

## **ATI acquires De Beers' training campus in Kimberley, boosting artisan skills in Northern Cape**

JOHANNESBURG – Technical training provider the Artisan Training Institute (ATI) has announced the acquisition of the De Beers' technical training campus (DBTTC) in a transaction that will bring new economic activity to the Northern Cape province.

ATI, one of the leading training institutions in South Africa, is strongly positioned to develop the DBTTC, ensuring an increase in the throughput of trained artisans in the region, and the future operation of the facility.

Like most emerging markets, South Africa is under pressure to train more artisans. Registered engineering apprentices have decreased radically over the past five years, from approximately 30,000 in 2015/16 to approximately 10,000 youth in training currently.

Sean Jones, managing director of ATI, says the acquisition of the new campus will play a critical role in reigniting opportunities for youth in the Northern Cape.

"We are delighted that the De Beers group has put its trust in ATI to continue the excellent track record of producing skilled artisans at an internationally accredited level at the campus," says Jones.

ATI has been working closely with government and private sector partners to expand its technical training offering to create new pathways for youth to enter the job market. Subsequently, the institute has outlined plans to implement youth development initiatives as part of the transaction.

ATI has successfully piloted a mid-level skills programme for Harambee, a leading non-profit organisation focusing on creating livelihoods for youth. The Installation Repair and Maintenance (IRM) programme bridges the gap between engineering theory and work readiness. ATI plans to roll out the IRM programme at the Kimberley facility.

"This approach creates new revenue streams for the centre, making use of some of the vacant workshops and bolstering its corporate social responsibility commitments within the Northern Cape," says Jones. 2

Both the De Beers facility and ATI have a long history and reputation for delivering quality technical training in South Africa making the transaction a logical fit. The two operations service similar customers in mainly the mining, engineering, transport, construction, government, and agricultural industries.

“The De Beers campus and ATI have helped create meaningful jobs in a country besieged by extreme youth unemployment,” says Jones. “The transaction ensures that this legacy will continue”.

The De Beers training facility was built in 1972 and officially opened in 1973. An estimated 5,000 artisans, mostly from the Northern Cape, but also from other parts of South Africa and neighbouring countries have qualified as artisans since the opening of the centre in 1973.

The 34 hectare campus area comprises an electrical, fitting and turning, plater, diesel mechanic and control and instrumentation section that can accommodated up to 240 learners. The facility can also provide student lodging in a 1.9 hectare accommodation section.

Since 2008, ATI has qualified more than 17,000 artisans in various engineering trades, including electrical, mechanical, boilermaking, fitting and turning, motor-diesel, instrumentation and others.

ATI originated from the Alpha School of Technical Skills, a subsidiary of the Anglo-Alpha Group in 1982. It was privatised in 1998 and renamed Ikhaya Fundisa Techniskills Academy. In 2008 the current shareholders, Mandisa Sowazi (66%) and Sean Jones (34%) acquired the business which was rebranded as the Artisan Training Institute in 2012.

ATI's vision is to be the leading technical training provider for budding artisans in the engineering sector, broadening its services across South Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

“The acquisition of the De Beers technical training campus brings us another leap forward in fulfilling our promise of providing quality technical skills development at an international standard across South Africa. It adds substantially to our current training capacity that includes a campus in Gauteng and Kwa-Zulu Natal,” says Jones.

ATI's main campus in Gauteng offers 15 engineering trades with a total capacity for 350 learners. It can accommodate 200 learners with on-site lodging. The campus in KwaZulu-Natal trains across five different trades and offers accommodation to 36 learners. 3

ATI is the largest self-funded private engineering training provider in South Africa. Its market share is estimated at 20-25% of engineering trade-related training in South Africa.

The sale process was effective 1 June 2019. "The De Beers training campus holds boundless opportunities for young people in a region of South Africa that requires a boost in skills development and training. ATI is committed to run and grow the campus to the long-term benefit of the Northern Cape economy," Jones concludes.

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**QUICK FACTS**

- The training facility is an accredited provider with the following institutions: - QCTO and National Artisan Moderating Body (NAMB) – Artisan Skills Development Provider and Trade Testing Centre for the country
- South African Marine Safety Authority – Engineering Marine Cadet workshop programme
- ISO 9001/2015 certification – Quality assurance
- The following SETAs are utilised: Mining Qualification Authority (MQA), Energy and Water Sector Education and Training Authority (EWSETA), the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) and the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA)
- The training facility comprises workshops that provide training in the following trades: Auto Electrician, Diesel Mechanic, Electrician, Fitter and Turner, Fitter including Machining, Instrument Mechanician, Millwright, Plater Welder/Boilermaker
- The training centre comprises the following technical sections accommodating 240 learners in total: - Electrical section (60)
- Fitting and Turning section (45)
- Plater section (45)
- Diesel Mechanic section (45)
- Control and Instrumentation section (45)
- Total Campus area: 34 ha
- Total Single Quarters area: 1.9 ha