

CESA Free State Branch Function

DATE: 3 June 2026
TIME: 11:00 - 14:30



PROGRAMME:

Arrival & Networking	10:30 – 11:00
Programme Director Pulane Motloi: CESA Free State Branch Chairperson and Director at African Engineering and Construction Solutions	11:00 – 11:10
If Not Engineers, Then Who? Reclaiming Our Purpose, Securing Our Future Dr. Vishal Haripersad: Consulting Engineers South Africa President & MD of Knight Piésold Southern Africa	11:10 – 11:40
Guest Speaker Aphumle Mnyaka: Executive Engineering & Projects - Vaal Central Water	11:40– 12:00
Keynote Speaker Ms Kathleen Dibolelo Mance: MEC - Free State Department of Public Works and Infrastructure	12:00 – 12:20
Industry Insights Chris Campbell: CEO of Consulting Engineers South Africa	12:20– 12:30
Q & A and Networking	12:30 – 12:50
Closing Remarks Marizel Pienaar: Chairperson of the CESA Young Professionals Forum & Civil Engineer at Bigen Africa	12:50 – 13:00
Lunch & Networking	13:00 – 14:30

Programme Director

Pulane Motloi

CESA Free State Branch Chairperson



Dr. Vishal Haripersad
CESA President



CESA Free State Branch Function

June 2026

If Not Engineers, Then Who?
Reclaiming Our Purpose,
Securing Our Future



Who will fix this when we are gone?
Infrastructure ecosystem:



WHAT KIND OF FUTURE ARE WE BUILDING?

What kind of future are we building in the Free State?

- »» 2026 – the “Year of Decisive Action”
- »» Progress is possible when engineering expertise, accountability, collaboration, and long-term thinking are placed at the centre of decision-making.
- »» Has investment translated into infrastructure that works?



Credit: Marriot.com

Understanding SA's Infrastructure Landscape

- » National Treasury's has committed to invest more than R1 trillion in public infrastructure over the next 3 years
- » Many municipalities are in financial and operational distress and therefore unable to deliver services as they should – National Treasury
- » *63% of municipalities in SA are in financial distress, and the proportion of clean audits remains unacceptably low* – Minister Enoch Godongwana



No More Narratives, Time for Action

- »» Are we prioritising long-term safety, quality, and sustainability in infrastructure, or are short-term cost pressures driving decisions?
- »» Are we empowering the people who build, design and maintain our systems?
- »» Are we leaving engineers out of the conversation until failures occur?



CESA's continued call for:



Credible multi-year project pipelines



Accelerated approvals



Enforced timely payments to stabilise workloads



Counter persistent cancellations and delays



Our nation and our profession is at a crossroads! Engineering MATTERS!

**Reclaiming our purpose does not
begin elsewhere, it begins with us**



CESA's 2026 Theme:

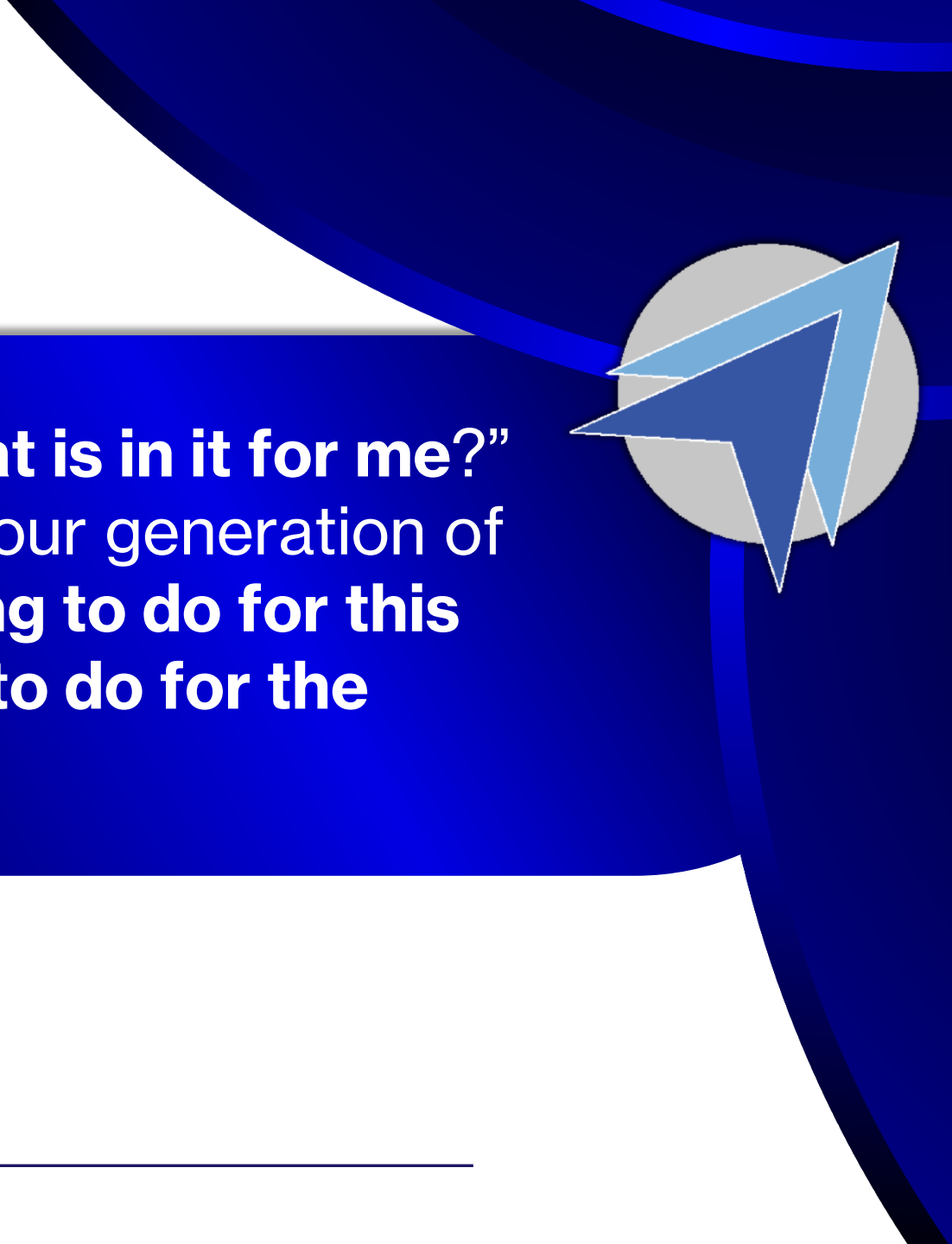
**If Not Engineers, Then Who?
Reclaiming Our Purpose, Securing Our Future**



