

# Upcoming rail safety conference to explore innovative, sustainable ways forward

South Africa's Railway Safety Regulator has announced that the 2021 Annual Rail Safety Conference will take place from 29 September to 1 October 2021.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

Hosted under the theme *Embracing the new normal through innovative and sustainable rail safety solutions*, this year's conference will be held virtually, at no cost to delegates. It will feature presentations from local and international rail experts from various disciplines.

"There is no doubt that the Covid-19 pandemic has changed how we interact and the way that we do business. The rail industry, like all others, has been impacted by the pandemic. However, this does not change the fact that as a rail regulator, we remain responsible for ensuring that our rail industry is well regulated and that the safety of rail service is improved," states Mmuso Selaledi, acting chief executive officer of the Railway Safety Regulator.

## Embracing the new normal

"In line with the conference's theme, we must embrace this new normal and find innovative ways that will ensure that we remain true to our mandate, through sustainable measures. This year's conference is a watershed moment for the rail industry," he says.

Hosted annually by the Railway Safety Regulator, the Rail Safety Conference provides a vital platform where industry stakeholders can come together to exchange experiences, solutions and lessons for improving railway safety. Amid the challenges of the Covid-19 crisis, the event is more important than ever as a forum for rail stakeholders to engage and collaborate on endeavours that will create safe, efficient and reliable solutions to address the emerging risks within the South African railway industry and beyond.

## Conference features

The conference programme features a number of key sub-themes. These include how industry role players can embrace the new normal, from environmental changes to the long-term impact of the pandemic. Innovation in a changing railway

environment will also be in the spotlight, along with the journey towards a sustainable railway environment.

The local and international rail experts on the speaker line-up include Mmuso Selaledi, acting CEO at South Africa's Railway Safety Regulator; Johny Smith, CEO at TransNamib, Namibia; Tshepo Kgobe, chief operating officer at Gautrain Management Agency in South Africa; Isabelle Fonverne, senior advisor: safety and interoperability at UIC in France; and Alberto Ronchi, railway division chief designer at Lucchini Group, Italy.

Presentations will include a panel discussion titled *Embracing the new normal through innovation and sustainability*. The imperative to instil a safety culture in the passenger rail transport industry will be discussed. A presentation on the Covid-19 impact on TransNamib and the way forward for the organisation will deliver valuable insights to all delegates. The technology innovations that can be leveraged to curb theft and vandalism and to maintain train safety and circulation will be unpacked in an important session focused on the experiences of South African railways.

All rail industry stakeholders are urged to attend this event, from rail operators, rail authorities, government regulators and municipal role players to rail solution and logistics service providers and freight and transport companies.

The conference will be more than just a webinar, according to the organisers, Smart Procurement. Delegates will have the opportunity to interact with exhibitors showcasing the latest tools and technologies impacting the rail industry, including eProcurement, commodity sourcing and ICT services.

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