

■ Road vs rail again

Announcements regarding the proposed construction of a high-speed railway system to Durban have come under fire from the road sector. Whether road or rail triumphs in the heated debate, opportunity abounds for the sector.

The South African Road Federation (SARF) cautions that the resuscitation of a proposal by the Minister of Transport, Sbu Ndebele, to establish a high-speed rail link between Johannesburg and Durban, should be subject to a thorough feasibility study before the scheme

reaches design stage. SARF president, Mutshutshu Nxumalo, says it is essential that an unbiased assessment should be conducted by experienced and competent transport engineers and economists.

"Should it be his intention to relieve the N3 of the excessive heavy-freight traffic it carries now, SARF suggests that a dedicated truck route would be far more effective. We believe that a high-speed, freight-rail link, with its vastly increased costs, would be a much more expensive option to construct and run."