

RAILROADER

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NRZ, SNCC in High Level Talks

NRZ, SNCC sign co-operation agreement



NRZ General Manager Ms Respina Zinyanduko and SNCC's Mr Marc Ndambo sign a business co-operation agreement in Bulawayo

The National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) has signed a business agreement with the Democratic Republic of Congo's Société Nationale des chemins de fer du Congo (SNCC) to enhance co-operation between the two railway companies.

The agreement was signed by the NRZ General Manager Ms Respina Zinyanduko and SNCC director of operations Mr Marc Manyanga Ndambo in Bulawayo.

Under the deal, the NRZ will refurbish 200 wagons from SNCC to move traffic from Hwange to the DRC while the companies will look at ways at increasing rail traffic between the two corridors.

Speaking at the signing ceremony NRZ Board Vice Chairman Major General William Dube said cooperation and collaboration between regional rail companies was important as they were facing competition from road transport.

He said despite the stiff competition, railways as a mode of

transport was there to stay. "Looking at the horizon in the future, I don't see any other technology that is about to replace railway in any economy. In spite of the invasion of our territory by road, we should not lose hope. We should regain our space," said Maj. Gen. Dube.

He said business was like war where the army should never surrender to an enemy.

"We have failed to defend our ground. We seem to be pulling out voluntarily and road is coming in. It becomes very difficult to dislodge an enemy who has occupied your ground.

This is the situation we are facing," he said. Maj. Gen. Dube said like in war, railway companies now need to come up with strategies to win back business lost to road instead of giving up hope.

Mr Ndambo said SNCC top management was eager to strengthen ties with the NRZ.

He said the agreement signed with the NRZ should not only increase traffic volumes on the corridor linking

the two countries but also stem losses of traffic to the road sector. Mr Ndambo said in the DRC, only 2.4 percent of international traffic was moving by rail, the rest used road.

"Railway should organise themselves so that we become competitive," he said.

The visit by the SNCC officials followed a similar one made by NRZ Board Chairman Advocate Martin Dinha and management to Lubumbashi in June last year.

Mr Ndambo was accompanied by Mr Stephane Kubelwa Ilunga, the SNCC Manager-in-Charge of Business Development, and Mrs Justine Mbelu Kanyinda, Agreements and Commercial Studies Manager.

"Looking at the horizon in the future, I don't see any other technology that is about to replace railway in any economy. In spite of the invasion of our territory by road, we should not lose hope.

Covid-19 booster shots available at NRZ clinics

The National Railways of Zimbabwe Medical Section has started offering booster shots to fully vaccinated people as part of efforts to boost resistance to Covid-19.

Nursing Officer (Southern) Sister Matilda Hadebe said the section started offering booster shots about a month ago.

However, she said response from workers had been poor as only 10 workers had volunteered for the booster shot in January.

According to the World Health Organisation, booster doses are administered to a vaccinated population that has completed a primary vaccination series when, with time, the immunity and clinical protection has fallen below a rate deemed sufficient in that population.

The objective of a booster dose is to restore vaccine effectiveness from that deemed no longer sufficient. Health authorities urge fully vaccinated people to receive a booster shot at least six months after getting the first two shots to provide further protection against Covid-19. "Employees are not forthcoming for booster shots. We have the doses. It could be a question of attitude," said Sister Hadebe. However, she said most NRZ employees were vaccinated against Covid-19. Three-thousand four hundred and forty-three workers received Covid-19

jobs at NRZ clinics. But the number of vaccinated employees is higher as data provided by the Medical Section only captured workers inoculated at NRZ premises and not those who received vaccines at other health facilities.

In addition to NRZ employees, the Medical Section also vaccinated 7 599 members of the public at its clinics.

Sister Hadebe said the introduction of mass testing of contacts at the NRZ had resulted in a drastic reduction in people booking off sick.

Before mass testing, contacts of people who tested positive to Covid-19 were booked off sick and isolated for 14 days as a precaution.

Some people were taking advantage of this to abscond from work claiming they had

been in contact with someone who tested positive to Covid-19. At one time, as many as 140 workers went into isolation in one week resulting in lost man hours

With mass testing, contacts no longer get automatic off-sick but are tested.

Sister Hadebe said although no deaths were reported in the fourth wave, it was the most devastating in terms of infections.

"The fourth wave affected us badly. Although we had no deaths, we had more cases compared to previous waves. The infection was very fast and it was more painful," she said.

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, NRZ recorded a total of 459 confirmed cases with 11 deaths. Most of the death occurred during the third wave.



NRZ-ZIMASCO COLLABORATE IN SUPPORT OF US\$12B MINING INDUSTRY

The National Railways of Zimbabwe has held discussion with one of the country's largest chrome producers to move the bulk of its products by rail instead of road, a move that will boost NRZ's freight volumes.

