

Rising through the ranks at the RMI

Julian Pillay recently took on the responsibility of Regulatory Compliance Manager for the RMI, the Regional Manager for KZN and the National Director of the VTA. We find out what it took to rise through the ranks of the RMI.

What is your background? What did you study and how did you get started in this industry?

I have a legal background. I studied for and obtained a Bachelor of Laws Degree (LLB) as well as a Bachelor of Commerce Degree (BComm). My first job was as a legal advisor for a labour consulting company called SEESA and I got started in the motor industry when I joined the RMI as an IR specialist offering legal labour advice to their members.

How long have you been with the RMI?

I have been employed with the RMI since 2011, so 11 years now.

What positions have you held during that time and what does your current portfolio include?

During my 11 years with the RMI, I have held various positions including IR Specialist, Regional Manager – KZN, National Director of NAZA (Number Plate Association of South Africa), Associational Director of the NTA (Natal Towing Association), Regulatory Compliance Manager, National Director of SAVABA and National Director of the VTA.

Currently my portfolio includes Regulatory Compliance manager for the RMI, the Regional Manager for KZN and the National Director of the VTA.

What difference would you like to make in your current position?

In my role as Regulatory Compliance Manager, the issue of safety and compliance is very important to me. The difference I would like to make is to educate members and the public at large on the importance of compliance and the risks involved with non-compliance and thereby getting people to understand the fundamental concept that whilst regulatory compliance is often viewed as a grudge activity it is an absolute necessity for the safe and proper running of any business.

What value do you think your association brings to the public, business owners and the RMI?

My Association, the VTA, plays an integral role in road safety and therefore I believe brings immense value to the public and the motor industry at large. We are responsible for testing and ensuring that the vehicles on our roads are in a roadworthy condition and this hugely impacts road safety and the preservation of life. Vehicles need to be constantly maintained and kept in a roadworthy and safe condition and that has a positive impact on road safety and decreases the number of fatalities from road accidents.

What achievements during your time at the RMI are you most proud of?

I am really proud of my appointment from IR Specialist to a Manager to Associational Director in a relatively short space of time.

What advice would you offer to young people wishing to pursue a career in the motor industry?

My advice would be to simply go for it. The motor industry is one of the most diverse and fascinating industries in our country and with so much variety it would be difficult for a young person not to find their passion in one of the many spheres the industry has to offer.



What does your average working day consist of?

Since I currently look after three portfolios, most of my days are spent sharing my time and resources amongst the three to ensure all get equal attention and are maintained adequately. I prioritise where I need to on a daily basis.

If you could change anything about the RMI, what would it be?

From an internal point of view, the only thing I would change would be to hold more events where our internal staff nationally would have an opportunity to meet and greet their colleagues face to face. As we are a national company we deal with staff from other offices on a daily basis but unfortunately many have not had the pleasure of meeting all their colleagues in person.

What do you think the biggest challenges will be in the next five years?

I believe that the biggest challenge we will face in the next five years would be to ensure that the industry keeps up with emerging trends and technology. Technology is constantly evolving and at a rapid pace and it is important that all role players in the motor industry keep up and evolve along with it.

What hobbies and interests do you have?

I enjoy working out at the gym, watching football and socialising with friends.

How do you like to spend your free time?

As my work life is often very time consuming I like to spend every spare moment I have with my lovely wife and seven-year-old daughter. Whether it involves going out or just enjoying a relaxing day in front of the TV with them, which is how I like to spend my free time.

What are your personal goals for the next five years?

I would like to further my studies at some point and I would like to take up a role in higher management within the organisation. **a**