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Media Statement by Minister Patricia of Public Works and Infrastructure's

Saldanha Bay Harbour development project progresses well with greater benefit in store for the community

Today, Tuesday, 6 April 2021, along with the Deputy Minister, Noxolo Kiviet and Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, head of infrastructure investment in the Presidency, I visited one of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure's (DPWI) Small Harbours Repairs and Maintenance projects at the Saldanha Bay Harbour.

The Small Harbours Programme has also been gazetted as a Strategic Integrated Project (SIP) as part of the Infrastructure Investment Plan approved by Cabinet in May 2020.

The 62 gazetted projects within the Infrastructure Investment Plan forms a credible infrastructure pipeline in which government is leading in infrastructure investment to create the crowing in effect by the private sector.

Infrastructure-led economic growth is the most effective and significant way as part of the country's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery plan to grow our economy while at the same time respond to the socio-economic needs of our people.

President Cyril Ramaphosa has described the Infrastructure Investment Plan as the flywheel to economic growth and we must deliver infrastructure at a faster pace to help the construction and related sectors emerge from the devastating economic impact brought on by the COVID 19 pandemic.

The SIPs, such as the Small Harbours Programme have been assessed to ensure that they respond to the following needs:

- Address spatial inclusivity and social cohesion both individually and within the areas that they are being implemented.
- Advance the national development goals - in particular, the 7 key priorities -as well as realise:
 - The creation of decent employment opportunities
 - Skills development, training and education, especially for historically disadvantaged persons and communities, women, youth and persons with disabilities
 - Economic equality and social cohesion
 - Local industrialisation,
 - Small business and cooperatives development,
 - Regional economic integration

Projects such as this one have been gazetted in terms of the Infrastructure Development Act to ensure expedited implementation which in turn also assists in growing investor confidence and bringing the benefits to local communities much quicker.

Work is currently being executed in the following Proclaimed fishing Harbours:

1. Kalk Bay
2. Gordons Bay
3. Hermanus
4. Gansbaai
5. Struisbaai
6. Arniston
7. Lamberts Bay
8. Laaiplek
9. St Helena Bay
10. Saldanha Bay
11. Pepper Bay
12. Hout Bay
13. Stilbaai

The programme identified the following scope of work in each of the 13 PFHs where it was applicable:

Removal of sunken vessels, dredging of the harbour basins, repairs to slipways, shore crane replacements, security Infrastructure upgrades, civil Infrastructure upgrades and electrical infrastructure upgrades.

The Small Harbours Unit applied for additional funding to National Treasury and was allocated R100 million in the current financial year. The total budget for the programme is R500 million with the bulk of the funding coming from DPWI's budget.

To date the programme in its entirety has created a total of 611 jobs and empowered local SMMEs to the value of over R61 million with the bulk of the SMMEs being a Level 1/2 BBBEE Level at all the harbours mentioned above.

The removal of sunken vessels programme has been completed with a total of 29 vessels removed at various harbours, 15 of those vessels were removed at the Hout Bay Harbour.

DPWI grasped at the opportunity at the Hout Bay harbour removal of sunken vessels project which allowed 9 informal divers (many which were former poachers) including 1 woman being trained as Class 3 Commercial Divers to assist with the work for the Hout Bay Harbour removal of sunken vessels project. The removal of sunken vessels project in Hout Bay alone created a total of 110 jobs and empowered 11 SMMEs to the value of approximately R4,5 million.

Dredging has been completed at Struisbaai, Gansbaai, Gordons Bay and Hout Bay. Dredging is in the final stages at Lamberts Bay and St Helena Bay Harbours respectively.

The repairs to slipways and shore crane replacements were packaged as one contract and have been completed at all of the harbours with the exception of Saldanha Bay slipway which is currently underway.

The primary purpose of the programme is to bring the harbours to a greater operational efficiency to assist the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) to carry out their mandate effectively with the enabling infrastructure provided by DPWI.

