

# ECSA concludes governance roadshow

An Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) countrywide roadshow, engaging a large concentration of engineering practitioners of different disciplines on the revisions to its governance instrument, was concluded in Gauteng recently.

“Engineering does not belong to a select few. It belongs to all who contribute to the profession, and as such, the principle of consultation is paramount to the regulations of the profession, according to the democratic culture in our country,” said Siphso Madonsela, chief executive officer of ECSA. He went to reiterate that under the current ECSA leadership, a decision had been taken to engage as much as possible with the engineering community around the country.



Siphso Madonsela. Source: [Zululand Observer](#)

## Upholding the integrity of the profession

Madonsela spoke of the need for sharing of responsibility and accountability equitably, in the management of ECSA's administrative team, the committees that report into ECSA's council and voluntary associations (VAs). In the past, there has been an imbalance between the responsibilities held by the three arms of ECSA and the levels of accountability of the respective arms.

The motivation for the public consultations stems from the industry's feedback where ECSA was called on to fulfil the role of leading and upholding the integrity of the engineering profession. In addition, the council was tasked with insulating registered persons from the risks of working in environments that would force them to breach the code of conduct.

“There was also a call from candidate engineers and young professionals to take the necessary measures required to address the absence of work-based training and mentoring programmes to provide adequate professional support,” added Madonsela. The revision of the VA recognition framework; the commitment and undertaking guidelines; and the continuing professional development (CPD) have these comments as their foundation.

## Winds of change blowing

Advocate Rebaone Gaoraelwe, in unpacking the framework revisions, lamented the fact that the roles and responsibility between VAs and ECSA have been reversed. The ECSA has, through the years been perceived as the tail of the engineering profession, whereas the VAs have been seen as the head. This perception, if proven to be true, begs for the transformation of the profession.

“ECSA has taken a stance to reposition itself at the behest of registered persons,” said Gaoraelwe. “The winds of change are blowing within ECSA, and it’s time for ECSA to be transformed to ensure that we can be relevant to the profession,” he added. ECSA’s intention is to evolve into a modern well-run professional regulator.

## **Robust Q&A**

During a robust Q&A session, there were concerns raised about the condition of the relationship between ECSA and the VAs, with the issue of trust between the two at the bed-rock of these issues. “We are attempting to address this broader issue of trust between us, to ensure we can all embrace each other and begin to work together as a team, for the common good of the profession and to allow it to remain noble and respected,” explained Madonsela.

Several engineering practitioners reaffirmed the need for a broader registration regime with ECSA, and whether the organisation is planning to make its registration more attractive for non-registered people.

He confirmed that the standards of engineering would remain the same since they are benchmarked internationally, through the organisations active membership of the International Engineering Alliance (IEA); “ECSA will continue to reach out to the employers of engineering practitioners to encourage them to employ registered engineers, in order to change the attitude of engineers towards registration and retain the integrity of the profession.”

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