

Minister Nxesi calls on the construction industry to speed up transformation

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Public Works Minister Honourable TW Nxesi has called on the Built Environment sector to speed up the transformation of the project and construction management professions.

Speaking at the opening of the 2nd Project and Construction Management and Professions Conference at the Gallagher Estate Conference Centre in Midrand Johannesburg on 21 October 2014, Minister Nxesi said the conference needs to ask itself what needs to be done to ensure that public and private sector contribute to the growth, development and transformation of the Project and Construction Management Professions.

“In my policy statement issued after the May elections this year, I listed a number of priorities for the coming five years of the new administration. One of these is for a renewed and sustained programme of action to transform the built environment, the construction and property sectors to address the mounting concern at the slow pace of transformation, so that the ownership, management and the skills profile better reflects the demographics of South Africa,” said the Minister.

Minister Nxesi said transformation must include support for black and female contractors and property practitioners; as well as the production of black and female professionals and artisans in the Built Environment disciplines. “We cannot be complacent that up until now, only 24% of built environment professionals are black and 9% female,” explained the Minister.

The Minister told delegates that he is aware that the charter councils have been frustrated in their work by non-compliance and non-cooperation and that, in general, the pace of transformation is too slow.

Minister Nxesi said, “Government has heard the concerns – which were echoed again recently by the BMF (Black Management Forum). The recent publication by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) of the long-awaited black empowerment codes for small business will assist, but only if there is speedy implementation and compliance.”

He emphasised that in pursuit of the goal of transformation of the built environment, a meeting of all stakeholders in the construction and property sectors was called earlier this year with a view of analysing where we are with transformation; the progress made; as well as the barriers to transformation in order to drive a debate in the sectors around possible solutions.

“The objective is to develop concrete workable plans to be fully consulted throughout the sectors and to put in place the necessary regulatory, as well as monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure that implementation takes place,” said the Minister.