



MEDIA ALERT

TO : ALL MEDIA
DATE : 14 May 2013
ATTENTION : NEWS EDITORS/REPORTERS AND PR WIRE

MCHUNU WELCOMES DECISION BY SAFCEC TO WITHDRAW COURT CHALLENGE ON VUKUZAKHE

KZN MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Willies Mchunu, welcomes the decision of the South African Federation of Civil Engineers (SAFCEC) to withdraw a court case challenging the Vukuzakhe programme.

On Friday (10 May 2013) the Pietermaritzburg High Court was informed by the legal representative of SAFCEC that the matter was being withdrawn and had been settled with the Department of Transport out of court.

Responding to this development, Mchunu said yesterday (Tuesday, 14 May 2013) that government had been vindicated by this decision because it affirmed the need for government to continue with the empowerment of those who were previously marginalized.

On 13 February 2013 the Department received an urgent application for an interdict in respect of two advertised tenders. In its application SAFCEC alleged that the Department's requirement for bidders to come from the Vukuzakhe database be set aside.

The Department deemed it necessary to defend this in court, informed by the conviction that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa has provisions for those who were oppressed to be afforded an opportunity to participate meaningfully in the economy.

The Vukuzakhe programme is aiming at empowering emerging contractors from Grade – 1 to Grade -3. These are new role players in the field and the Department has a responsibility to empower them until they graduate to a competitive stage.

Recently SAFCEC delegation met with the Department of Transport and indicated their intention to withdraw the case because they were not opposed to Vukuzakhe.

“We welcome the withdrawal by SAFCEC of this case. We were vehemently opposing it because our position is that the Vukuzakhe programme is constitutional. We are convinced that we are empowered by law to uplift people that were marginalized before and to bridge the high levels of inequality,” said Mchunu.

Mchunu also committed the Department to working with SAFCEC on strategic matters.

Ends

For more information contact – Kwanele Ncalane 072 803 1462 or 079 6995755