



The Second Africa Technology Transfer Conference

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa • September 20-23, 2005

High-powered Technology Transfer Conference provides...

New hope for the rural poor

Conference Reporter

As the 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference opened in Pietermaritzburg, the Capital of KwaZulu-Natal Province, on Tuesday September 20, dynamic leaders of the host organisation, Mr Bheki Cele and Dr Kwazi Mbanjwa, spelt out unambiguously the strategic importance of the conference, which has attracted some of the world's foremost academics and captains in the transport sector.

Mr Cele, MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, is passionate about the conference, which brings glory to South Africa and has firmly shifted the focus on his department and KwaZulu-Natal, giving the province welcome exposure and a boost as an international conference destination.

The four-day 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference is being held at the Head Office of the Department of Transport in Pietermaritzburg. The conference is a sequel to the first international gathering which took place in Arusha, Tanzania, in 2001.

The theme of the conference is *Transportation Technology Transfer for Africa's Renaissance*, which underpins, most vividly, the objective of promoting the effective use of technology to uplift poor and marginalised communities in the developing world.

Dr Mbanjwa, head of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport, is able to espouse, in the clearest of terms, the imperative need to use technology in order to free the poor from the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment.

He is able to do this with zest because, as a young man growing up in rural Sweetwaters, outside Pietermaritzburg, he witnessed the need, first-hand, for the deployment of resources that would ensure the provision of basic services and infrastructure. Along with the people of Sweetwaters, he suffered the effects of denial and government neglect.

Dr Mbanjwa sees the conference being held this week as a holistic and all-embracing endeavour to address the aspirations of so-called developing communities, and he is confident that the outcomes will go a long way towards finding sustainable solutions.



Head of Department Dr Kwazi Mbanjwa – a deep understanding of the need for rural development.



Premier Sibusiso Ndebele: Presented the welcome address in which he highlighted the critical role of knowledge transfer.



MEC Bheki Cele: Empowering communities with transportation technology skills.

"Perhaps the most effective way of creating the outcomes that are desired is through the sharing of practical solutions to the technological, engineering, and socio-economic challenges of developing countries, including states of Africa," said a confident Dr Mbanjwa.

The conference was opened by South Africa's national Minister of Transport, Jeff Radebe, reflecting the strategic significance the government of South Africa has placed on the event. The welcome

address was delivered by the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Sibusiso Ndebele, who said the technology transfer programme was a mechanism to transfer information and new technology from the research community to the user community.

Some of the papers that will be presented are: "The Role of

TO PAGE 2

Technology transfer is a sound investment for KwaZulu-Natal

Conference Reporter

In the serious business of the 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference, the focus will fall sharply on the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport's Technology Transfer Centre, a world-class facility.

The centre, based in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, has had its profile significantly raised after it was disclosed that it would be hosting the 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference, a major coup for South Africa.

Through its clinching of the conference, a key event on the

global transport technology calendar, the Department's Transport Technology Transfer Centre has put South Africa and, indeed, KwaZulu-Natal and the Department, on the international map, as centres for technology and innovation.

How did it all begin? The Technology Transfer Centre's history can be traced back to seven years ago, when the Head of the Department, Dr Kwazi Mbanjwa, made an official trip to Washington DC, where he and other officials were hosted by the Federal Highway Administration.

It was then that Dr Mbanjwa and his officials heard of the transportation technology transfer centre, which is run by the Centre for

Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in Pretoria.

On his return to South Africa, Dr Mbanjwa asked his staff to begin inquiries with the CSIR in Pretoria and it emerged that Pretoria was the central structure that catered for the Gauteng Province but it did not provide a service in other provinces.

The Federal Highway Administration was then informed of the need to establish such a centre that would accommodate the needs of rural people in regards to technological development.

The Federal Highway Administration visited the Department to discuss funding for the rural centre. However, after the Department had a meeting with the Provincial Treasury, it became apparent that

TO PAGE 2



KZN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT



The Second Africa Technology Transfer Conference

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa • September 20-23, 2005

Women and youth must benefit too

The Technology Transfer Centre of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport will play a critical role in enhancing government work programmes intended to address the backlogs in South Africa’s road network.

It will also make a significant contribution to alleviating poverty, creating employment, and generating wealth by supporting these programmes, including the highly-acclaimed labour intensive Zibambele road maintenance and Vukuzakhe road construction initiatives. Many contractors have also had the opportunity to acquire new skills through these programmes.

