

THE FUTURE OF WIM IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Operations at Traffic Control Centres (TCCs) are not optimal. Issues are experienced with geometric design (queuing times and space in particular), effectiveness and accuracy of Weigh-in-Motion (WIM) screening equipment, availability and cooperation from traffic police, slow weighing procedures, errors caused by the human element, potential for bribery and corruption, ageing technology and lack of integration of interrelated processes and systems. The negative effects of these issues are amplified by significant growth in heavy vehicle volumes, particularly on the major freight corridors, and consequent pressure on weighbridge throughput. A further major concern is that overload control efforts are limited to specific weighbridge locations while the remainder of the road network remains unmonitored and uncontrolled.

Time wastage of law-abiding, compliant freight companies due to congestion at weighbridges, inaccurate WIM screening, repeated weighing at several weighbridges on the same route during a single journey etc. are detrimental to freight logistics, the economy at large and create negative sentiment within the freight industry.

It is evident that the current overload control methods in South Africa need to be scientifically assessed to determine how they can be optimised and better integrated and to quantify what improvements could be realistically achieved. Furthermore, the use of technology has lagged behind over the years and innovative ways need to be explored using the latest technology and automation to not only improve weighbridge operations but also cover a much wider area of the road network and find alternative and more efficient and effective approaches to law enforcement.