

Press release from Jan de Beer, cell 082 456 3677:

Government's Plan To Uplift Municipal Management Skills Welcomed

The Association of SA Quantity Surveyors (ASAQS) has welcomed the recent announcement by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, David van Rooyen, that his department will now instruct and also assist municipalities to appoint suitably skilled individuals for senior management posts.

In its announcement, the Ministry conceded that the appointment of managers lacking in appropriate skills was severely hampering the effective operations of local authorities. The new initiative announced by Minister van Rooyen forms part of his department's Back to Basics programme for municipalities which incorporates following concept advertising for vacant posts, issuing proper description of the posts' duties, and also drawing up the correct letters of appointment. The filling of senior municipal management posts would in future be controlled and monitored by the Ministry right from the advertising through to the appointment phases to ensure that municipalities filled vacant posts with suitably qualified personnel.

Commenting on the announcement, Larry Feinberg, executive director of ASAQS, said the association had for long contended that poor management of South Africa's tender process was a major factor for the increasing complaints regarding the abilities of contractors and professional service providers (PSPs) employed on local and national government projects to deliver quality buildings on time - and within budget.

"The lack of skills have resulted in the appointment of unsuitable contractors when awarding municipal tenders. This affects all members of the building industry involved in a failed project. Decision-makers at municipalities should have the acumen and legal standing to take more factors than price and preference into consideration when awarding municipal tenders. It is to be hoped that the newly published Standard for Infrastructure Procurement and Delivery Management published by Treasury will also improve matters when it comes into effect on July 1 this year," Feinberg stated.

Dr Stephan Ramabodu, president of ASAQS, said that ASAQS hoped that the central government's mission to employ more skilled civic management would now enable municipalities to roll out more infrastructural building projects which had been budgeted for but - ostensibly through municipal and provincial government skills inadequacy - had been frustratingly delayed.

"It is also to be hoped that the government's Back to Basic programme, in its quest to boost municipal service delivery and contain expenditure, will now also ensure that cost-controlling and accredited quantity surveyors are included in the professional team for local government building projects. Municipalities have in the past increasingly regarded the inclusion of a QS in a project's professional

team as a dispensable, additional cost, overlooking the value-engineering role a QS can play in municipal projects," he added.

Bert van den Heever, immediate past president of ASAQs, said by employing properly qualified personnel, the deteriorating standard of municipal tenders in general would hopefully be alleviated. "Poorly prepared tender documentation has become a major problem in the construction industry with tenders put out by municipalities alarmingly low in standard. This is threatening the survival of emerging as well as established contractors, and leads to unnecessary wastage of time and resources which eventually result in escalating building costs," van den Heever stated.

He said many tenders often failed to provide a clear description and quantified scope of the work involved, as well as the terms and conditions under which such work should be undertaken. "Quite often tenderers have had to pay substantial amounts to obtain tender documents, only to discover that the documents they bought were worthless. Poor specification writing, dismal Bills of Materials, inadequate drawings and other supporting documents are increasingly the norm in tender packages drawn up by some local governments and parastatals. To exacerbate matters, there have also been many reported cases of vested interests and corruption in the awarding of tenders. One can only hope that the government's Back to Basics programme will lead to a major improvement in total municipal management skills. It is in the national interest," van den Heever said.

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Caption: "asaqs - stephan ramabodu":

Hopefully long-delayed infrastructural building projects would now be rolled out by competent municipal managers, Dr Stephan Ramabodu, president of ASAQs, has stated.

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Caption: "asaqs - larry feinberg 2016":

Poor municipal management of the tender process has for long been severely hampering the building industry, ASAQs executive director, Larry Feinberg, contends.

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