This was disclosed by MEC **Mr Bheki Cele**, *pictured right*, when he held a high-profile media briefing in Durban last week. He had an enthusiastic media seeking more information as he unveiled plans for the 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference, which is being held from September 20-23 at the Department of Transport’s Head Office in Pietermaritzburg. The conference, hosted by the Department, has attracted some of the world’s foremost academics and researchers in public transport.

Opened by South Africa’s national Minister of Transport, Mr Jeff Radebe, the conference is themed **Transportation Technology Transfer for Africa’s Renaissance**. Other high-profile South African dignitaries who will attend are the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Sibusiso Ndebele, and Transport MECs from the other provinces. Delegates from African and other countries will also be present.

Mr Cele told journalists in Durban: “We shall utilise the perfect timing of the conference to our advantage, to ensure that women and youth benefit accordingly, so as to bridge the gap and consolidate all the gains in strategically preparing for future challenges as we approach the 2010 Soccer World Cup.”

Tracing the history of the T² concept, Cele said it was initiated by the US Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to provide a forum for the cost-effective transfer of transportation technologies to local and state government transportation departments.

The success of the concept resulted in the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) exporting it to other continents, especially South America and Africa. Currently there are several T² Centres in Latin America, Africa, and eastern Europe.

The first Technology Transfer Centre in South Africa was established in 1996, after the national Department of Transport signed an



agreement with the US Federal Highway Administration. The centre is run by the South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) on behalf of the Department of Transport. The second T² Centre was launched at the transportation division of the CSIR in 2000.

The 1st Africa Technology Transfer Conference was held in Arusha, Tanzania, in May 2001 under the auspices of the Tanzania T² Centre. Following the success of the first conference, a decision was made to convene similar conferences in other African countries every two years. South Africa was chosen as the host nation for the 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference and the KZN Department of Transport T² Centre was nominated to convene it.

Said Mr Cele: “The Technology Transfer Centre’s objective is to ensure that there are technical, scientific and engineering solutions to the challenges facing rural road development in the country. The KZN Transport Department is mandated to build a KwaZulu-Natal that truly belongs to all by ensuring that we achieve our vision of Prosperity through Mobility. Our challenge continues as the conference deliberates on issues of technological development, thus empowering rural communities with transporta-

tion technology skills.”

“As I serve the mandate of defending the weak and ensuring that we rise up and build KwaZulu-Natal, this conference is set to achieve resolutions to all challenges that exist in transportation technology. The current dispensation requires citizens with unique skills, and the conference will provide a forum for the exchange of experiences and ideas relevant to the transfer of skills, thus achieving the objectives of an African Renaissance, in theory and practice.”

Since its inception in 2000, the T² Centre of the KZN Department of Transport has established itself as a major provider of technology transfer services for the department and external customers. Services provided by the T² Centre include:

- Developing and facilitating technical training;
- Collaborating with external service providers to facilitate training courses;
- Providing mentorship training to graduate engineers;
- Supporting additional maths and science classes for learners in disadvantaged schools;
- Supporting other activities aimed at encouraging study of maths and science by high school learners;
- Providing experiential training to S3 technikon students to enable them to complete their studies;
- Carrying out and/or co-ordinating research on issues of interest to the department;
- Managing the department’s infrastructure system; and
- Managing the technical resource centre.

“Public transport remains a challenge in the province – a challenge we are prepared to resolve peacefully. We will be presenting a paper on public transport during the conference to benchmark our activities to the world. The T² Centre aims to provide skills development relevant to transport planning at municipalities as some municipalities are faced with the challenge of developing transport planning as a constitutional mandate,” said Mr Cele.

“The department is committed to supporting the activities of the T² Centre by providing financial and human resources. So great is the commitment that the department decided to renovate three floors of an existing building to provide modern facilities for the T² Centre. The renovations have been completed and the centre is now housed in the new facility.”

FROM PAGE 1

Sound investment for KZN

KwaZulu-Natal would be able to fund the centre on its own. The Federal Highway Administration was tasked with the skills development needs of the centre, including initiating an exchange programme.

Dr Mbanjwa, above, said he and his officials believed the establishment of the Technology Transfer Centre at his Department was a sound investment, and their views were now vindicated.

Dr Mbanjwa is passionate about the centre and the work it does and has given it full support in its endeavours to uplift the lives of the rural poor. “I believe it has made, and will continue to make, a significant contribution to rural development,” said Dr Mbanjwa, who has unquestionably been highly influential in the establishment of the centre.



