

Trade can boost car terminal

The Maputo car terminal does not yet handle a balanced supply of imports and exports

MAPUTO - A rise in global trade could boost the volume of cars being imported through the Maputo terminal to more than 250 000 a year. This could make the port entry a viable alternative to Durban which has a roll-on/roll-off facility that can handle almost 600 000.

BMW spokesman Mr Guy Kilfoil said BMW South Africa had completed a trial run to the Maputo car terminal and was planning a second. "The early indications are that this is a cheaper route to follow due to the lower port charges," said Kilfoil. But the final business case for Maputo will only become clear once all results are analysed.

Grindrod is the majority owner of the Maputo car terminal, while Höegh Autoliners has a 30 per cent stake.

Mr Dave Rennie, an executive director of Grindrod, said the facility was performing reasonably well considering the state of the automotive market.

The terminal opened in November 2007 and has an annual capacity of 52 000 but, when demand materialises, this will be increased to 250 000 cars a year.

Rennie said part of the reason for the low demand for the Maputo car terminal was that the globally depressed market had affected exports.

The Maputo car terminal does not yet handle a balanced supply of imports and exports, but it is currently handling some domestic cargo for Mozambique and some cross-border trade.

The Durban Ro-Ro Terminal is operated by Transnet Port Terminals.

