

DECIDING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ROAD USER CHARGES IN THE SADC REGION

ASANRA is a forum for networking on policy formulation and technical exchange among industry and professionals in the transport sector in the SADC region. This article is designed to introduce and discuss regional topical issues affecting the transport sector. The forum is open to ASANRA members and stakeholders. Discussions will be posted on ASANRA website and published in subsequent issues of the newsletter. This issue 1 of ASANRA Newsletter introduces the subject of implementation of Road User Charges in the SADC region.

In 2009, SADC launched a study on the implementation of Harmonised Road User Charges (RUC) System in the region: RUC Model. Member states submitted their road data for inclusion in the HDM4 model run. The study recommended road user charges for each member state. However, these were deemed too low and hence not implemented. This prompted a rerun of the model with revised data. Member states submitted much higher charges than the first set.

Implementation of road user charges in the SADC region is therefore a crucial pending issue which raises the following questions:

- a) Should member states decide on the level of road user charges?

- b) Association of Southern African National Road Agencies (ASANRA), Ports Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA), Southern African Railway Association (SARA) and Federation of East and Southern African Road Transport Associations (FESARTA) are all regional organizations in Southern Africa (FESARTA and PMAESA extend into East Africa), and therefore share common interests. All are trying to improve the efficiency of the corridors in the region: ASANRA through the improvement of roads, PMAESA the ports, SARA the rail and FESARTA the road transport industry.