



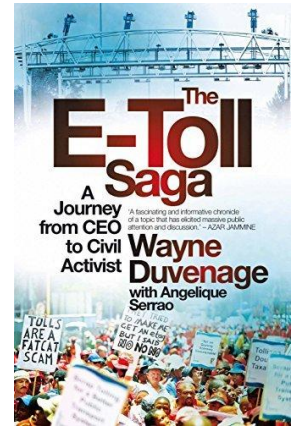
Title The E-Toll Saga "A Journey from CEO to Civil Activist"
Author Wayne Duvenage (with Angelique Serrao)
Published 2015 by Pan Macmillan
Review By Christelle Faul Marais (Founder and Director, Lucidum)



Lessons For
 Directors, Prescribed Officers, Executives
 Governance Officers, Company Secretaries
 Ethics Officers, Risk Managers, Compliance Managers
 Audit Professionals
 Strategy and Sustainability Professionals
 Line Managers

Relevance
 8
 9
 7
 5
 9
 6

Overall Rating
7.3



Review Date August 2026

Synopsis

The E-Toll Saga tells how Wayne Duvenage, then CEO of Avis Rent a Car, walked away from a conventional corporate career to lead the Opposition to Urban Tolling Alliance (OUTA) against the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project's e-tolling scheme. Co-written with journalist Angelique Serrao, Wayne describes how a loose coalition of motorists, business groups and civil society mobilised over R11 million in a matter of weeks to challenge government and the South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) in court, and how he found himself followed and surveilled as the campaign grew. OUTA sprung up from nothing to a highly visible and trusted brand in the not-for-profit space in a matter of a few months. OUTA's legal challenge ultimately failed, e-tolls were implemented, and yet the book argues the greater damage was done to SANRAL and the government: chronic non-payment turned e-tolls into an unworkable, loss-making scheme that was eventually written off entirely. Duvenage draws out what made OUTA effective as a civil organisation and how ordinary citizens can be mobilised against a state decision they consider unjust. For governance and strategy professionals specifically, there is a key takeaway: a project can be legally and procedurally approved and still fail, when the organisation driving it misjudges its key stakeholders' consent and underestimates the cost of sustained reputational and civil resistance. This book does more than describes one man's inspiring personal story; it also contains valuable lessons on what makes a civil organisation effective and how to mobilise an active citizenry to work towards positive transformation in South Africa.

Key Concept:

Social Licence to Operate

The acceptance an entity needs from its stakeholders. Without this 'legitimacy', even a lawfully sanctioned organisation can become practically unworkable.

Quotes:

"I don't want you to panic or anything, Wayne, but we have some feedback from our security division that you are being followed." "These are very obvious tactics by the intelligence authorities. They will want to know your every strategy and who you are talking to." "Please, Wayne, never speak of our children during press interviews." "I knew that if you allow the fear of all the things that can go wrong to get to you, then your opponents win." "If no one had taken up the challenge against apartheid, we would still be living with an evil system." "No matter what happened I would think positively about this challenge and continue to fight."

Practical Tips

- Consider whether your organisation treats public and stakeholder consent as a one-off approval to secure (to promote a vested interest or strategic target), as opposed to something to keep earning throughout the organisation's future as a responsible corporate citizen.
- A permit or court judgment in your favour is not the same as the public accepting the decision. Legitimacy as an outcome of good governance is situated in the honesty, credibility, and integrity of how your organisation engages with its surrounding communities.
- Consider how prepared your organisation is for sustained, well-organised civil opposition to an unpopular decision – reputational risk, mass public non-compliance and litigation can outlast the original business case and turn a legally sound project into a financial write-off.

Think About

- Don't assume that legal authority to proceed is the same as stakeholder buy-in. Where a decision materially affects stakeholders' interests, expect organised resistance if your organisation's consultation is seen as inadequate or untruthful.
- Understand how quickly individuals and informal coalitions can mobilise funding, legal capacity and public support once they perceive a decision as unfair or imposed without consent.
- Consider the long-run cost of pressing ahead with a contested project regardless of stakeholder sentiment. Here, years of non-payment and litigation cost far more, in money and credibility, than the state addressing objections earlier would have resulted in.

Contact Us

www.lucidum.africa

Christelle Marais
 +27 (0) 82 453 7948
christelle@lucidum.africa

Jacques Marais
 +27 (0) 72 398 6913
jacques@lucidum.africa