

Look: Toyota South Africa reopens Durban factory

Toyota South Africa Motors (TSAM) has announced that its Prospecton Plant in Durban has restarted operations after production was halted due to damages caused by floods in the facility. The announcement was made at a reopening ceremony attended by members of the media, TSAM top brass as well as the newly elected premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Nomusa Dube-Ncube, and Siboniso Duma, MEC of economic development, tourism and environmental affairs



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TSAM's Prospecton Plant produces Corolla Cross and Quest as well as segment leaders Hilux, Hiace Ses'fikile and Fortuner – while also assembling a variety of Hino commercial vehicles. All the other production lines have resumed production with the exception of Corolla Quest, which is due to commence on 17 August.

TSAM was enjoying a healthy market share of 30% – on average – before its production plant in Durban was submerged in water following the devastating floods that engulfed parts of KwaZulu-Natal in April.

This immediately put TSAM on the backfoot, with its market share shrinking to 17%, 18,1% and 16,3% in the months of May, June and July – respectively.

“ Watch as one of our tour leaders takes us through the positives improvements made to our process to ensure an even better product outcome for our customers. [#RebuildingBetterTogether pic.twitter.com/GkovmcpdY8](#)— @ToyotaSA (@ToyotaSA) [August 16, 2022](#) ”

“ It's a wrap! Here's a message from Toyota SA President and CEO Andrew Kirby to close things off. Thank you for taking this journey with us. We promise that the locally built vehicles will be worth the wait💎💎[#RebuildingBetterTogether pic.twitter.com/CZl1kZPpOe](#)— @ToyotaSA (@ToyotaSA) [August 16, 2022](#) ”

President and CEO of TSAM, Andrew Kirby, says:

“We communicated with Japan (Toyota Motor Corporation) on the night of 12 April; I very quickly got a message back of support and an offer from them to do whatever they could to help. They dispatched a lot of experts to support us, helping us to repair, identify, diagnose and replace and then communicating with suppliers all over the world to source replacement parts.”

The process towards the plant’s full recovery has been long, with pre-floods level forecasted to be achieved in December.

Prior to the floods, operations at the Prospecton Plant were halted due to Covid-19-induced lockdowns in 2020 as well as the civil unrest that brought most businesses to their knees in 2021.



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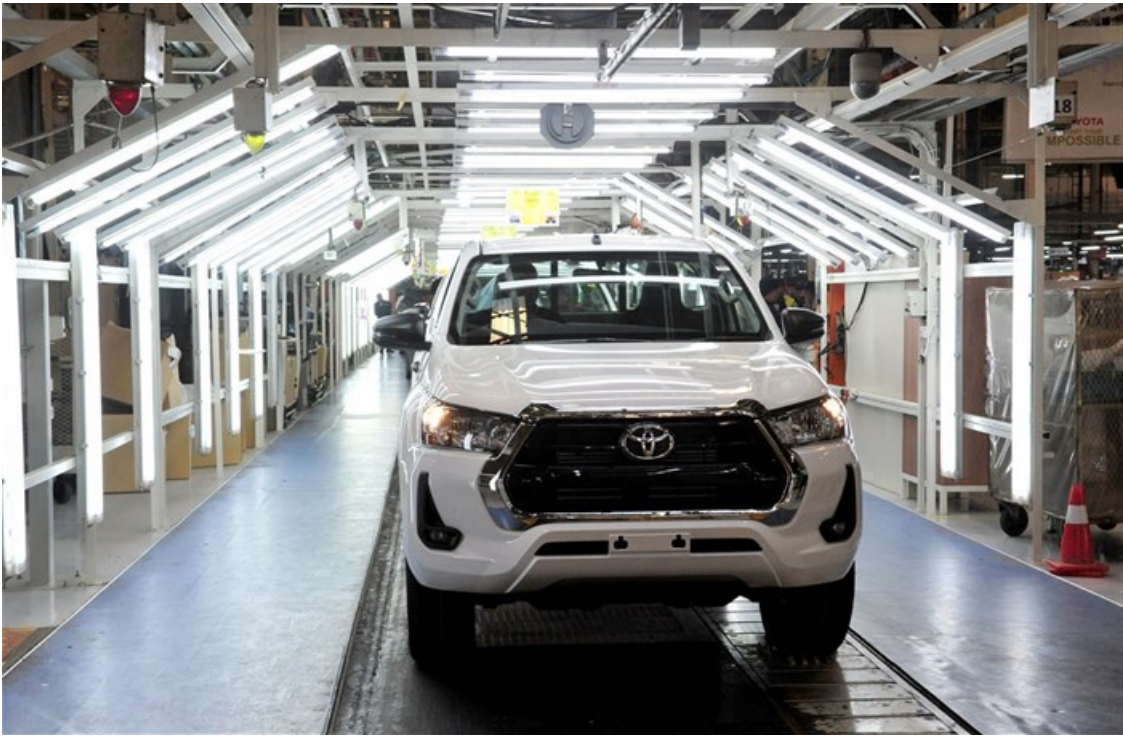


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“Despite these challenges, there was no impact at all to Toyota’s long-term future in South Africa. The commitment to rebuild this site has been incredible. We know that our recovery will not be smooth, but by next year we plan to be stronger and better than we were before.

“TSAM’s operations at Prospecton will actually be better and we plan to use this crisis to try and improve our equipment and upgrade where we can. In fact, we’ve created an internal slogan for our recovery called Rebuilding Better Together. This talks to how we all work together as one team to find a way of renewing and improving our site at the same time,” says Kirby.

The internal slogan also came through during the tour of the plant tour, where various presenters recalled the extent of the damage in their areas and how recovery processes were carried out to ensure that the plant will not be susceptible to similar devastation in future. It also became clear that while there were more 4 000 vehicles damaged on site during the floods, the costliest damage was to the plant infrastructure itself – including robots and other machines.

In fact, as Kirby referenced one of his colleagues: “There was not a single square metre of the entire 87 hectares facility that was not affected. In fact, it would be easier to just build a new plant.”

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