



**merSETA**

MANUFACTURING, ENGINEERING AND RELATED SERVICES SETA

## 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 Mossgas 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.

According to Brown the aims of the project are to offer training to new comers and up-skill existing welders towards achieving the certified

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HEAD OFFICE	EASTERN CAPE	FREE STATE & NORTHERN CAPE	GAUTENG & NORTH WEST	KWAZULU NATAL	MPUMALANGA & LIMPOPO	WESTERN CAPE
PO Box 61826 Marshalltown 2107 Phone 011 484-9310-16 Fax 011 484-9320 info@merseta.org.za	PO Box 34733; Newton Park; Port Elizabeth; 6055 Phone 041 363 0117 Fax 041 363 0144 zngayeka@merseta.org.za	PO Box 6848 Bloemfontein 9300 Phone 051 430 1263 Fax 051 447 8873 gslabbert@merseta.org.za	PO Box 62297 Marshalltown 2107 Phone 011 639 7800 Fax 011 639 7821 rchammudzi@merseta.org.	PO Box 10279 Marine Parade 4056 Phone 031 208 4600-02 Fax 031 208 4624 mmtshali@merseta.org.za	PO Box 13660 Leraatsfontein 1038 Phone 013 692 4616 Fax 013 692 4637 pmakaba@merseta.org.za	PO Box 2383 Bellville 7535 Phone 021 948 6606 Fax 021 948 6676 spretorius@merseta.org.za



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 31<sup>st</sup> 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.

**Issued by:** Thamsanqa Malinga; Communications Officer  
8 Hillside Road, Parktown, 2193. PO Box 61826, Marshalltown, 2107  
Tel: 011 484 9310 Fax: 086 670 0718, Cell 082 559 8676  
E-mail: [tmalinga@merseta.org.za](mailto:tmalinga@merseta.org.za)

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