

POTHOLE PATROL

LAUNCHES NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH



AVIS

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Pothole Patrol takes on a new partnership that's geared to continue making a marked difference for all South African road users

Johannesburg, 29 June 2023: Today Discovery Insure and Avis Southern Africa announced a partnership to support the Discovery Pothole Patrol in Johannesburg. The partnership will see the two companies working together to identify and repair potholes on major roads in the city.

Pothole Patrol was initially launched in May 2021 to support the Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA) and the City of Johannesburg to deal head on the serious pothole issue in the city.



From Left to right: Anton Ossip, CEO of Discovery Insure; Kenny Kunene, Joburg Transport MMC; Ramasela Ganda, Group CEO of ZEDA Limited and Avis Southern Africa; Zweli Nyathi, Acting CEO at JRA; Kgodiso Mokonyane, Head of Strategy and Value-Added Products at Discovery Insure; Litha Nkombisa, Executive: commercial sales at AvisMMC Kunene and executives from JRA, Discovery Insure and Avis during the launch of Pothole Patrol initiative.

“Together with the Johannesburg Roads Agency, we are excited to have Avis join the Discovery Pothole Patrol,” said Anton Ossip, CEO of Discovery Insure.

“Potholes are a major safety hazard, and we believe this cross-sector partnership aimed at tackling the problem of potholes in the city, will help to make Johannesburg’s roads safer for everyone,” Ossip added.

“We believe that everyone has a role to play in making our roads safer and, as an integrated mobility business we are committed to providing our customers with a safe and reliable driving experience,” said Ramasela Ganda, Group CEO of ZEDA Limited and Avis Southern Africa. “This partnership will ensure that we stay true to this commitment. By working together with Discovery Insure and the JRA, we can make a real difference in the lives of our customers and broader society.”

“Providing quality roads that are accessible and liveable for our communities is the JRA’s mission as the entity manages a 13 599 km road network across the City of Johannesburg, explains the JRA Acting CEO Zweli Nyathi, “We therefore welcome this extended partnership in support of the Discovery Pothole Patrol, which is assisting our depots with some of our reactive maintenance on our extensive road network and thus ensuing safer mobility for road users”

Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Transport Cllr. Kenny Kunene applauds the extended partnership, “The Discovery Pothole Patrol Initiative, eliminating one pothole at a time is just one example of how the JRA and the City’s Transport department is transforming the way in which it looks at service delivery. Through partnerships and developmental models where citizens and business are no longer the passive recipients of services but active participants, working together for the greater good.”

A partnership marked with remarkable milestones

Monthly impact of pothole damage to South Africa is concerning and Discovery has estimated the cost to South Africans approximately is R500 million per month. This is equivalent to buying 550 000 brand new tyres each month.

“Notwithstanding this worrying picture, we have achieved our core purpose to enhance and protect lives by making our roads safer, through Pothole Patrol. Through the initiative, all motorists in the City of Johannesburg have made great savings in prevented pothole-related incidents that would have resulted in them needing to make a significant financial outlay to fix their vehicles, while Discovery Insure clients have made a potential saving of 21% from expected pothole claims” remarks Head of Strategy and Value-Added Products at Discovery Insure, Kgodiso Mokonyane.

Pothole Patrol made a marked difference on Johannesburg roads, by repairing close to 175,000 potholes and road defects across Johannesburg. Discovery Insure data shows a 26% drop in pothole-related claims in Johannesburg since its launch in May 2021 to December 2021, compared to an increase of 45% in the rest of Gauteng over the same period. In 2022, pothole-related incidents per 100km had increased by 29% throughout the country, and remained flat in Johannesburg.

Commenting on these results, Mokonyane says, “We are deeply encouraged by Discovery’s shared-value insurance model, that enables us to be a force for good and positively impact the lives of our clients and the broader society. In just two years, there have been fewer pothole incidents on Johannesburg roads, made possible through Pothole Patrol.”

The initiative has also accomplished the following:

- Approximately 13 000 Pothole Patrol App downloads
- 58 000 potholes have been reported through the App
- It has used 7 000 tons of asphalt to fill 175, 000 potholes

The Discovery Pothole Patrol will operate seven days a week, and it will focus on major roads in Johannesburg that are known to have potholes and those reported on the Pothole Patrol app. The team of technicians will also work with local authorities to identify and repair potholes in areas that are not regularly patrolled.

Discovery Pothole Patrol will contribute skills to road maintenance in Johannesburg

Discovery Insure and Avis have also launched the Discovery Pothole Patrol Academy (Academy) as part of a larger shared-value initiative not only to improve road safety in Johannesburg but also to be a force for social good. The Academy is a skills development programme which aims to empower youth from nearby communities with viable skills that can be used immediately after the training and to improve their income generating prospects.

Mokonyane adds, "The academy, will create a pipeline for the Discovery Pothole Patrol, and add capacity to the existing team of technicians. The graduates will also be equipped with business skills, "and therefore encouraged to start their own small businesses in the road maintenance industry."

"At Avis, we are underpinned by strong ESG principles and are pleased that through the Pothole Patrol initiative, we will continue to embed our social impact by uplifting local communities and creating skills development opportunities. We therefore, look forward to achieving many more milestones through this initiative," Concludes Ganda.

Enhanced technology to Pothole Patrol

Since the initial launch, Discovery Insure has applied its assets and capabilities such as the telematics technology applied in Vitality Drive to identify potholes. This process of identifying potholes has been enhanced to improve efficiencies, by introducing game-changing artificial intelligence (AI) software, that is able to detect road defects with unparalleled accuracy and efficiency.

The advanced AI technology scans every inch of the road, identifying potholes, cracks, and imperfections in real-time. Further, not only does it detect road defects such as potholes and manholes, the technology also measures and categorises them, providing invaluable insights for prioritisation and swift action.

Mokonyane explains, "The data collected by this AI software becomes a roadmap to success, empowering our graduates and partnering municipalities to make informed decisions and deliver exceptional results."

"Through shared-value and by keeping safety for all at the heart of what we do, repairing potholes is just one way we get to make a difference. And we look forward to continuing the good work already achieved with Avis on board," concludes Mokonyane.

Report your pothole today!

Being able to repair potholes depends on being able to identify their exact locations.

Although Discovery Insure's unrivalled telematics data enables them to locate potholes quite accurately via their clients, many more road defects can be reached with invaluable community input.

To help make a positive difference go even further, report potholes with the Discovery Pothole Patrol App.

Simply download the Discovery Pothole Patrol App, which is available on the IOS app store and Google Play. Once downloaded, follow the registration prompts and you're all set to report potholes as you come across them on the roads.

About the Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA)

The JRA is a City-owned agency responsible for the maintenance, repair and development of Johannesburg's road network and storm water infrastructure, including bridges and culverts, traffic lights and signage. The organisation is committed to providing quality roads that are accessible, safe and liveable for our communities. ***Stay in touch with JRA via 0860 562 874/hotline@jra.org.za /twitter @MyJra /Facebook: Johannesburg Roads Agency so that we may be of service.***

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