

Sacci discusses challenges with government

It is crucial for South Africa's economic development that the country adequately maintains and expands its transport and logistics network to support economic growth, South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Sacci) chief executive Neren Rau, said on Tuesday.

Sacci hosted a business dialogue breakfast on Tuesday morning with the Department of Transport, led by the director general, George Mahlalela.

"Many challenges in the transport sector exist and unique solutions are required to address bottlenecks and other impediments. Programmes outlined by the minister aimed at achieving these goals include the national rollout of road asset management systems across all road authorities by 2014.

"The department also acknowledged that in order to raise the estimated R140bn required for the maintenance and upgrading of South African road network, the participation of the private sector was essential," Rau said.

In addition, the director general also discussed the passenger railway modernisation process, the Moloto Rail Corridor, the coal haulage roads system in Mpumalanga in partnership with the private sector, and the Durban-Gauteng Freight corridor.

Sacci members used the opportunity to table a number of issues in a frank discussion with the team from the Department of Transport, Sacci said in a statement.

"Topics included the participation of the department in the SADC region, financing of infrastructure development, especially relating to the Gauteng freeway improvement project, the impact of the proposed customs bill on the inland ports system, the lack of capacity on the rail corridors and Prasa's tender process," it said.

The Sacci annual convention on 4 and 5 October is the pinnacle event in this regard where Sacci, in the domestic session, will present a paper on the principles needed to guide infrastructure development in order to ensure private sector participation, it added.