FROM PAGE 1

Centre provides new hope for the poor

Tanzania Technology Transfer Centre in Knowledge and Information Sharing”, “The Potential of Stated Preference Techniques in transferring transport technologies in developing countries”, “Facing the challenges of technology transfer in developing countries”, and “Learning content management system and learning management system as a tool for knowledge dissemination”.

MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr Bheki Cele, told a media briefing in Durban on Thursday last week that the conference, through deliberations on technology development, would be empowering rural communities with transportation technology skills.

Clearly, the presence of high-profile figures at the conference underlines the vote of confidence the KZN Transport Department has received.

Dr Mbanjwa said that several transportation-related issues would be examined by the speakers.

The themes of presentations would capture the holistic and all-embracing nature of transportation as the life-blood of all societies – rich and poor and developed and the underdeveloped societies.

It is expected that challenges – and opportunities – faced by rural communities in relation to engineering, job-creation, road construction

and maintenance, road safety and law enforcement, and community infrastructure development will form the focus of some discussions as delegates try to chart the way forward.

Engineering

Some of the infrastructure-related issues to be tackled will include concrete roads, road maintenance seals, manually operated chip spreader, pavement design and surfacing repair strategies, gravel road specifications, and their impact on performance.

Enforcement

Papers will be delivered on the value of accurate accident statistics in effective traffic policing, as well as on the consequences of overloading (by heavy vehicles) on provincial alternate roads.

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport’s Public and Freight Transport General Manager, Mr George Mahlalela, will present a paper, entitled “Public transport at a Crossroad in South Africa”.

Questions on the appropriate use of technology in public transport in the developing world context will also be examined. Mr Mahlalela’s division is faced with the challenge of explaining the workings of the taxi recapitalisation programme to taxi owners.

Education

Road safety education issues will be dealt with in papers, entitled: “Road signs: do drivers really know what is around the next corner?”, “Working together – a look at co-operation among school outreach programmes”, as well as the critical one, entitled: “Towards a structured road safety education curriculum”.

Communication and marketing will all take centre stage in an endeavour to promote the concept that information is knowledge and that it must be disseminated, in time, to all who need it.



KZN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT



The Second Africa Technology Transfer Conference

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa • September 20-23, 2005

The world is ready to share...

The international world is ready to address some of the present imbalances, through the sharing of knowledge on technology and infrastructure development in transportation.

Conference Reporter

In his book entitled, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Walter Rodney presents a classic exposition on how the historical linkage between the global “centres” of capitalism and the “periphery” played itself out, resulting in the miserable economic condition in which the majority of Africa finds itself today. At the time when Europe was on the rise, African people didn’t develop economically, scientifically, or culturally.

Such forces of slavery caused Africa to be under-developed. The laws that were passed to govern black people marked the total dispossession of land, as well as economic, political, and social injustices.

In Africa, it must be remembered always that the continent, in both its positive and negative aspects, is a product of colonialism.

At the same time, we need to welcome what the global world is currently doing in sharing its ideas and experiences with Africa with regards to technology.

However, it is a fact that millions of people in Africa continue to live in poverty with no food, medicine, shelter, and proper road infrastructure. Mother Africa has been coined the “Dark Continent” for a variety of reasons. It is for such reasons that the President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency Mr Thabo Mbeki, has pioneered the concept of an African Renaissance.

Reawakening

Through the implementation of this philosophy, past injustices must be eradicated. African Renaissance must achieve the rebirth, reawakening, revival, reconstruction, renewal, and resurrection of Africa. New challenges for the forthcoming decade have presented themselves and require immediate prioritisation. One of these is expedient service delivery in Africa that would culminate in the future building of our continent’s morale, and which requires a collective and synergistic effort from all spheres.

Essential for the success of Africa’s rebirth is the need to further entrench and strengthen democracy, to continue in our endeavour towards building a culture of human rights, to alleviate poverty, and to implement technology transfer strategies in order to improve the quality of life and rejuvenate a sense of pride in our African-ness.

The sharing of experiences and ideas on technology transfer means that the international world is ready to address some of the present imbalances, through the sharing of knowledge on technol-



Minister Jeff Radebe: Roads and bridges play a vital role in our transportation system.

