

CONCRETE FEATURES



MANY REASONS TO CELEBRATE CONSTRUCTION, REPORT REVEALS

With the built environment having deemed October the month of careers in construction, the cidb believes it a tradition well worth marking for the spotlight it shines on upcoming talent that will be the force and inspiration shaping tomorrow's infrastructure landscape. The event creates public awareness of construction careers, attracts the next generation of recruits and showcases the positive impact a fulfilling career in the sector can have on individuals and the world.

Although skills development is not part of the cidb mandate, the organisation strongly supports and – through the B.U.I.L.D Programme – now funds interventions that professionalise the industry through learning and knowledge. It also draws attention to careers through its longstanding involvement in the globe's premier artisan-development initiative, WorldSkills, as longstanding sponsor of the South African regional and national bricklaying heats. And it inspires interest in construction careers with the Oscars of the built environment, the Empowerment and Recognition of Women in Construction (ERWIC) awards.

Both these events took their rightful pages in the cidb 2023/24 annual report, which the organisation recently celebrated signing off for public release.

Although described by CEO Bongani Dladla in his foreword as 'a year of highs and lows' for the industry, the cidb can rest briefly on its laurels

for some notable successes, chief among them the triumphant ticks against 17 of its 18 annual targets, a 94% tally that maintained last year's performance record, albeit with more targets to fulfil this review year.

The standout performances were a full house of contravention notices for non-compliance issued within 30 days against a target of 80%, 100% of compliant contractors registered on grades 1 to 9 within 21 days versus the 90% objective and 18 more industry capacitation sessions staged than the planned 72. The last-mentioned is particularly significant given the widely accepted need for continuous capacitation of procurement and supply chain officials to ensure tenders are correctly formulated and infrastructure budgets spent fully and wisely to realise the country's infrastructure development goals.

The WorldSkills South Africa national competition 2024, the report notes, saw 200 aspiring artisans put the tools of their trades to the test in 22 categories that would determine the candidates to move on to the finals in Lyon in September 2024. Although the local contingent went on to lift just one gold at the France finale – for refrigeration and air-conditioning – it was another brick in the lifelong-learning wall for these youngsters and a gateway to bigger and better things.

The 15-category ERWIC awards staged in August 2023 saw honours bestowed on 10 inspirational hard-hatted women who have not only

accepted, but have conquered, the challenges of South African construction. Star performer Suzan Portia Phalane and her enterprise Sue Phalane Trading and Projects scooped a stupendous four awards. She followed this with two of the 16 awards up for grabs in the ERWIC awards of 2024.

During the financial year, the report highlights, cidb call centre agents informed and advised more than 110 000 callers, while the contractor registration team had its work cut out processing more than 83 000 new applications and renewals and the compliance unit referred 21 fraud cases to the South African Police Service and acted against 31 non-compliant clients listed on the Register of Projects.

At the core of external excellence is internal strength. Thus, R1 million was expended during 2023/24 on executive development and another R1 million on management training. More than R700 000 worth of bursaries benefitted 31 staff.

Well pleased with the year, Chairperson Khulile Nzo cited in his review his priorities for 2024/25, namely ongoing contractor training and development, continuing to thwart criminal activities that hinder service delivery and unifying public and private sectors to elevate sector standards.