NRZ senior management met the Zimasco General Manager (Marketing) Ms Clara Sadomba who expressed her company's desire to revert back to the situation which prevailed years ago when chrome ore, chrome concentrates and ferrochrome produced by the mining giant were moved almost exclusively by rail.

For decades, Zimasco used rail as the main means of transport to move chrome ore concentrates from Kildonan near Mutorashanga to its smelting plant in Kwekwe and to the Port of Beira.

It also relied on rail to move ferrochrome from Kwekwe to Maputo.

However, owing to capacity challenges faced by the NRZ, Zimasco has resorted to moving most of its products by road.

At the meeting in Bulawayo, attended by General Manager Ms Respina Zinyanduko, Chief Marketing and Business Development Manager Mr Takunda Madanha, Chief Strategy and Planning Manager Mr Francis Bowden, Acting Chief Traffic Manager Mr Gefferson Chimunye and Innovation and Business Development Manager Mr Richard Ncube on the NRZ side, the two companies



NRZ General Manager Ms Respina Zinyanduko poses for a picture with Zimasco General Manager (Marketing) Ms Clara Sadomba and NRZ Managers

agreed that rail was the only cost effective way to move chrome ore and ferrochrome. Zimasco produces about 130 000 tonnes of ferrochrome per annum.

It also mines 300 000 to 400 000 tonnes of chrome ore and needs nearly 100 000 tonnes of coal and coke for its furnaces, all which need to be railed to the processing plant in Kwekwe.

Mr Madanha said the NRZ would provide a dedicated train service to Zimasco to move the availed business.

He said if the NRZ manages to successfully move Zimasco cargo without hitches, other mining companies presently using road would return to rail as the NRZ would have proved its capacity to uplift their business.

NRZ is undertaking various initiatives to ensure that it is able to carry business availed by the mining sector in readiness for the US\$12 billion mining industry.

Mr Madanha said the initiatives included discussions with Mozambique railway operator, CFM, on areas of co-operation and resource sharing to enable the two railway companies to support the \$12billion mining industry by 2023.

CFM has purchased over 300 new High-sided wagons and 100 container carrying wagons, six [3 000 horse power] locomotives, rehabilitated the track infrastructure from Chicualacuala to Maputo with new bridges and culverts on the Maputo/ Limpopo Corridor to stabilise the track.

On the Beira Corridor, CFM bought four new locomotives, 250 wagons [150 High – sided & 100 Container conveying] and is also upgrading the Machipanda to Beira Railway line.

He said the NRZ was also building internal capacity to ensure it has enough resources to support the mining sector. "These include ensuring the

availability of adequate locomotives and wagons. By mid this year, 1000 wagons would have been refurbished for use within the NRZ network and the SADC region. The Government allocated the NRZ ZWL 2 billion in this year's National Budget under the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) for infrastructure development.

“This will go a long way in improving track infrastructure and ensure speed restrictions are removed on tracks resulting in enhanced train operations efficiency.”

The NRZ is also pursuing the possibility of manufacturing concrete railway sleepers internally. This initiative is expected to substantially lower track maintenance costs leading to reduction in unit cost of service.

Mr Madanha said the NRZ had a significant role to play in the achievement of government's quest for a US\$12billion mining industry by 2023, of which the chrome sector is expected to contribute US\$1billion.

“In this regard, the NRZ is lobbying the mining industry through the Chamber of Mines and the Minerals Marketing Corporation of

Zimbabwe to support the National Transportation Master plan which defines cargo for rail and cargo for road. The use of rail to carry bulk cargo will translate into several benefits for the country,” he said.

The benefits include a reduction in road traffic accidents and deaths and less damage to the national road network caused by haulage trucks carrying cargo ideal for rail transport.

Mr Madanha said rail was also a cost effective way of moving both bulk raw materials and finished products with one train load being equivalent to 33 road trucks, hence less salaries' cost for drivers and carbon emissions into the environment and low fuel consumption and resultantly saving in foreign currency and benefit to downstream industries and the men and women in the streets.

The government, through the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure Development, is currently engaged in a massive road rehabilitation exercise. However, if bulk cargo continues to be transported on road, this investment into a state of art road infrastructure will go to waste.



Mr Alex Mugabe bought a cake to share with workmates to celebrate his promotion from Auditor to Administration Officer

Every Friday, Clean-up Day

National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ) Management has designated every Friday a clean-up day.

While the Government has set aside the first Friday of the month as National Clean-up Day with cleaning taking place for two hours, NRZ has gone a step further by having weekly clean-up sessions where workers clean up an identified area or their work stations from 8am to 12pm every week.

The decision to start weekly clean-up sessions followed uncontrolled growth of vegetation at the Stores and distribution Branch at Raylton Bulawayo which made the area unsightly.

