

## New Bill gets support from builders

The Master Builders Association of the Western Cape (MBAWC) has welcomed the Infrastructure Development Bill that was recently introduced to Parliament by Minister of Economic Development, Ebrahim Patel. The Bill is intended to strengthen the capacity of government to implement the roll-out of infrastructure.



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"We hope that, should the Bill be adopted, it will result in more work for our members, greater opportunities for future employment, a sustainable industry, less red tape and the elimination of nepotism and corruption," MBAWC executive director, Rob Johnson, says.

The Bill provides for the designation of strategic integrated projects (SIPs) through the National Infrastructure Plan. To date the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission has identified 18 SIPs which bring together hundreds of separate construction projects that include improving schools across the country, opening the northern mining belt or developing the south eastern coastal regions.

### Producing skills

The Bill also provides for a planning framework for infrastructure, with a long-range plan. This allows universities and FET colleges to tool up to produce the skills that will be needed for the next 20 to 30 years, and gives investors the certainty they need to commit to long term investment in the domestic economy.

Furthermore the Bill sets time frames for the approval of regulatory decisions affecting the implementation of infrastructure projects. Instead of sequential approval processes, it provides for processes to run concurrently wherever possible, ensuring that the state works to a common deadline.

### Mechanisms to stop corruption

It also sets out processes of coordination that require regulators and relevant departments to work closely together through steering committees for each SIP that will coordinate efforts to speed up the implementation of infrastructure construction and completion. There are clear mechanisms to avoid conflicts of interest between decision makers and the underlying projects, as part of government's anti-corruption drive.

"We fully support the Minister's sentiments and hope to see the provisions set out in the Bill come to fruition. We believe that not only will the Bill be of benefit to our current and future members, but to the industry as a whole and to the building of the Western Cape and furthering its economy," concludes Johnson.