The programme also aims to boost investor confidence within the harbours and many existing tenants are looking to expand their operations coupled with a high appetite from new investors within the harbour which will assist the DPWI in its drive towards attracting private sector investment and revenue generation for the state. Ultimately the economic spin-offs of the repair and maintenance programme will allow for further job creation and local economic development surrounding the 13 PFHs along the Western Cape coastline.

Today we inspected the work at the Saldanha Bay harbour and engaged the contractors and some of the local workers who have already been working on the project.

The works currently underway at Saldanha Bay Harbour includes work on the slipway infrastructure, civil & land infrastructure as well as electrical infrastructure work.

Around R96 million has been allocated for the much needed infrastructure upgrade work at the Saldanha Bay and Pepper Bay harbours and to date R6.6million has been spent since the start on the three aforementioned projects. Contractors established site between October and December 2020 and all works at the Saldanha Bay Harbour is expected to be completed in March 2022.

The Saldanha Bay harbour project will also see the main contractors appoint SMMEs from the local community in May 2021. The value of work to be contracted to SMMEs under all 3 projects is approximately R23 million.

This project is a prime example of the importance of infrastructure development to spur on economic activity and much needed job creation for our citizens.

The development of harbours will allow rural coastal communities access to the sea as well as an opportunity to grow the oceans economy in turn creating jobs and growing these coastal towns that were deprived of proper marine infrastructure for many years.

A summary of the work currently underway at the Saldanha Bay harbour includes:

- Under land infrastructure (electrical) work package the contractor will be conducting new installations and will also do electrical connection installations in the security house coupled with the automated access control into the harbour.
- Within the Slipway Infrastructure package the contractor will be dismantling the main cradle and the motor in the winch room. The contractor will also be doing sandblasting steel works and carrying out paint works of the side slips.
- In the Land Infrastructure (civil) package, the contractor will be carrying out cleaning of the existing waterlines as well as removing the existing asbestos buildings and roofs. Upgrades to the existing the storage shed will also form part of the scope of works.

Work is also due to start in the coming months at the Pepper Bay harbour, similar to Saldanha Bay.

Benefits of the infrastructure upgrades:

- The bulk of the work and budget has been allocated to the slip way infrastructure which will bring a great benefit to the local economy as the increase of the Slipway capacity from 600 tonnes to 1200 tonnes will attract business to the harbour and ensure that the commercial use of the harbour is optimized while also ensuring higher revenue.
- The upgraded electrical infrastructure will ensure prolonged working hours with adequate lighting for all economic activities in the harbour throughout all seasons.

- The efficiency and functionality level of the harbour will be increased as a result of the upgraded civil and electrical infrastructure upgrades.
- Safety and security will be upgraded thus increasing confidence to attract private sector investment within the Harbours.
- The repair of internal roads will ensure the safe conveyance of stock within the harbour.

Local job creation benefits:

So far 34 local residents have been appointed to work on various aspects of the project at Saldanha Bay.

The project is expected to create an additional 100 jobs over the course of the project.

Plant equipment, small equipment and building materials will also be sourced locally.

A programme steering committee with representatives from the local community has also been set up to ensure that all stakeholders are involved and adequately consulted and members include the Paramount Chief of the Guriqua tribe of the Khoisan Community, four Saldanha Bay community representatives, ward committee members and three community liaison officers from the local area.

This project is already bringing immense benefit in terms of job creation but once completed it will spur on investment and greater economic activity, not only to contribute to the livelihoods of the local community but also the broader community which benefits from the fishing value chain and other activities at the harbour.

This is one of the very successful projects for the DPWI and we will continue to work hard on all fronts to ensure delivery is not stifled or delayed and we ask communities to work hand in hand with us so that we can ensure delivery of critical infrastructure that will benefit the broader community and in turn grow the oceans economy.

ENDS

Contact:

Zara Nicholson

Media Liaison Office to Minister Patricia de Lille

Mobile: 079 416 5996

Email: zara.nicholson@dpw.gov.za