Essential for the success of Africa’s rebirth is the need to further entrench and strengthen democracy, to continue in our endeavour towards building a culture of human rights, to alleviate poverty, and to implement technology transfer strategies in order to improve the quality of life and rejuvenate a sense of pride in our African-ness.

ogy and infrastructure development in transportation.

The sharing of information on technology transfer in transportation is extremely important, as transport is indeed a critical element of economic development.

The national Minister of Transport, Mr Jeff Radebe, has consistently emphasised that South Africa’s roads and bridges play a vital role in our transportation system as they link farms, small communities and busy urban centres by supporting and enhancing safety, commerce, and quality of life for everyone.

This concept of technology transfer centres is in line with the South African government’s vision of skills development. It is gratifying to note that the technology transfer programme is a mechanism to transfer information and new technology from the research community to the user community.

Working with and sharing information with the rest of the world will definitely benefit all parties by improving the transportation of goods and people in our different countries, resulting in a stronger global economy.

The legacy of apartheid and colonialism in Africa has resulted in historically disadvantaged communities poorly trained in subjects such as Mathematics and Science. This created a shortage of skilled transportation human resources in these communities.

However, the present government has implemented development plans that will ensure well-trained people of all races in the various fields of transportation. The government recognises that a weak transport infrastructure is a deterrent to private business, commerce, access to health care, urban development, and delivery of goods to previously disadvantaged communities.

This conference has also come at a time when South Africa and Africa prepare to host our first Soccer World Cup.

Traffic volumes

In order to deliver a successful 2010 World Cup, traffic congestion, as well as the road system, must be dealt with in order to cope with high traffic volumes during the World Cup.

There is no doubt that information sharing and education are pivotal to the provision of a balanced road network, particularly for the historically disadvantaged communities of South Africa and the rest of Africa.

On the other hand, the rapid changes in technology and knowledge affect transportation professionals in practice. With these rapid changes, it is becoming necessary for transportation professionals to participate in refresher courses, retraining, and continual educational programmes. Key to continual success is the advancement of the knowledge and skills of our work force. A well-informed citizenry will give a better world and a better life for all.

Transportation theories support the need for advanced technology with the goal of building more and better roads in any country.

For the transportation sector to function efficiently, developing countries must also participate in transportation technology transfer, as a means to address economic growth. In order to create efficient transport systems, it is important to have access to the most current scientific information.

Sharing technology

Sharing technology with the rest of the world, especially developing countries, through technology transfer centres and conferences such as this, will contribute towards the political and economic emancipation of not just a certain class of people, but all human beings.

KZN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

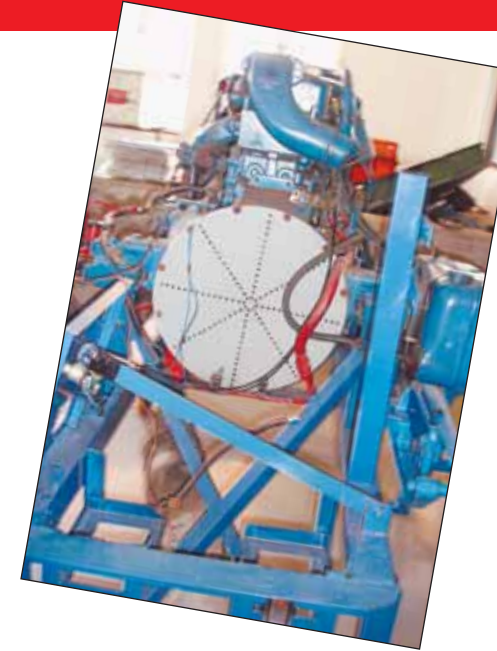
3





The Second Africa Technology Transfer Conference

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa • September 20-23, 2005



What exactly do Technology Transfer Centres do?

They ensure there are technical, scientific, and engineering solutions to the challenges facing rural road development in the country...



Pictures:
Master Mosunkutu



BRIDGE-BUILDING... Plus whatever else it takes to ensure prosperity through mobility

Conference Reporter

In sub-Saharan Africa, Tanzania and South Africa are the pace setters in Technology Transfer Centres, illustrating both the need and effectiveness of these institutions. Their value as institutions of learning is also profoundly entrenched.

What exactly do Technology Transfer Centres do? These centres aim to ensure that there are technical, scientific, and engineering solutions to the challenges facing rural road development in the country. The centres have advanced laboratories and field testing facilities

which help with quality control, research, training and data collection.

