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South Africa takes another step on path to creating a national shipping line



Sam Chambers • June 2, 2025 3 3,833 1 minute read



More than a quarter of a century since Safmarine was sold to Maersk, South Africa is slowly gearing up to found another national shipping carrier.

Having been on the drawing board since 2017, Pretoria is now finalising plans to create a national shipping line with the department of transport inviting shipping companies to take part in a steering committee to establish a model for the new business, with the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) set to be involved in its creation. The new carrier is likely to be called South African Shipping Company (SASCO).

Crude and chemical tankers as well as containerships, dry bulk vessels and bunker barges are all being eyed by the government, either newbuild or secondhand. All ships would be flagged in South Africa.

Safmarine, and its iconic white hulls, was sold to Maersk in 1999, with the Danish carrier taking the decision five years ago to fold the brand.

#South Africa**Comments**

**Elijah Mbaru**

June 2, 2025 at 7:24 pm

Interesting to learn revival of National line curious to see

[Reply](#)**Erika Reynolds**

June 3, 2025 at 6:00 pm

This decision is based on a law that the ANC is cooking up: a foreign ship may just visit one port in the country to deliver goods. This means that if something has to go to both Durban and Cape Town, it can just say drop the full cargo in Durban and SA has to transport the other portion to Cape Town. Roads and rail are not an option due to their state. Hence we "need" a shipping line.

So another SOE and one that is not necessary under current off-loading arrangements.

[Reply](#)**Paul**

June 3, 2025 at 9:17 pm

Safmarine bit the dust. The seafarer got stuck on Mouille Point. I was there.

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