Accountability for Building Capability

- »» South Africa faces a severe skills shortage
- »» SA - one engineer for every 3 100 people, developed nation average one engineer for every 300 people - ECSA
- »» Partnerships and collaboration are key to address critical skills gap
- »» High youth unemployment rate in the Free State
- »» Advocate and support STEM Education

Are we doing enough to prepare and empower the next generation to build, maintain, and innovate?



The question is not simply **“what is in it for me?”**
The questions that will define your generation of engineers is: **“what are we going to do for this province? What are we going to do for the communities that need us?”**

Accountability for the value we deliver

- »» Procurement systems prioritise lowest cost over quality, longevity, and social benefit endangering both infrastructure and communities
- »» Prioritising short-term savings leads to higher long-term costs and increased risks to public safety



Are we willing to accept avoidable failures in the name of short-term savings? Or will we commit to procurement and project decisions that recognise true value, risk mitigation and long-term benefits?



Accountability for Integrity

Integrity is not just what we do; it is who we are, and the culture we foster.

- » *Corruption Watch 2025 Annual Report* - procurement-related corruption remains one of the most reported forms of misconduct, with infrastructure projects featuring prominently
- » CESA continues to collaborate and lobby for dedicated policing, disruption protocols, and anti-corruption controls to protect workers, clients, our member firms, and communities from organised crime

Accountability for Integrity

How will we ensure that public resources serve the people, and not private interests?



Securing a meaningful seat at the decision-making table

- »» Who is making decisions about infrastructure if the people, who design, build, and maintain it are not in the room?
- »» Why are engineers consulted only after projects fail, rather than before decisions are taken?
- »» Why do we call on engineers to fix collapsing systems, but exclude them when strategies, budgets, and priorities are set?



Securing a meaningful seat at the decision-making table

- »» How long must engineers continue knocking on doors, offering expertise, while critical decisions are made without technical accountability?
- »» Why are we so often a 'needle in a haystack'? One voice among many, easily ignored, easily overridden.

Engineers must be at the centre of decision-making, where accountability begins!



Economic growth does not happen on spreadsheets

Together, grounded in *Ubuntu* and accountability, let us show South Africa what collaboration looks like!

Let us ALL be the custodians of a safe, sustainable, prosperous future our country deserves.



**This is my invitation to all of you!
We will fix it. We all have a
responsibility to fix it through:**



Thousands of
skilled, empowered
engineers nurtured
in our ranks



Communities
united by trust



Institutions



Public and private
sector partnerships

We can all share in the future of infrastructure that builds.

Thank you



Guest Speaker

Aphumle Mnyaka

Executive Engineering &
Projects - Vaal Central Water



Keynote Speaker

Ms Kathleen Dibolelo Mance

MEC - Free State Department of
Public Works and Infrastructure



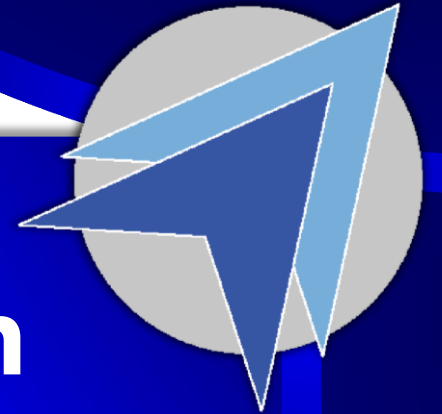
Industry Insights

Chris Campbell

CEO of Consulting Engineers South
Africa



Question and Answer Session



Closing Remarks

Marizel Pienaar

Chairperson of the CESA Young
Professionals Forum



Thank you

