

## Dti engages business on MCEP

JOHANNESBURG: The Department of Trade and Industry (dti) on Tuesday, 22 May 2012, engaged stakeholders on the newly launched Manufacturing Competitiveness Enhancement Programme (MCEP). The MCEP, launched last week by Minister Rob Davies, is a new incentive and a key component of the Industrial Policy Action Plan3.



The programme provides enhanced manufacturing support aimed at encouraging manufacturers to upgrade their production facilities in a manner that sustains employment and maximises value-addition in the short to medium term.

The MCEP is to be taken to stakeholders across the country, with Gauteng having kicked-off the first workshop of the MCEP on Tuesday.

Director for product development at the department, Mlungisi Mthimunye, said the MCEP was designed to help the industry advance.

"This programme is designed to assist industry so it is quite appreciated to see that industry is here today. The success of this programme would be for us to realise its objectives but we can only do that if industry takes up this benefit that we're putting forth," he said.

The R5.75 billion programme will run over a period of 6 years.

The programme expands on the distressed facility to SMEs offered by the Industrial Development Corporation. Companies can apply for incentives from June 4, when the department's online application system will be launched.

In the meantime, business can access draft application forms on the department's website.

Applicants must submit a complete application at least 60 calendar days prior to the commencement of commercial use of the activities being applied for.

According to Mthimunye, the department was looking at making the programme tax free by next year.

"The grant, as it is today, is taxable. However, we are involved in a process with SARS [South African Revenue Service] to try to have it as a non-taxable programme. By next March, it will be a non-taxable programme," said Mthimunye.

The workshops will be carried out across the country, concluding on 7 June 2012.

