

SA engineers are losing confidence in promised infrastructure spend

BDLive reports that a survey conducted by financial services provider PPS showed that South African engineers are losing confidence that the government will deliver on its proposed multi-trillion-rand infrastructure spend.

After surveying nearly 200 engineers, PPS says overall confidence in the sector dropped 9 percentage points to 39% in the third quarter, well below the 50% halfway mark. Low confidence, and the dramatic fall-off in the country's cement sales since the global economic crisis hit, may have critical implications for the country's beleaguered construction industry.

Construction group Murray & Roberts said last month that not a single tender had recently been issued for a main infrastructure project. The National Planning Commission recently said public sector spending had fallen 30% since 2008. South African Institution of Mechanical Engineering CEO Vaughan Rimbault said politicians and public servants could not implement South Africa's infrastructure plan, which needed the input of professional engineers.

Neville Gurry, executive director of the South African Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors, told BDLive the Construction Industry Development Board, which operated under the Department of Public Works, "had no teeth", adding "their regulations are great, but they have no power to enforce them."

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