

Petro.t.ex to address SA's challenges

Africa's petroleum and petrochemical industry faces many challenges, including climate change issues, fuel security and the falling oil price. These will be addressed at the forthcoming Petro.t.ex Conference and Exhibition, a major mid- and downstream event focused on showcasing products, services and business opportunities across sub-Saharan Africa. Petro.t.ex Africa is a component of the multi-sector South African Industry & Technology Fair, and takes place at Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand from 20-22 May 2015.



"The key focus of the conference is the updates for the liquid fuel and downstream industry," said organiser Bette McNaughton. "It will also cover numerous current topics such as the overall status of the liquid fuel industry in South Africa, climate change, alternative fuels, and the revised Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Codes for the retail fuel market."

About 95% of South Africa's crude oil demand is met by imports from the Middle East and Africa; however, with estimated reserves of over nine billion barrels of oil beneath South Africa's coastlines, many drilling and business opportunities exist, which could also give the country some small measure of independence from imports.

Opening keynote address

Avhaphani Tshifularo, Executive Director of the South African Petroleum Industry Association (SAPIA), describes the current state of the oil industry as 'resilient', but with a constant need to adapt. He will deliver the opening keynote address on The Overall Status of the Liquid Fuel Industry in South Africa.

"Oil is a strategic asset and key to South Africa's growth; the rapid fall of the oil price - from over \$100 to just over \$50 per barrel - does affect the industry, but we need to be flexible to continue to function. The Petro.t.ex conference will play a major role in informing the industry about these changes and provide a vital platform for discussion," said Tshifularo.

Implications of the Revised BBBEE Codes for the retail market will be presented by Bakang Moeketsi, CEO of the South African Petroleum Retailers' Association (SAPRA). "The promotion of broad-based black economic empowerment is a primary objective, as is the need to achieve a globally competitive mining industry that benefits all South Africans," said

Moeketsi. "The revised codes combine management control and employment equity into one element, as does preferential procurement and enterprise development, thus reducing scorecard elements from seven to five."

The hijacking of tankers

Dr Rod Crompton from the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) will discuss fuel security and the hijacking of tankers. Truck hijackings have increased by 10% to over 1200 incidents last year, costing the road freight industry about R1.2 billion.

The effects of the falling oil price on the economy will be discussed by Carmen Nel, an economist at Rand Merchant Bank.

Another important topic is alternative fuels, presented by Jason Gifford from the steering committee of the Southern African Biogas Industry Association. Alternative fuels include biodiesel, electric vehicles, compressed natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas and hydrogen.

Other topics for discussion include:

- Clean fuels and maximising sustainable development opportunities, presented by Professor Jim Petrie, Director of Energy and Green Economy from the Department of Economic Development and Tourism of the Western Cape Government;
- Climate Change, presented by Deborah Ramalope, Chief Director: Climate Change Mitigation; and
- The role of independent storage suppliers, presented by Muziwandile Mseleku, CEO of Burgan.

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