



public works
& infrastructure

Department:
Public Works and Infrastructure
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Enquiries: Thami Mchunu 079 519 6997

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MEDIA STATEMENT

Department of Public Works and Infrastructure set to Accelerate the Throughput of Artisans

Department of Public Works and Infrastructure is working to expand the pool of professional artisans in the country. Through collaboration with tertiary institutions and industries, the Department is aiming for rapid rollout of artisans by re-establishing the Departmental Workshops across the country.

Speaking at the 4th Annual Construction Business and Project Management (CBPM) conference in Cape Town, Deputy-Minister Sihle Zikalala confirmed that the department would launch a Centre of Excellence at the University of Cape Town. Such Centres of Excellence have already been set up at the University of Johannesburg, University of Witwatersrand, and Walter Sisulu University.

“The work that the institutions are doing is useful in ensuring that there is a coordinated approach and a seamless contribution to the body of knowledge which finds expression in practical implementation. We need greater collaboration between government, industry and other partners to accelerate delivery and scale of innovation,” said Deputy Minister Zikalala.

The DM emphasised the importance of collaborations and coordination of various stakeholders in facing up to the challenges relating to infrastructure delivery, housing provision, procurement, sustainability and technological advancement. He said that through fostering collaboration, driving innovation and promoting the exchange of insights, centres of excellence will advance transformation in the built environment.

Mr Zikalala also reminded the conference that government has set itself a target of developing 30,000 artisans per year as announced by the President during 2023 State of the Nation Address. The Department of Public Works

and Infrastructure is one of the lead departments in this endeavour. The Department has already launched the Artisan Development Programme. It focuses on developing construction trades such as bricklaying, welding, carpentry, painting, mechanical, fitter and turner, electrical, plumbing and boiler making.

The Deputy Minister called on the private sector, academia and SETAs to play a greater role to ensure South Africa trains enough artisans as the current throughput is way too small at only 15 000 graduates per year from Technical colleges

“Let us construct beyond buildings and roads, but hope, opportunity and lasting progress for generations to come,” he concluded.

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Issued by: Thamsanqa Mchunu

Director: Media Relations

079 519 6997