In the case of KwaZulu-Natal, the centre ensures that the Department of Transport has good infrastructure management systems, including pavements, gravel roads, bridge management, as well as accident and traffic count data bases.

An excellent example of what the centre does can be seen in the challenge KwaZulu-Natal has with obtaining the material that is used to construct gravel roads.

The centre has enabled the province to make use of chemicals to change ordinary soil to hard

surface that can replace gravel.

One of the key objectives of the government is to provide community access roads, and the centre will ensure that this is met, despite the odds, including financial constraints.

Therefore, the centre enhances the work of government programmes that are aimed at addressing the backlogs in South Africa's road network. The centre also attempts to address poverty alleviation, job-creation, and wealth generation, through programmes, such as Zibambele road maintenance and Vukuzakhe road construction.

Another practical example of the usefulness

of the centre is illustrated in endeavours to determine the life span of a particular road. The centre provides scientifically correct measurements in this regard.

The measurements help the Road Traffic Inspectorate better understand, for instance, which road needs more protection from trucks since these vehicles are known to be responsible for some of the damage that occurs on roads.

The centre provides a support service for transportation needs in provinces with large rural communities. The centre is located in the KZN Transport Department's Corporate Services Chief Directorate because it provides a support

function. This function includes offering refresher courses to government technical staff and in-service training for university and technical students.

The centre also supports educational programmes and career guidance initiatives that seek to develop school pupils who specialise in subjects, such as science and mathematics.

One of the primary objectives of the centre is that school children from rural areas are exposed to computers and technical subjects or theories so that they can better compete with learners who have been exposed to technical subjects and have fully equipped laboratories in their schools.

Some Successes of the KwaZulu-Natal Technology Transfer Centre:

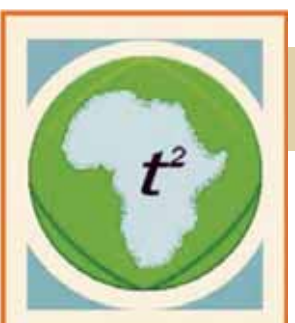
- Administrative re-organisation was initiated and completed.
- As part of research and liaison, a video explaining the process of construction of roads using the labour-based method was produced.
- A manual to guide field staff in design and supervision of labour-based road construction works was developed. The manual has two volumes and covers all aspects of labour-based road construction in a simplified way.
- T² supported the bridge building competition organised by SAICE.
- The centre continued to provide practical training to third-year technician students to enable them to complete their studies.
- All the bridges and major culverts were geo-registered and linked to the KZN road network.



4

KZN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

5





The Second Africa Technology Transfer Conference

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa • September 20-23, 2005

Skills development is at the heart of *transformation*

*Message from the
KwaZulu-Natal MEC:
Transport, Community
Safety & Liaison
Mr Bheki Cele,
pictured right*

Esteemed guests, conference delegates, ladies and gentlemen:
Welcome. I am extremely pleased to welcome you to South Africa, and in particular to Pietermaritzburg, the Capital City of the province of KwaZulu Natal, to the Department of Transport, and of course, to the 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference.

Your attendance of this conference emphasises the important role that technology transfer can play in the development and dissemination of transportation policies and practices for the benefit of developing economies in the continent and beyond.

We, in the Department of Transport take special interest in this conference for two main reasons:

First: the focus of the conference is on technology transfer. Technology transfer in all its various forms is a critical component of skills development, a process that is at the heart of the transformation of this country.

Second: this is an African conference. You all aware of how passionate our President, His Excellency Mr Thabo Mbeki, is about African Renaissance. We must find African solutions to African problems in all spheres of human endeavour if the continent is to rise above its current woes and attain true renaissance.

As you deliberate upon issues of technology transfer in the transport environment, take time to reflect on the challenges we face as a country, and as a continent. We face challenges in providing basic access to rural communities, and challenges in linking



agricultural and economic nodes in order to kick start the second economy. This must be done without neglecting the provision of an efficient transport infrastructure to support the first economy.

It is only when solutions begin to emerge on these and other pressing issues will the rebirth of the continent truly begin.

Once again, welcome to our beautiful city and country. Siyajabula Ukuba Nani!

Technology lessons will go out to students too

Conference Reporter

KwaZulu-Natal's MEC for Education, Ina Cronje, is to take on a strategic role in the second Africa Technology Transfer conference, which takes place in Pietermaritzburg from September 20-23.

