

# TPT hosts Eastern Cape Procurement Imbizo for SMMEs

Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) hosted existing and potential suppliers for a day-long procurement Imbizo - a series of roadshows in line with TPT's efforts to engage with and create opportunities for small, medium and large enterprises in South Africa with a particular focus on Black Women Owned, Black Youth Owned and People with Disabilities-Owned Businesses; Cooperatives, Qualifying Small Entities and Exempt Micro Enterprises. The roadshows were held from 29-31 August in the towns of uMthatha, the Golf Club in East London and at the Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium in Port Elizabeth respectively.



Siya Mhlaluka presenting at the TPT Procurement Imbizo

The Procurement Imbizo's were driven by TPT's GM of the Eastern Cape, Siya Mhlaluka, with the theme of 'Moving from Potential to Participation', which has set a premium platform for the exchange of information so that SMMEs can connect with corporate business and build stronger relationships with TPT through fostering dialogue. The primary aim of the Imbizo was to solve the challenges of small and medium business participation in South Africa's mainstream economy by providing information that will foster a culture of "Vuk'uzenzele" among SMME suppliers and with the support of Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and TPT - in the case of the recently held Eastern Cape Procurement Imbizo.

## Addressing challenges faces by SMMEs

"As a state-owned company and because the empowerment of South Africa's historically disadvantaged people is high on government's agenda, the onus is on us to implement this agenda," stated Mhlaluka. He added that four key areas were identified in which SMMEs often fail to comply with when attempting to work with Transnet. These Imbizos break down and analyse these key requirements and challenges for SMME's which include, governance, specifications, tendering processes and supplier development.

According to Mhlaluka, the Imbizo also opened doors and opportunities to work with some of TPT's established suppliers who were invited to the Imbizos and encouraged their active engagement with the attending businesses to educate them about the required processes as well as identifying any future partnerships or collaborations with these SMMEs.

The interactive component to this Imbizo was essential for TPT to also educate themselves about the type of challenges these SMMEs face and recognise where they can offer them support. "The Imbizo creates an opportunity for all the role-players and beneficiaries to exchange ideas about how TPT can collectively improve active participation in the economic growth of the country, educate suppliers on Transnet procurement practices and provide information on existing enterprise

supplier development (ESD) programmes,” Mhlaluka concluded.

## **Opportunities and meetings**

Apart from Mhlaluka’s outlined benefits of attending these Imbizos, these events also provide potential suppliers with the unique opportunity of meeting and engaging with all of the relevant TPT individuals and other companies in one day and at one location, meetings which would normally take these SMME’s months to secure. This nationwide roadshow looks to establish TPT’s reputation for introducing innovative programmes that ensure the full participation of these businesses in the private sector and TPT contracting process. The entire repertoire of goods and services currently procured by TPT as well as future requirements were showcased at these events, making them an opportunity that was not to be missed.

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