



MEDIA RELEASE: Immediate

SANRAL awards contract for R61 upgrade from Baziya to Mthatha Airport project

Eastern Cape, 02 July 2021: The R237-million contract to upgrade the R61 from Baziya to Mthatha Airport has been awarded, the South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) has announced.

The National Route R61, Section 7 from Baziya to Mthatha Airport, phase 1, was retendered late last year, after the initial contract was terminated in August 2019 due to non-performance by the previous contractor. The contract for the remaining work has been awarded to H & I Construction.

H & I Construction, previously known as Triamic Construction, has more than 20 years of experience completing numerous major roads and bridge infrastructure projects for SANRAL in various provinces.

The 18-month contract includes a three-month mobilisation period. During the mobilisation period, the contractor will establish a site office, undertake a skills audit of the targeted enterprises in the project area, identify work packages for sub-contracting opportunities, and recruit local labour. The contractor will start construction of the remaining work in September 2021, and it is expected to be completed in November 2022.

The 27km road is in the King Sabatha Dalindyebo Local Municipality, which is in the OR Tambo District Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province.

It is anticipated that between 150 and 200 jobs will be created for skilled and semi-skilled workers during the construction phase. Skills development training will also be offered.

“An upgrade of the R61 is required as there has been a substantial increase in traffic volumes over the past few years,” said Mbulelo Peterson, SANRAL Southern Region Manager.

The work will take place within the existing road reserve.

“Once completed, access to the Airport and Mthatha will be improved due to the wider road prism and surfaced shoulders. In addition, numerous intersections will be upgraded to improve traffic flow and ease turning movements into and out of the R61,” said Peterson.

The project’s scope of work will include widening the existing road cross-section with surfaced shoulders and additional auxiliary lanes to facilitate traffic flow.

All the major structures are approximately 95% completed and require finishing-off around these structures.

Some access roads leading to the R61 will be re-gravelled or surfaced. “These access roads will be improved to ensure safer access points as well as to reduce the number of access points to the R61,” said Peterson.

In addition, SANRAL plans to provide a dual carriageway between Mthatha Airport and Mthatha CBD to increase mobility and service levels in this area.

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Issued by FTI Consulting on behalf of the South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL). For editorial content or additional information contact: pressoffice@nra.co.za