



Considering the Easter Season

As South Africans, we are fortunate to have a number of important public holidays during the Easter period that allow us time to reflect and reconnect with our values and each other:

- **Good Friday** – a day commemorating Christ, observed by many as a moment of solemnity, sacrifice, and reflection.
- **Family Day** – a celebration of our loved ones and the time we cherish together.
- **Freedom Day** – a day to remember South Africa's first democratic elections held in 1994, reminding us of the importance of liberty, equality, and human rights.
- **Worker's Day** – honouring the contributions of workers across all sectors and promoting fair labour practices.

Let us all take time to embrace the meaning of these days and remember what truly matters to us as South Africans.

Logistics Corporates Must Reinvest in Industry Development

A Development and Compliance Perspective

By Ingrid du Buisson, CEO – ICFF



On 11 April 2025, the ICFF hosted a roadshow in Johannesburg where we hosted some excellent speakers from industry who provided us with their insight to the challenges, we as an industry are facing, especially as the facilitators of international supply chains. The overarching topic was the current global trade war happening and its anticipated impact on South Africa and what it will mean for our employees and corporates. The legislative imperatives the industry is currently facing from Employment Equity, BBBEE and Customs Licensing, not to mention AEO accreditation was also discussed at length.

One aspect that became very clear during the discussions was the urgent need to capacitate and upskill our employees to become more effective and efficient in and across the supply chains they are facilitating, with huge emphasis on customs compliance as a risk to business. If industry is to survive these turbulent times, investment into upskilling and professionalizing employees must become a strategic intent for corporates. We have many employees in the industry who are not certified or qualified, we have a mechanism to assist.

In the meantime, we have been networking and collaborating with key individuals in the industry that are very conversant with the proposed amendments to the BBBEE charter and what the new requirements that are anticipated will be. We all know what the expectations are as far as Employment Equity is concerned, targets have been set with punitive consequences. Are corporates aware of this and are they ready to address it?

One also needs to ask the question as to when last has the industry seen revised and new qualifications being funded and developed by the SETA? Not to mention revising our industry standards? We are currently sitting with qualifications from pre-2009, not very comforting to say the least when our mission within the ICFF and the industry is to build and maintain skills and capacity towards professionalization, and to meet legislative imperatives. How do we begin to address these challenges when our entire skills development infrastructure is so outdated and seemingly lacking funds?

Well, here at the ICFF we have designed a Learning & Development strategy which will assist industry in achieving all their training & legislative imperatives, their points on their BBBEE scorecard and Employment Equity requirements by reinvesting back into industry towards developing and revising industry standards which will enable us to facilitate the development of qualifications directly with the Quality Council for Trade Occupations. This all can be achieved whilst achieving BBBEE points on CSI and SED in the process.

The ICFF is here to support the industry, so we urge you to contact us so that we can guide and assist you in achieving all your imperatives.

Please call on us to address any queries you may have.

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How are we giving individuals recognition?

Message from the Vice President

– Yolandi Dercksen

Roadshow Reflections and a Call to Action



It was an incredible privilege to recently host our ICFF Roadshow in Johannesburg, where we were joined by a strong and diverse audience. Among those in attendance were freight forwarding and customs agents, CEOs, HR Directors, training providers, representatives from the Transport Education and Training Authority (TETA), the Road Accident Fund (RAF), ICFF board members, honorary members, and other esteemed VIP guests. The energy in the room was electric, and the engagement throughout the event reaffirmed the importance of what we are striving to achieve at the ICFF.



During the roadshow, I had the opportunity to speak on a matter close to my heart – the importance and urgency of obtaining professional designations in our industry. As we navigate the current economic crisis, it has become increasingly clear that the strength of our economy depends heavily on international trade. It is, in fact, the heartbeat of economic growth in South Africa.

For this reason, it is vital that we develop a **skilled, empowered, and qualified** workforce capable of efficiently moving cargo across our borders. Whether through imports or exports, our logistics and customs professionals play a pivotal role in enabling trade and boosting our economy. Professional designations are not just titles – they are a mark of excellence, commitment, and capability. They ensure that the individuals driving our industry forward are held to a high standard of professionalism and performance.

