

Gibela plans to get local suppliers

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Gibela Rail Transport Consortium, which has a R51bn contract to supply 600 trains to the Passenger Rail Agency of SA (Prasa), is looking for local machinery and equipment suppliers for its R1bn ultra-modern manufacturing facility.



This comes as Gibela on Thursday said that work was under way to construct the main factory building on the manufacturing facility. The R400m factory building in Ekurhuleni is being built by a joint venture of black-owned companies Trencon Construction and Black Jills Engineers. The manufacturing facility will consist of a main factory building which will be equipped with machinery and tools for assembling the train coaches as well as train-testing facilities, a supplier park and training centre.

Special purpose company Gibela is 61%-owned by French power and transport group Alstom with the rest of the shareholding held by empowerment partners. More than R30bn has been set aside in the R51bn deal for local suppliers. A further R5bn is going to small, medium-sized and micro enterprises (SMMEs) and R1.7bn to women-owned businesses.

Gibela will manufacture the 600 new coaches over 10 years for Prasa's urban Metrorail service, which is aged and unreliable. Twenty of the coaches are being built at Alstom facilities in Brazil to speed up the modernisation of the Metrorail service. Prasa has already taken delivery of three of the coaches. The other 580 coaches will be built at the factory under construction in Dunnottar in Ekurhuleni. Trencon and Black Jills began construction of the factory last month which will be 33ha in size and stand on 78ha of land. The area will also accommodate a 4,000m² training centre and supplier park.

The main factory building will be ready to be equipped in October with machinery and specific tools required for the manufacturing of the coaches. All construction and fitting work is due to be completed by September 2017 with the manufacturing of coaches set to begin in November 2017.

"For all that equipment and machinery and whatever we install, we have a similar procurement process where we are targeting to notify some potential suppliers here in the country," said Gibela CEO Marc Granger.

"We have quite a significant commitment to local procurement and it is our strategy to give preference to local suppliers," Granger said.

Source: Business Day

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