

# South Africa Adopts Banknote Watch Initiative



At the ATM Industry Association (ATMIA) African chapter Annual Conference held in the beautiful city of Cape Town, South Africa, delegates agreed to adopt the Banknote Watch initiative in support of the use of cash degradation systems.



*Alan Townsend,  
Chair of Banknote Watch and  
Banknote Watch International*

Alan Townsend, Chairman of Banknote Watch UK (BNW) and Banknote Watch International (BNWI), was invited by ATMIA to lead a morning workshop on BNW prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference held in the Southern Sun Cape Sun Hotel, between 25<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

Held at the foot of the magnificent Table Mountain in Cape Town, Alan introduced the concept of BNW to the workshop delegates and outlined the purpose and aims of the UK initiative and other adoptive countries, to test the appetite for setting up a similar campaign in Africa.

Banknote Watch was launched as a United Kingdom national crime prevention initiative in 2001 to help prevent criminals, involved in the theft of cash from cash in transit vehicles, financial institutions, retail outlets and ATMs, profiting from their crimes by raising public awareness of the significance of stained banknotes.

Alan raised the issue that support of a country's central bank was a key element in the success of such a venture. The group was honoured that the South African Reserve Bank was represented at a senior level at the workshop and

gave their strong support to the inception of a Banknote Watch style initiative in South Africa.

The Reserve Bank's support was eagerly welcomed by the banks, cash in transit companies and other interested stakeholders in attendance to the point where a Steering Committee was immediately formed and the first conference call meeting scheduled for July.

It was also reassuring to learn that other African countries were equally disposed towards Banknote Watch being introduced into their regions. The decision was taken to bed down the process in South Africa first and then offer it to northern African neighbours as soon as possible.



*Table Mountain*



*Brian McLean,  
Executive Director Africa*

Brian McLean, ATMIA African Executive Director and BNW SA lead, was in attendance and agreed to visit the UK in September in order that he can attend a BNW meeting and see 'first-hand' the important work conducted by this crime prevention campaign.

During the ATMIA 'Africa ATMs 2008' conference, Alan also provided delegates with a presentation on current ATM crime trends in the UK and Europe when he updated them on present types of attacks, statistics and reduction solutions adopted to prevent such attacks.



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At the conclusion of the meeting, Mike Lee, ATMIA Chief Executive Officer, thanked the speakers and delegates for attending and said he was proud to announce that the South African Reserve Bank had become a member of ATMIA Africa.

For more information please contact [Alan Townsend](#).



*Mike Lee,  
Chief Executive Officer*



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