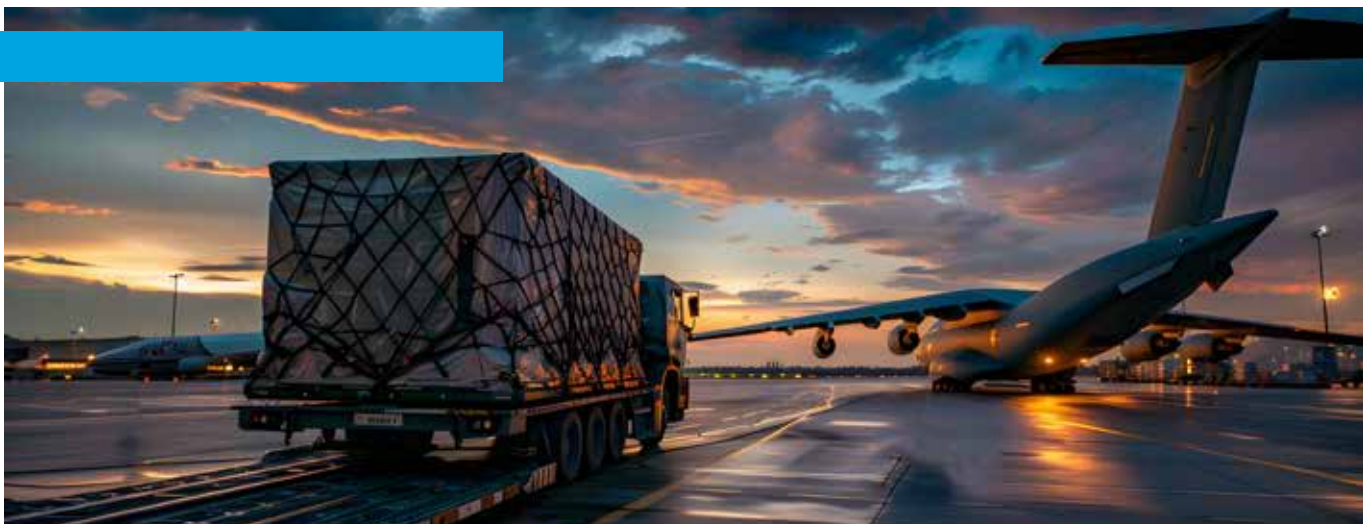
Now is the time to invest in your people. Support your staff, encourage their growth, and help them reach the next level in their careers through professional designation. Together, we can raise the bar and set the standard in our industry – not only for today but for the future.

Thank you to everyone who attended the roadshow and contributed to its success. Let's continue working together to build a stronger, more sustainable industry.

Warm regards,

Yolandi Dercksen

Vice President – ICFF





ICFF ROADSHOW - CAPE TOWN

Save the Date – CAPE TOWN ICFF Roadshow 2025!

Mark your calendars for **Thursday, 15 May 2025**, for our next Roadshow in **Cape Town** at the **Western Cape Business Chamber!**

Our guest speakers will include:

- **Donald MacKay** – Trade Specialist
- **Maria du Preez** – Chair of SAAFF
- **Gary Marshall** – CEO of SAEPA

Join us to hear the latest insights, industry trends, and expert commentary on what's ahead for freight forwarding and customs in South Africa. RSVP to Lerato to secure your spot.



The DaVinci Institute and ICFF Join Forces to Redefine Professional Development

At The DaVinci Institute, we believe that learning is not confined to the walls of academia. It lives and breathes in boardrooms, on factory floors, along supply chains, and in the lived experiences of professionals navigating real-world complexity. In that spirit, we are proud to announce a bold and strategic partnership with the Institute of Customs and Freight Forwarding (ICFF), an organisation as committed to professionalisation and innovation as we are.

Aligning Education with Industry: A Shared Vision

This collaboration brings forth a shared vision of education that is both relevant and responsive. **Dr Sam February, Executive: Business Development at The DaVinci Institute**, explained that the partnership opens numerous strategic opportunities:

“Together, we aim to align academic programmes with industry needs by integrating customs and freight content into DaVinci’s offerings - content that ICFF recognises as key pathways to professional growth. Through co-developed short courses and micro-credentials that balance theory and practice, we will empower learners at every stage of their careers. We are also exploring joint research initiatives on critical topics such as digitalisation, sustainability, and regulatory compliance - backed by real-world case studies from ICFF members.”

Dr February added that the partnership will enable events such as workshops and conferences that bring together students, faculty, and professionals for meaningful knowledge exchange: *“We’re also looking at structured opportunities for internships, mentorships, and executive training to strengthen our engagement with the industry. Our collaboration will address digital transformation in freight, including blockchain and AI applications, and champion ESG awareness across supply chains. At its core, this partnership bridges academia and industry, fueling innovation and growth across the customs and freight forwarding sectors.”*

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two institutions marks the beginning of this journey - one grounded in co-creation, mutual respect, and a commitment to unlocking the full potential of industry professionals.