General Manager Ms Respina Zinyanduko said the situation at the Stores and Supplies Depot had not occurred overnight but was allowed to develop over years.

She said in order to ensure a smart environment, areas will be identified where branches will second their workers every Friday to clear vegetation.

“This clean-up campaign is the beginning of the railways that we want to see. I am sure we are all happy that this place can be nice, so going forward we are going to have teams where each and every Friday is going to be a clean-up day. We are not going to wait for the National Clean-up day,” she said,

Ms Zinyanduko commended workers for the commitment shown during the clean-up exercise saying in a few hours,



General Manager Ms Respina Zinyanduko takes part at the January Clean-Up Campaign



Above and Below: Employees clear grass at Supplies and Distribution Branch



they had cleared vegetation which had grown over many years. “This thing was left over years but we have managed to clear the thicket that was there in one day,” she said. Areas which have been cleared of vegetation under the weekly clean-up exercise include Stores and Supplies and the Materials Depot at the Central Mechanical Workshops.

Advantages of Having a Project Management Office

Project Management Concepts and Insights

with Eng. Clifford Moyo



continued from last edition

- The organisation enjoys savings on company resources brought about by the PMO's effective and efficient delivery of projects.
- The company exploits educated and professionally tested comprehensive information on its project portfolio, programme and project business.
- Organisational uncertainty due to projects is easily exposed and quickly comprehended thereby facilitating an easier undertaking of decision making on risk response and required actions on project issues.
- The PMO inter-relates all project decisions as logical pieces of the whole strategic cake, so that universal project decisions can be made easier.
- Repeatability or re-usability of excellent successful project management practices is facilitated while bad unfruitful practices are exposed and shunned.
- The learned guidance and governance offered by the PMO helps the organisation keep all the projects on track and finish on scheduled time.
- Everyone in the organisation may easily conceive the broader strategic placement and contribution of projects
- The organisation enjoys economies of improved communications leading to satisfied stakeholders.
- The company's resources are equitably shared among project implementers and effort is

channelled towards the organisation's strategic initiatives.

How Modern PMOs Are Evolving To Harness Change

There is often great pressure on PMOs to evolve in a dynamic environment so as to register stronger contributions to organisational benefits realisation and value creation.

This pressure includes greater organisational uncertainty, higher pace of organisational change, higher competition, and more empowered customers, all implying that organisations then operate in an increasingly complex and dynamic environment.

It is, therefore, highly demanded that PMOs become able to rapidly implement new strategic initiatives and changes.

The modern PMO is, therefore, evolving in step with the dynamics of the operating business climate.

The following are the ways by which the modern PMO is evolving:

- Putting Focus on the critical initiatives.

The PMO changes from project watching to deliberate offensive masterminding of engagements among other key stakeholders and project teams. Such communication ushers accurate and clear perceptions into project performance, threats, and opportunities that are of strategic significance. The focus also fosters clarity and course correction amidst any arising issues and it also promotes the optimum possible realisation of required outcomes.

- Setting up smart and simple processes. The PMO right sizes the organisation's capabilities by

employing just enough processes and practices to enable effective communication, sufficient collaboration and continuous improvements without adding wasteful steps or overriding processes that are already producing value.

- Promoting the growth of talent and capabilities. The PMO begins to do a proactive duty of recruiting and retaining talented team members. The PMO develops and nurtures technical, strategic, management, and leadership skills within project teams and across the organisation.
- Cultivating and enabling a culture of change. The PMO becomes a change leader by actively building company-wide support for and commitment to outcomes and benefits-focused performance and organisational change management as competitive differentiators (PMBOK Guide 7th Edition ideas)

Conclusion:

The best PMO in the world alone will not help any organisation unless there are proper supporting structures. The PMO needs highly trained or talented personnel to man it. In place also should be some tried and tested project management processes together with a well reinforcing technological setup.

Rail key in carbon reduction

Continued
from
last edition

Rail is a key means of supporting decarbonisation at a world level.

For instance, EU policy has focused on rail for the last 30 years, with the aim of developing a common transport policy for rail and the Single European Railway Area, an EU-wide system of connected networks.

Most recently, the emphasis has been to position the bloc's rail sector as a key part of EU decarbonisation strategy. The same can be adopted for our region SADC, through our SARA. The EU's Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy presented as part of the European Green Deal in December 2020, calls for the doubling of high-speed rail by 2030.

Furthermore, 2021 has been designated as the European Year of Rail in an effort to promote railway transport as a sustainable and safe option for Europe's mobility.

In June 2021, the EU Council, which represents the 27 member states, adopted conclusions on 'Putting rail at the forefront of smart and sustainable mobility'.

The conclusions which can be drawn, underline the need to further develop rail transport for passengers and goods in our country and region.

Authorities in our rail industry need to adopt the same and lobby policy makers to seriously reconsider the future of sustainable rail investment.

