

# DFA invests R81 million with deployment of optic fibre

Dark Fibre Africa (DFA) will be investing in excess of R81 million over the next six months with the deployment of over 120km of optic fibre at Klerksdorp in the North West Province. The company's expenditure plan is in excess of R3.5 billion and it has already trenched more than 6 700km of optic fibre across South Africa.

DFA's optic fibre network is expanding to smaller cities and towns at a rapid pace, enabling Internet service providers (ISPs) to offer their services to new markets. It will launch Klerksdorp into the digital age and, more importantly, the socio-economic benefits of fibre optic networks are vast, as affordable broadband contributes to increased economic activity.

The company's CEO Gustav Smit says DFA's network is the fastest-growing open-access optical fibre infrastructure in the country. "We are the carrier of carriers, providing infrastructure to three of the top four cellular providers, to seven of the top eight Internet service providers, to one of the two fixed-line operators, to the country's largest media conglomerates, to educational institutions, to open-access data centres, and to major metro municipalities.

## National footprint

"The network is used by companies such as cellular network operators Cell C, Vodacom, MTN and landline network operator Telkom as well as ISPs like IS and MWeb, media companies and high Internet usage corporations," he explains.

DFA's footprint extends nationally and links with the SEACOM, EASSy, SAFE and the SAT3 cables at Mtunzini in KwaZulu-Natal and links to the WACS cable at Yzerfontein and the SAT 3 cable at Melkbosstrand in the Western Cape.

The deployment of metro and long haul open access ducting, optimised for fibre network deployment, will enable larger users of communications capacity to enjoy logical separation and ownership of communications capacity, while sharing the same physical right of way and access routes with other carriers.

"South Africans simply don't know what 20Mbps or 100Mbps to the home means. An opportunity needs to be created for users to test drive serious broadband and ISPs need to play a leading role in mobilising communities. We will be taking on some risk as we work to get fibre to every business and many homes; we anticipate 20% take-up over the next four years," Smit concludes.