STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, MR JOE MASWANGANYI, ON THE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MOLOTO DEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR

The R573 Moloto Road is one of South Africa’s busiest and essential economic routes connecting three provinces of Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. Over the five-year period of the upgrade an estimated total of 12 500 jobs will be created in these provinces and the road will not be tolled.

On average the road is used by approximately 50 000 commuters daily; including buses, taxis and heavy trucks.

The Mpumalanga and Limpopo Moloto Road sections were incorporated into the South African National Roads Agency SOC Ltd (SANRAL) network on the 3rd August 2015. Since the incorporation, SANRAL has started with a wide range of interventions in terms of road maintenance that include:

- the repair of dangerous wash-aways in the Moteti area in Limpopo;
- opening and clearing of storm water pipes/culverts;
- repairing gravel shoulders;
- repairing potholes and other pavement failures;
- cutting back vegetation along the road;
- clearing litter and debris from the road reserve and,
- repairing road signs and markings.

Minister Maswanganyi said that the Moloto Road project forms part of the programme coordinated by the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission, which identified 18 strategic infrastructure projects (SIPs) being undertaken to rejuvenate the South African economy.

“It is part of SIP1, which is designed to unlock the northern mineral belt with the Waterberg as the catalyst. It will include the development of a logistics corridor to connect Gauteng with Mpumalanga and Limpopo, said Minister Maswanganyi.

The Minister said that apart from boosting the Waterberg mineral belt, SIP1 will also boost local economies along the Moloto Road - notably the Sekhukhune District in...
Limpopo and Dr J S Moroka and Thembisile Hani municipalities in the Nkangala District Municipality in Mpumalanga.

On the road construction side, SANRAL has advertised and appointed two construction companies on the Limpopo and Mpumalanga sides of the road construction, whilst the road Gauteng province is yet to appoint a company with SANRAL as an implementing agency.

On the current construction contracts, 20% of the contract value is set aside for SMMEs of CIDB grading 1 to 6. These SMMEs will be procured during the construction period.

The criteria for a targeted enterprises includes:

- A CIDB registered contractor with a grading designation from 1 to 6;
- The contractor which has no equity holding in the Targeted Enterprise;
- A subcontractor who undertakes work within its registered CIDB category;
- Is registered in terms of the Company’s Act, 2008 (Act No. 71 of 2008) or Close Corporation Act (Act No. 69 of 1984);
- Is registered with the South African Revenue Services; and
- Is registered with the National Treasury’s Central Suppliers Database (CSD).

Job seekers who still require to be included in the employment database for the project can apply through the current processes managed by local municipalities along the Moloto development corridor.

Fudua, a Sotho term that means to stir, was considered the most effective system to be used in recruiting unskilled labourers, considering approximately 57 000 submissions received.

Fudua, involves a raffle where every applicant listed on the SANRAL employment database is assigned a unique number. The numbers are placed in a vessel and a voluntary member from the crowd conducts a draw in front of everyone.

The first group of 160 labourers from all 32 wards in Thembisile Hani Local Municipality were selected through this process. Long term (permanent) impact on labour amounts to 18 000 job opportunities.

Part of the contract between SANRAL and the main contractors for the projects, is that there will be training provided to all the people recruited for the projects in line with government policy.

In co-operation with the local municipalities and traditional leaders, safe designated areas will be identified for informal traders.

In order to deal with the pedestrian’s road safety along this corridor pedestrians will be channelled to dedicated and safe crossing points which will be constructed along the roads.

SANRAL has a single standard for all roads on its network. Roads provide access – to jobs, to education, to health care facilities – and hence the agency engineers its roads to ensure that these are of the highest standard.
Some of the benefits communities include:

- Improved quality of life;
- The road will be made safer for all users;
- Crashes on Moloto Road will be reduced; and
- Local SMMEs will be involved in the upgrades and general maintenance of the road.

The Moloto Development Corridor will also include investment in passenger rail services so as to offer commuters a safer, faster and more accessible connection between these three provinces.

Rail system will form the backbone of both the public transport system and the corridor development process. The rail stations and transfer facilities will become the centre points for nodal developments. All commuters and the non-commuting public will use the rail facilities around the station and the node in general as the basis and position for all commercial and other economic activities along the corridor.

The aim is that commuters must support local trade to uplift the local economy. Minister Maswanganyi also indicated the rail development corridor will also facilitate the creation of new local production and services and therefore the creation of local employment opportunities.

“Aim is also to reduce the relative number of people that will travel long distances for work and other purposes because this development will create an opportunity for a higher percentage of people that will find employment locally,” said Minister Maswanganyi.

Amongst others, the rail service design will feature:

- 13 New Train Stations
- 125 KM of double Track;
- 38 Road over-all rail bridges
- 9 Pedestrian Bridges, with the potential of being increased
- 44 River Crossings;
- 3 staging yards in the corridor
- 12 car train sets
- 46 train sets
- 15 000 passenger/ hour
- 1 Major Multi-Modal Interchange and
- 160 KM/H Operational design
  The rail services, will comprise of a feeder services and distribution which will be complemented by a (49) Bus/Taxi routes with 681 buses and taxi stops.

Minister Maswanganyi confirmed that the Department has concluded the review and assessment of the Putco Moloto contract (IC52/97), which included a detailed census to determine current demand.

The review proposes that a “new contract” be introduced to replace the current IC52/97 based on the outcome of the passenger census and the current demand, providing for additional trips on certain routes during peak.
The contracting authority will start to prepare for the implementation of a completely redesigned contract, which should be introduced as a medium to long term solution and can be in the form of more than one contract.

“The unbundling of the current IC52/97 will allow new entrants to participate and share in the proposed new contract,” emphasized Minister Maswanyi.

Given the scale of the proposed changes, an intergovernmental structure will be established to coordinate the process between national, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Limpopo provinces and Tshwane municipality.

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