Policies implemented by governments to decarbonise transport have a significant impact on rail investment decisions.

Given the lengthy economic life of rail assets, obtaining policy certainty ahead of time is key for

investors. For instance, the UK Government has challenged the sector to plan for removal of all diesel-only trains by 2040 and to decarbonise traction, rail property and infrastructure.

The Rail Industry Decarbonisation Taskforce, which published recommendations to the Government in 2019, observed that, due to the economic life of rolling stock, many existing fleets will be in existence past the 2040 deadline.

To prevent the loss of economic value, key decisions on fleet refurbishments and conversions will need to be made in the short term. As many developed countries have set sustainability targets for 2030, 2040 or 2050, our rail policies too, must be quickly finalised to allow investors to make long-term decisions about key assets.

The need for long-term clarity equally applies to investment decisions regarding construction and development of new rail infrastructure, which has historically been publicly funded as it is capital intensive and investors are unlikely to recoup all outlays through charges.

Implementing the necessary changes to meet climate goals will require new capital-intensive infrastructure, such as replacing diesel trains, building new lines, electrifying existing networks and developing hydrogen trains etc.

However, given competing demands for public funding, implementing such changes is likely to present opportunities for private investors.

This may lead to a rise in the number of private-public partnerships to develop infrastructure, as was envisaged for the Kuala Lumpur–Singapore high-speed rail project.

Furthermore, for trains to provide a realistic alternative to more carbon-intensive transport, further investment is needed to make the rail network more accessible, attractive and affordable.

The Governments of Zimbabwe should start introducing measures to promote trains. For instance, in the UK again, part of the UK Department for Transport's (DfT) strategy includes modernising fares through contactless ticketing and flexible pricing.

In January 2020, Germany's government implemented climate protection measures

aimed at making train travel more attractive. This involved a cut in VAT, effectively reducing fares for long-distance travel. France did the same, revealed its new high-speed train, which will be in service by 2024.

The new trains, which are greener, spacious and cheaper to run than previous generations, are hoped to revolutionise rail travel in the country.

While some of these measures are implemented and funded by governments, the vast funding needed will likely present substantial investment opportunities for the private sector, when invited by government.

With low emission rates and existing green technology, rail should be a key part of global climate conversations, more so, at national level, even before taking account of the scope to further decarbonise the sector.

Key to bringing the industry more centrally into that dialogue will be further progress on electrification of rail networks, and battery-powered trains and making passenger travel more affordable and convenient.

The industry must embrace different forms of financing to ensure rail fulfils its huge potential to decarbonise our economy, transport and daily lives.

Announcements

LONG SERVICE

40 Years

MURIRE Samuel Traction & Rolling Stock Artisan's asst

NGOMA Lucky Traction & Rolling Stock Fitter

JUSTEN Robert Traction & Rolling Stock Foreman

BANDA Allan Tracks Handymn G4

MSAGO Arubento Traffic Handymn G5

MBOMA Clever Traction & Rolling Stock Sectn Ofcr

MUZARADOPE Elliot Traction & Rolling Stock Sectn Ofcr

CHISORO Itayi Traction & Rolling Stock Skw4 Fittr

ADAM Peter Human Resources Snr M Instr

KATONHA LOVEMORE Traction & Rolling Stock Tr&Qlty En

SHAVA Charles Works & Buildings Works Ofcr

35 years

MURANGWA Moses Traffic Stn Fmn

MANDOGA Edmond Traction & Rolling Stock c&w atndt

DENGENYERA Andrew Traction & Rolling Stock C&W Atndt

MASIBANGO Hurt Traction & Rolling Stock L c&W X/Rp

MACHIKITI Phibeon Traction & Rolling Stock C&W Atndt

PHIRI Zakaria Traction & Rolling Stock C&W Atndt

MUKWENA Patrick Traction & Rolling Stock Shunt Att

CHINYAMUNZORE Matthew Vehicle Maintenance Handymn G3

BARIKINYA Zuze Tracks Trk Patrmn

30 years

NDLOVU Thabisani Works & Buildings Foreman

RETIREMENTS

The following employees proceeded on retirement in January 2022. We wish them success in their future endeavours

MASHOKO Reward Human Resources Loco Insp

SIMBANEGAVI Progress Human Resources S Per C G4

MUVENGWA Aleck Tracks P way insp

SAMHIRI Morgen Works & Buildings Artisan's Asst

HOVE Edmos Tracks Trk Patrmn

TAKAVADA Zondiwe Security Services Bhd Scrtry

MLOTSHWA Godwill Traction & Rolling Stock crn dr/hdym (G3)

MOYO Costa Traction & Rolling Stock C&W Xmn/Rp

NARE Henry Traction & Rolling Stock C&W Atndt

FOMBE Moses Tracks Trk Patrmn