

ASAQS in talks with government for greater support on large projects

In order to get stalled infrastructure development projects back on track, SA's quantity surveyors are aiming to play a more crucial role.



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“Municipal managers and classically trained accountants are currently expected to deliver complex projects,” says Larry Feinberg, executive director of the Association of South African Quantity Surveyors (ASAQS). “Not only is this expectation unfair on them without them having received the proper training, it’s also part of the reason why some large infrastructure development projects have been suspended or have ground to a halt.”

Creating supportive solutions

According to Feinberg, the ASAQS has been in talks with senior government officials and other industry bodies to create solutions that can assist with training and professional support to those charged with delivering these projects.

“Training on the use of standards documentation is but one of the areas where professional quantity surveyors can be of assistance,” explains Feinberg. “Deploying professional quantity surveyors to upper echelons in government is one of the mechanisms that can be used to good effect to educate officials on good governance in procurement, bidding and tendering processes, and the complex process of managing the construction process from a cost control point of view.”

Sharing knowledge and expertise

The “send me” call made by President Cyril Ramaphosa during his State of the Nation address earlier this year has resonated with many and sparked collaborative action across many economic sectors. Feinberg hopes that this call can be used as a basis for professionals in the built environment to bridge focus areas that traditionally operate in and create solutions that serve the best interest of the public and the fiscus.

“Our interactions on several discussion platforms are focused on how to bridge the gap between what 'thuma mina' means for the public sector and how our members can assist,” says Feinberg. The ASAQS has consistently promoted the role of a quantity surveyor as one that plays a significant part in curbing instances of fraud and wasteful expenditure.

“The time for behaviours that – intentionally or unintentionally – resist collaboration is over,” says Feinberg. “It is now time for all of us to share knowledge and expertise, so we can collectively respond to the president’s call.”

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