Ms Cronje, pictured below, will be a facilitator at the conference, one of Africa's most important transport-related symposiums. Her scope of responsibility will give her wide exposure to the themes and thinking of presenters, who are among the foremost academics and researchers in the field of public transport.

Ms Cronje has shown herself to be one of the most progressive provincial ministers of education in South Africa, eclipsing many of her peers in her deep understanding of the dynamics and challenges of education.

Under her leadership, education in KwaZulu-Natal has moved significantly towards equity, bringing, for the first time, easy access to education for hundreds of thousands of children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

And they are grateful for this.

For Ms Cronje, her participation in the 2nd Africa



Technology Transfer Conference will certainly be an eye-opener in some respects, exposing her to new technology education.

The conference will produce a wealth of information that can be converted into both an education resource and reference material for learners at schools and tertiary institutions. It is this information and knowledge that Ms Cronje will transfer to educators so that they, in turn, will be able to pass them on to their pupils and students.

Clearly, the conference is not confined to technology; the knowledge derived there can be passed to students in order to broaden their own knowledge and learning experiences.

The Head of KwaZulu-Natal's Department of Transport, Dr Kwazi Mbanjwa, said he was confident the ideas around innovation and new technology that emerged from the conference could be disseminated to schools and tertiary institutions as part of a wider learning exercise. This concept has been wholeheartedly supported by Ms Cronje.



KZN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT



The Second Africa Technology Transfer Conference

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa • September 20-23, 2005

Uplifting lives

Message from the Head of the KwaZulu-Natal
Department of Transport
Dr Kwazi Mbanjwa, pictured below

*‘The Department is committed to supporting the activities of the
T² Centre by providing the required financial and human resources.’*

The first Technology Transfer Centre in South Africa was established in 1996 when the National Department of Transport signed an agreement with the US Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The centre is currently run by the South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) on behalf of the Department of Transport. The second T² Centre was started at the Transportation division of the CSIR in 2000.

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport signed a Memorandum of Undertaking with FHWA in 2000 to start the first of the provincial T² Centres. It was envisaged at that stage that the KwaZulu-Natal T² Centre would assist in expanding the T² Centre concept to other rural provinces.

The Department is committed to supporting the activities of the T² Centre by providing the required financial and human resources. Since its inception in 2000 the T² Centre in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport has established itself as a major provider of technology transfer services for the department and for external customers. Services provided by the T² Centre include: –

- Developing & facilitating technical training;
- Collaborating with external service providers to facilitate courses;
- Providing mentorship training to graduate engineers;
- Supporting additional maths and science classes for learners in disadvantaged schools;
- Supporting other activities aimed at encouraging study of maths and science by high school learners;
- Providing experiential training to S3 technikon students;
- Providing experiential training to mechanical apprentices to enable them to obtain their trade certificates;
- Carrying out and/or co-ordinating research on issues of interest to the department; and
- Managing departmental infrastructure system and managing the technical resource centre.

We feel honoured to have been nominated to host the 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference. I extend a word of welcome to all the delegates and wish them fruitful deliberations.



KZN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT





The Second Africa Technology Transfer Conference

Pietermaritzburg, South Africa • September 20-23, 2005

Fast-tracking delivery

Conference outcomes will have a positive impact on MDGs

Conference Reporter

The outcomes of the 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference will have a profound effect on the Millennium Development Goals, set by the United Nations member countries five years ago.

Under the MDGs – as the Millennium Development Goals is commonly known – the developed world committed itself to assist the developing countries with funding and other resources to halve poverty, HIV/Aids, and water and sanitation backlogs by 2015.

Additionally, under the MDGs, a commitment was made to halve the proportion of people in rural areas who live beyond 2km from an all-season mode of transport; to cut in half the difference in transport costs within Africa as compared to Asia; to provide safe and reliable transport to learners and schoolchildren in rural and urban areas; affordable access to health and medical facilities; to ensure adequate access in times of natural disaster or emergencies.

Uplifting lives

Head of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport, Dr Kwazi Mbanjwa, said a key area of deliberation at the 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference, which begins on September 20 in Pietermaritzburg, will be on how technology can play a critical role in uplifting the lives of the rural poor.

“This dovetails neatly with commitments made under the MDGs, and the outcomes of the conference will provide crucial support in achieving the MDGs. It is expected that the overriding strategic focus of discussion at the conference will be on the crucial role transport is expected to play in the creation of a sustainable African development agenda,” said Dr Mbanjwa.

