



Tekwakha

Construction Industry Council News on the Eswatini Observer every fortnight on Mondays

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BIG 5 CONSTRUCTION EXPO FOR LOCAL A SUCCESS



CIC delegates at SANRAL tour.

THE Construction Industry Council extended an invite to all registered CIC Contractors (from any CIC category) to attend the Big 5 Construct Southern Africa from the 7th - 9th June 2022 at the Gallagher Convention Centre.

This follows the launch of the Contractor Development Strategy which is a roadmap that will transform the industry through creating a conducive environment for stakeholders to perform effectively and efficiently. As part of the CDS implementation plan, the Council is tasked with exposing local contractors to international construction events especially the SADC region, with the aim to connect with industry buyers and distributors, discover the most innovative products and technologies available, engage with public and private sector stakeholders over the most critical issues and learn about the latest trends, best practice and upcoming construction projects.

THE BIG 5 EXPO

The Big 5 Construct Southern Africa construction conference was open to all industry players hence the Council funded the accommodation for Contractors attend the conference.

The three-day conference agenda included a Stakeholders Forum, Contractor workshops, exhibitions and Africa Smart Cities Summit. The conference kicked-off with the Stakeholder Forum, an open engagement amongst construction industry players including private and public sector as well as small medium enterprises. The forum panellist included the South African Minister of Small Business Development Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams and industry experts with representation from TVET (technical and vocational education and training) institutions. It is worth noting

that the Council will be hosting a similar forum as mandated by the CIC ACT No.14 of 2013 section 19 (2) which will be inclusive of all industry stakeholders and will be announced upon planning finalisation.

Contractors also had a chance to take part in the African Smart Cities Summit which took place on June 8 whereby spotlight was shared on the need for constructive dialogue around the investment for smart cities across the continent. The Chief Executive Officer of NEXTEC, Sean Bennet highlighted on the importance played by technology in attracting global capital and driving transformation. The Africa Smart cities summit organised a tour for delegates to appreciate some of the smart city initiatives in Johannesburg. The tour began at the Radisson Red hotel in Rosebank, a newly established hotel. Participants were afforded a chance to appreciate futuristic smart systems that manage the operations of the hotel, both within and beyond the boundaries of the hotel. Attendees also had a tour at the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL) monitoring station. Delegates got to tour the SANRAL facilities such as the data centre and the national roads surveillance room.

The overall experience of the Expo revealed that the challenges and experiences of the South African construction Industry is somewhat similar to the status quo in Eswatini. Contractors had testimonies about the Big 5 Construction Expo. Mcebo Maziya who is the Technical Director at Project Managers of Choice had this to say; Through presentations done by industry experts, we were able to get an in-depth comprehension on how public-private partnership (PPP) are compiled, packaged, advertised and implemented. The whole understanding of the eco system they bring about partnerships between governments and the private sector.

REGULATION

On the state of the Industry, Maziya highlighted the Minister for SME's Stella Abrahams who delivered a keynote address highlighted government concern over lack of regulation for the industry. Key drivers in the industry had a platform to tell their own frustration towards government. Key issues raised were; a) shrinking industry as opportunities are scares, b) threats coming from abroad skill importation yet the region has sufficient skills, c) general governance of the industry and industry mafia.

Further on access to finance, financial institutions pledged support to SME's should they require assistance to manage

projects. This came from insurance companies and other small scale financial players as cash flow was a universal challenge. On Healthcare Insurance, contractors were capacitated on healthcare as construction is a risky business. Healthcare insurance companies offered healthcare insurance for industry low income earners to boost their welfare. "Overall, it was worthwhile excursion not to be missed and we are grateful to the association in collaboration with the CIC for affording us the opportunity to attend," Maziya highlighted. Maziya also emphasized the need to bring back the Construction Indaba to deliberate on issues as a country whereby stakeholders will be engaged directly. Another testimonial by Nhlanhla Maphanga, Managing Director of Maphanga Mitchell Associates also shared same sentiments about the Big 5 Construction Expo. Maphanga said through invitation by CIC, they were afforded accommodation and clear information of the event and its benefits was communicated to all parties showing interest. On the Big 5 Construction Expo, Maphanga said there was a very interesting spread of construction material and machinery suppliers. "The stands demonstrated their products very well, interesting to note was the large number of international companies exhibiting their products, systems or equipment." Maphanga highlighted. He said with these companies that exhibited their products, a number of them were not quite established in Southern Africa yet which places Eswatini in good contention to attract them to set-up their plant in the Kingdom. "There is a concern that professionals in the industry are regulated but are not recognised by the infrastructure developers". He said this leads to others not conforming to registration and offering services to clients and leaving them exposed and at high risk. It is therefore important that professional services are recognised and clients compelled to employ them for the long-term benefit. Maphanga noted that challenges and experiences of the South African professional counterparts are very similar to challenges in Eswatini thus sharing expertise as countries was key for development.

COMPANIES THAT ATTENDED THE BIG 5 CONSTRUCTION EXPO ARE:

- Maphanga Mitchell Associates
- Ngubo Yengwe Construction
- Macsteel
- Scalco Investments
- Doxa Construction
- Usizo Technical Services
- Exotic Investments
- Vince Investments
- Scalco Investments
- Architectural Design Studio
- Swazi Wire
- Project Managers of Choice



CIC contractors at Big Five Expo.