

TNPA allocates R98m for floating caisson at Sturrock Dry Dock

Following discussions among the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT), Wesgro, industry and strategic partners with Transnet National Port Authority (TNPA), a R98m floating caisson will be constructed for the Sturrock Dry Dock in the Port of Cape Town.



Image source: www.waterfront.co.za

The new caisson forms part of a multi-million-rand overhaul of the port's ship repair facilities over a three-year period (2019-2022) under South Africa's Operation Phakisa Programme, which has identified ship building and repairs as a strategic industry for the port.

A caisson - which is a large steel gate structure that acts as a secondary seal and subdivides the dock and allows for simultaneous docking of multiple commercial vessels within the facility - is expected to double the productivity of Sturrock.

South Africa ranks among the world's top 15 shipping nations, based on the tonnage transported to and from its ports, with three of the eight major commercial ports based in the Western Cape. Further to this, the province is the production hub of the South African ship building industry and is home to the country's largest luxury yacht builders, Robertson and Caine and Southern Wind.

In addition to this, it is estimated that around 68% of commercial boat yards are located in the Western Cape. Although the majority of marine manufacturing capacity is located in and around Cape Town, boat yards have also been established in

St Helena Bay, Velddrif, Saldana Bay, Swellendam, George and Knysna.

Employing 4,000 people, contributing R1.5bn to the provincial economy in 2017 - 95% of manufactured products in the sector are exported with Cape Town identified as the second biggest exporter of Catamarans.

Job creation

“The introduction of a caisson that can now allow for multiple docking of commercial vessels allows for Sturrock Dry Dock to significantly increase ship repairing capacity, which will facilitate job creation. The total value of turnover of provincial ship repairs in 2016 was estimated at around R2.2bn, revealing the potential for significant economic gain to the province through investment of updating the dock facilities,” said Wesgro CEO Tim Harris.

“Trade is the life blood of the economy. R1.73bn of goods enters and leaves South African ports every year. About 30,000 ships passes South Africa’s coastline annually and 12,000 of them make calls into our ports. Many of these vessels require services like repairs and maintenance which represents a significant opportunity for jobs. The marine vessel fabrication, repairs and maintenance employed 10,280 people in 2017. A constraint to job growth in this sector is a dearth of suitable infrastructure to service these vessels. The, Western Cape Government welcomes and appreciates the R98m budgeted by the Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) for the construction of the floating caisson in the Sturrock Dry Dock at the Port of Cape Town. This investment by the TNPA will facilitate the creation of hundreds of direct and indirect jobs required to service vessels in the port,” explained Solly Fourie, head of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

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