Addressing Industry Gaps and Setting New Standards

Ingrid Du Buisson, Chief Executive Officer of ICFF and Master of Science Degree, a Master of Science in the Management of Technology and Innovation (MSc) alumna of The DaVinci Institute, highlighted the longstanding challenges that have hindered the sector:

“Learning and development in the logistics and freight forwarding industry have historically been fragmented and misaligned. Over time, industry standards have drifted from business realities, severely impacting the development of competent professionals. This is further compounded by a bureaucratic skills development landscape that has failed to adequately support a small yet vital sector - one that facilitates 90% of South Africa’s international trade. Sadly, a very small percentage of the workforce holds formal qualifications.”

But the partnership with The DaVinci Institute marks a turning point. As Du Buisson explained: *“This collaboration presents an opportunity to reshape learning in our sector. By co-developing programmes and qualifications aligned to real-world business realities, we are redefining the standards for competency and proficiency. Our goal is to build an ecosystem that supports professionals and strengthens their role in facilitating international supply chains.”*

She also underscored the importance of Da Vinci's learning model:

"DaVinci's Mode 2 methodology is especially valuable as it supports working professionals in practical, accessible ways. The programmes are aligned to the ICFF competency framework and enjoy strong industry recognition. This partnership fits squarely within our vision of professionalisation - an imperative increasingly driven by global legislation and compliance requirements. Licensing of customs operators and professional designations are no longer optional, and this partnership enables us to respond proactively by creating learning and development strategies that meet these demands," Ingrid added.

What This Means in Practice

This partnership will activate a series of joint initiatives, including:

- **Workshops, seminars, and conferences** that address emerging challenges and opportunities in customs, logistics, and freight forwarding.
- **Co-developed research and publications** that fuse academic rigour with industry relevance.
- **Competency-based certifications** that recognise the full spectrum of skills required in today's dynamic trade environment.
- **Professional development pathways** that open doors for both ICFF members and DaVinci students to deepen their impact and expand their potential.

ICFF brings to this partnership a vibrant community of logistics and freight professionals, a wealth of sector-specific knowledge, and a dedication to maintaining global standards. The Da Vinci Institute contributes its academic infrastructure, research capability, and a distinctly human-centred approach to innovation and learning.

A Shared Vision for Professional Growth

At the core of this partnership is mutual recognition that people are the future of any industry. We also recognise that knowledge is most powerful when co-created, and innovation happens when diverse minds are brought together with purpose.

We are not just preparing individuals for today's jobs. We are cultivating systems thinkers, adaptive leaders, and innovators capable of navigating and shaping a rapidly evolving world. The DaVinci Institute and ICFF will foster an ecosystem where learning is continuous, credentials are credible, and industry challenges become growth opportunities.

Why This Matters

This partnership represents a deliberate step toward the future we are all trying to build. A future where academic institutions do not sit apart from industry but walk alongside it. Where professional organisations do not merely train but shape the future of entire sectors. And where learning is not a destination but a journey of reinvention.

By aligning on ethical conduct, shared intellectual property, joint reporting, and a robust communication cadence, both organisations have laid the foundation for a principled, impactful, and enduring partnership.

The Da Vinci Institute and ICFF. Reimagining professional development together.
For those who are ready to think differently. Lead courageously. Learn continuously. Welcome to a new era of collaborative partnership.

ICFF & SAAFF MOU

We are proud to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the **Institute of Customs and Freight Forwarding (ICFF)** and the **South African Association of Freight Forwarders (SAAFF)**.

This strategic alignment marks a significant milestone in strengthening industry collaboration and setting unified standards for professional development within the customs and freight forwarding sectors. The partnership will promote skills development, streamline recognition of training programs, and support the advancement of professional designations - ensuring the industry continues to grow through shared expertise, credibility, and innovation.



Get Involved – Join Our Committees!

The ICFF continues to invite dedicated professionals to volunteer for our active committees, helping shape the future of our industry:

- ✓ **Membership, Policies, and Standards Committee** – Upholding industry ethics, conduct, and service excellence.
- ✓ **Research Committee** – Investigating pressing trends, challenges, and opportunities.
- ✓ **Audit and Risk Committee** – Overseeing compliance and financial accountability.
- ✓ **Disciplinary Committee** – Maintaining the highest professional standards across the board.

Interested? Send your CV and a brief application letter explaining how you'd contribute to the committee of your choice.

Become a Member – Join the ICFF Family!

As an ICFF member, you become part of a national network committed to professionalism, growth, and excellence in customs and freight forwarding.

Let's grow together – visit our website or reach out to us directly to find out more.

Warm regards,

The ICFF Team



Please visit our website:

📍 www.icff.co.za

Or Email:

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