



merSETA

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING AND RELATED SERVICES SETA

The merSETA: Press Release

Attention: News Editors; Education and Training Editors; Labour Editors

Manufacturing SETA (merSETA) to open an Institution for Sectoral and Educational Excellence (ISOE) for the Welding vocation in Saldanha in the Western Cape

For immediate release,

The Welding vocation has become a political issue, so political that it is now central to the Jipsa agenda. The manufacturing, engineering and related services SETA (merSETA), in partnership with West Coast College and the International Institute of Welding (IIW), has invested 2.85 million rands into the establishment of a welding school of excellence in Saldanha in the Western Cape. The school will be opened officially on Tuesday the 27 February at 10H00 at a function to be attended by merSETA CEO Dr. Raymond Patel and Western Cape MEC for Education Mr. Cameron Dugmore.

Said Helen Brown, Project leader for the merSETA “the decision to place the project at Saldanha is a response to the emerging Fabrication Hub that is designed to cater for world class oil and gas related port side infrastructure. In the past, particularly at the time of the construction of the Moss gas offshore platform, large capital projects relied on ‘imported skill’ into the Saldanha area – this at the cost of employing the local community due to their limited access to world class skills training”.

With this welding school the local community stands to benefit in that local members of the Saldanha community and surrounds will be able to enter the available skilled jobs after successfully completing their training at the centre.

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According to Brown the aims of the project are to offer training to new comers and up-skill existing welders towards achieving the certified 6GR welding standard. "Each industry contract requires certain ASME or ISO compliance standards, depending on the client requirements and this centre will be able to train and certify candidates to the required standards. Until now, this has not been possible at an FET College" said Brown

The funding for the project covers the erection of 25 fully equipped welding training bays to IIW standards; the training of three IIW accredited instructors; accreditation as a Training Body by the International Institute of Welding; and the implementation of the IIW training curriculum.

The school, which is being seen a long overdue, already has welding apprentices that have been sent practical training by GrinekerLTA, and their programme for the first leg of training finishes on the 31st of March. There are indications that all 25 training bays will be fully booked until July 2007.

With this welding school of excellence, being the second to be unveiled by the merSETA, enough interest has been created for the development of more Welding schools of excellence using the merSETA model and funded by other government departments and private enterprise. The merSETA is looking at strategically placing at least three more Institutes for Sectoral and Occupational Excellence (ISOE) in trades other than Welding.

The media is invited.

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