



## **OVER R3BN SET ASIDE ON SANRAL PROJECTS TO BENEFIT EASTERN CAPE SMMEs**

*Eastern Cape, 9 December 2021* – The South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) has set aside over R3 billion to benefit local small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) in Mpondoland in the Eastern Cape Province.

Addressing SMMEs in Port St Johns, Eastern Cape, Mbulelo Songqishe, SANRAL's project manager on the N2 Wild Coast Road Project, said about 8 000 direct jobs and up to 20 000 indirect jobs will be created through this massive injection in the region.

"On the Msikaba Bridge project alone, which is one of our mega projects in the region, R243 million has already been paid to 103 local suppliers, service providers, sub-contractors and other targeted enterprises from surrounding municipalities. About R38.5 million has already been paid on wages to over 300 local community members employed on the projects," he said.

The Msikaba Bridge project is expected to be completed in February 2024 and targeted goals on employing different sector groups have already been exceeded.

"We are proud to say that we have exceeded our targets on the Msikaba bridge project. The targeted labour for youth is 30%, but we have exceeded this by employing 87.4%. Other targets achieved were 38.4% for women which surpassed the 30% target," added Songqishe.

Four current tenders have already been advertised by SANRAL in the region. These include the rehabilitation of the Ingquza Hill Memorial Road, which was advertised in October this year; upgrading of roads in Ntlavukazi Village, which was advertised in November; upgrading of the DR8004 road from the R61 national road to Bambisana Hospital Road, which was advertised in November; as well as the upgrading of the R61 national road to Mbongweni Village.

Community development projects have also been initiated. "Our community development projects go way beyond bitumen and asphalt. They leave our communities with a legacy of road safety improvements, as well as economic opportunities that will benefit communities from project inception," said Nwabisa Gxumisa, SANRAL's Wild Coast district manager.

New community development projects that are in design phase are an access road leading to the Goso Forest Clinic, access road and pedestrian facilities in Mbotyi and

Ntafufu Service Road. Construction on the DR08120 and DR08121 road from Bizana to Mbongweni will start in the new year.

SANRAL will also implement community legacy projects associated with each project. One prime example is the upgrading of provincial roads in the region to surfaced roads, on several villages along the route which will form part of the O.R. Tambo Heritage route.

“These projects are over and above the roads, training, and community development components of each projects. Some of these legacies will include simple and yet symbolic gestures such as leaving behind buildings built or rehabilitated for use by the contractor or engineering site staff during construction for use as community halls, business hubs, and tourist accommodation,” added Gxumisa.

The tender for the anticipated R3.5 billion Mtentu Bridge project has closed and is currently in adjudication. A contractor is expected in the new year.

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