

# Safa's long-overdue debt finally picked up by you

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## Lloyd Gedye

South African taxpayers forked out R16-million to settle the South African Football Association's (Safa's) bad debt for the original construction of Soccer City, according to a leaked affidavit regarding cartels in the construction industry.

This emerges from an account about upgrading Soccer City for the 2010 World Cup, which is at the heart of one of the more interesting revelations included in affidavits that were leaked to the *Mail & Guardian*.

Directors of the construction company Stefanutti Stocks originally handed them to the National Prosecuting Authority and the Hawks in 2011.

The tale involves Safa, the city of Johannesburg, the national department of public works and the con-

struction company Grinaker-LTA.

According to the affidavit of Schalk Ackerman, a director of Stefanutti Stocks and a former managing director of Grinaker-LTA, Safa did not pay the full amount of the contract when the original Soccer City was built. But the understanding was that Grinaker-LTA would be given first option on any future work on the stadium.

"Grinaker-LTA had the pre-emptive right to build Soccer City and it, accordingly, remained anxious to explore the potential opportunities, which this pre-emptive right afforded it," Ackerman stated in his affidavit. "The pre-emptive right came about as the result of an agreement reached between the then Grinaker and Safa that, due to non-payment of part of the contract value during the construction of the original Soccer City (FNB) stadium,

Grinaker would be granted the exclusive right to be the contractor for any future major upgrade.

"As the World Cup process started to unfold and it became known that Soccer City would be upgraded to become a venue, I was tasked by the exco [executive committee] of Grinaker-LTA to pursue this agreement.

"I attempted on various occasions and had a number of meetings with Safa on the issue, but they remained very noncommittal and even avoided me."

When the M&G contacted Safa this week with Ackerman's version of events, it said questions should be directed to Grinaker-LTA.

"It became known that Safa would not be the client for the upgrade of Soccer City but that the City of Johannesburg [CoJ] would," Ackerman stated. "I then redirected