Earlier this year, the Ministers of Transport summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, dealt with the development and implementation of a plan of action to secure the MDGs. The programme of action that emerged from that meeting integrates and builds on a number of transport development programmes that are being implemented by countries, regional and continental blocs, among them NEPAD.

Central to this programme is the critical importance of improving, upgrading, and expanding transport infrastructure and services, but, in particular, “the eradication of physical and non-physical barriers



Leaders who recognise the value of technology in uplifting the lives of the rural poor – from left: MEC Bheki Cele; Meshak Hadebe, chair of chairs, KZN Parliament; KZN Premier Sibusiso Ndebele; His Majesty King Goodwill Zwelithini; Finance and Economic Development MEC Zweli Mkhize; and Dr Kwazi Mbanjwa, Head of the Department of Transport.

riers along transport corridors, maritime ports, and inland waterways”, while also paying attention to “enhancing the access of rural and remote areas to markets, inputs, and social services”.

The ministers’ meeting agreed that many of the MDGs targets relating to transport access and provision can be met by 2015. It is in this context that the 2nd Africa Technology Transfer Conference will be strengthening its collective intellectual muscle to help fast-track delivery on the MDGs, and also keep the battle against poverty on the global agenda.

On a different dimension, the conference is expected to hear how skills resident in the national Department of Transport, headed by Minister Mr Jeff Radebe, were dispersed after the department was restructured in 1994 to meet the needs of the new constitution, the distribution of powers and responsibilities between different spheres of government, and the establishment of a range of agencies and state entities outside the immediate purview of the department. Clearly, adequate attention was not paid to replacing these skills, or deepening the capacity within government to oversee the functions of these agencies.

The challenge the department faces now is: what can be done to integrate the academic and research realm more appropriately into government departments on the one hand; and to expand and drive greater capacity within government to carry out oversight functions

in a manner that ensures that sector, or specific stakeholder, interests and influence do not override the general purpose of structures.

The conference will also hear that the department is currently working with other state agencies on improving co-ordination and planning as a transport master plan is developed for the country. The national Department of Transport has been proactive in enhancing relationships with some sectors that clearly have problems and complaints.

Identified issues

On a more cheerful note, the department has identified issues related to potential host cities, as well as candidate projects and opportunities for each of the potential host cities and towns. There are at least three elements to the planning. The first relates to inter-government co-operation; the second revolves around the national department because of the peculiar roles of some of its agencies, and the third relates to how the department ensures that 2010 acts as a catalyst for its general transport strategy, integrating public transport initiatives, such as the taxi recap, the subsidy reform, routing and schedules on road, rail, and even the air; the rail revitalisation programmes in metro areas in particular; non-motorised initiatives in urban areas; urban settlement planning and road traffic management and control.

Invited Speakers

Conference organisers identified leaders and experts in some of the conference topics to prepare invited papers. Invited papers are intended to stimulate more vigorous discussions and debates during the conference.

Mr A Logie: Technical Assistance Engineer, US Federal Highway

Dr M Ayele: Director, National Highway Institute, US Federal Highway Administration

Mr S Macozoma: Chief Director, Infrastructure Network Management, Department of Transport, South Africa

Mr P Hendricks: Director, CSIR, South Africa

Mr N Alli: CEO, South Africa National Roads Agency

Dr P Paige-Green: Divisional Fellow, CSIR Built Environment

Prof M De Beer: Divisional Fellow, CSIR Built Environment

Mr M Mitchell: Deputy Director General (Retired), Department of Transport, South Africa

Prof A Sarkar: Professor, Birla Institute of Technology and Science, India

Mr J Mlawu: General Manager, Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport

Mr H Bishanga: Manager, Transportation Technology Transfer Centre, Tanzania

Mr I Ngoma: Manager, Malawi Technology Transfer Centre, Ministry of Communication and Transport, Malawi

This supplement has been produced by the Communication Support Directorate of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport:

Tel: (033) 355 8624

Fax: (033) 355 8632

Email: Logan.Maistry@kzntransport.gov.za

Website: www.kzntransport.gov.za

For further information regarding the conference, please contact Dr. Simon Oloo – Manager: Technology Transfer Centre:

Tel: (033) 355 8609/8054

Fax: (033) 355 8049

Email: Simon.Oloo@kzntransport.gov.za

Those wishing to attend the conference must register.

A conference fee of R2 500 is payable.

