



# public works

Department:  
Public Works  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS, MRS HENDRIETTA BOGOPANE-ZULU, MP,  
ADDRESSES THE MEDIA ON THE OCCASION TO ANNOUNCE THE START OF THE ANNUAL  
NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION WEEK**

**DATE: Wednesday, July 08, 2009**

**VENUE: Ministerial Boardroom, Pretoria Central, Tshwane**

The National Department of Public Works initiated the National Construction Week as a nation-wide awareness campaign to promote the image and profile of the construction industry.

This was to show the construction industry as a transforming sector capable of meeting and realizing transformation goals of the state as detailed in the RDP literature, the White Paper on the transformation of the industry as well as the scorecard indicators contained in the Construction Industry Transformation Charter.

Since the mid 1990s, government had identified the construction industry as a strategic partner pivotal to the noble goals of reconstruction and development. The capacity of the industry to deliver competently, its ability to transform and its contribution to the growth and development agenda of the country became the yardstick with which we agreed to measure the success of our vision. Today milestones such as the performance of the industry and the success of the initiatives such as the National Construction Week, gives us assurance that we are on track and the vision of the 1990s is translating into a reality.

Government job creation and poverty alleviation programmes such as the Expanded Public Works Programme, the Rural Development and the Urban Renewal strategies are to a larger extent dependent on the viable construction and built environment industries for their achievement and impact. It is for this reason that as government we remain committed to cooperate with the industry, and entrust the success of the development of our programmes not least the multi billion rand public sector infrastructure drive, to the world class industry that remains key to growth, development and transformation.

Water reticulation, sanitation, rural road network, low cost housing, and the provision of other basic but essential public infrastructure such as schools, clinics, and the Thusong multi-purpose are all the products of a competent industry and remain key focus areas of government as espoused in the ten (10) priority points contained in the State of the Nation Address by President Jacob Zuma.

This year's National Construction Week is to be held from **Sunday 26 July to Sunday 02 August 2009** under the theme **"The construction industry -laying a concrete foundation in the era of**

**renewal - with the sub-theme, the role of the construction industry in economic growth, social development and transformation”**

We believe that the theme recognizes the significance of the industry in job creation, job retention, and heightened contribution to the Gross Domestic Product amidst the gloomy global economic outlook.

The theme also pays tribute to the role of the sector in social development as the construction industry is integral to the public sector’s more than R787 billion infrastructure roll-out programme and parallel to the national infrastructure maintenance strategy - to alleviate poverty by improving service delivery, employing labour-intensive methodologies to create job opportunities while stimulating emerging enterprises.

Among other events we have lined up to celebrate the role of the construction industry, as a Department we have selected certain projects to illustrate the necessity of the sector. As part of the celebration of the Mandela Day, the Department under the aegis of its Corporate Social Responsibility function has identified the renovations of two facilities for the disabled learners in and around Gauteng. The Department will also focus on certain Heritage projects.

To kick-start the actual Week itself, we have chosen to visit the two construction projects at Diepsloot and Kagiso in the West Rand. The Police Station and the Magistrate Court in Diepsloot and Kagiso respectively are symbolic of the government’s conscious decision to improve the asset base of the former poor communities by investing multi-million rand infrastructure projects to alleviate poverty, improve service delivery and stimulate local economic development. Both projects are undertaken by the emerging contractor who is a beneficiary of the DPW’s Contractor Incubator Programme and they employ the locals and the youth under the National Youth Service initiative, using labour intensive guidelines of the Expanded Public Works Programme.

This brings the themes of the National Construction Week a full circle, considering that over the past few years, the Department of Public Works and the Construction Industry have focused their NCW programme on youth, women and emerging contractors. This year we look at the role of the industry in our every day lives.

This year, the overarching theme will be expounded through the following sub-themes:

- Skills generation, career advancements, gender roles, empowerment (Human Resources Transformation)
- Infrastructure development, business development, job creation and modernization (Economic Growth)
- Creating of human settlements, aesthetics, stability, safety and security (Social Development)
- Urban and Rural renewal efforts (Social Development)
- Heritage, Prestige, Cultural, (Social Development).

In terms of scope of application, the NCW as per previous campaigns will be nation-wide including the participation of government departments at all levels of government (national, provincial and local), state-owned enterprises, the private sector and the civil society at large. The long term goal of the campaign is to endear the industry to the millions of South Africans, from all walks of life; for people to see the industry as relevant, necessary, important and essential.

Our objectives with **NCW for 2009** include:

- i. highlight and recognize the role of the construction industry in economic growth, social development, cultural representation and human resources development;
- ii. hail the construction industry as one of the beacons of light (and hope) amidst global economic gloom;
- iii. celebrate the thought and foresight of the founding parents of the construction development and transformation movement of the 1990s in South Africa.
- iv. position the construction industry as vital to the everyday living of individuals and communities and career destination of choice to youth, through, among others:
  - a. 2014 Youth Foundation Programme; and
  - b. NDPW Bursary Foundation Scheme.

From the public sector side, the provincial departments of Public Works, the State-Owned Enterprises and other government infrastructure departments will be joined by the Public Entities such as the Independent Development Trust, the Council for the Built Environment and the AgrEment Board of South Africa as they showcase their distinct technical areas in celebration of the National Construction Week

We want to take this opportunity through our media to call on the civil society to take a moment to reflect on the importance of this sector. We also urge everyone to visit our web page to register whatever event or activity they might wish to celebrate during that week and as political principals we are committed to avail ourselves to honour invitations in celebration of this industry that is undoubtedly a national asset.