

SA civil engineering industry fared better in Q1, 2012

According to *Independent Online*, the South African Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors (Safcec) hopes that the worst may finally be over for the country's civil engineering industry. Safcec says that 2012 is likely to improve on 2011, albeit at a single-digit rate.

Several indicators in Safcec's State of the Industry report suggest the industry's performance improved in the first quarter of 2012, after it has endured a period of severe contraction due to a decline in contract activity, which has led to job losses.

Improved turnover (albeit from low levels), improved order books, the expectation to hire rather than retrench staff in the next quarter, and marginally improved profitability, follow several years of lower turnover and diminished profitability, reports *Independent Online*.

Current focus, Safcec says, remains on internal strategies to operate efficiently, effectively and profitably. However, the federation warns that lower employment and low tender prices are signs of an industry still under stress, in spite of some of the other indicators showing "improved" conditions, *Independent Online* reports.

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