

# PROFESSIONALISATION OF TRANSPORT PLANNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

**S DIBAKWANE**

National Department of Transport, 159 Struben Street, Pretoria;  
Tel: 012 309 3524; 083 7111304; Email: [dibakwas@dot.gov.za](mailto:dibakwas@dot.gov.za);  
[sipho.dibakwane@gmail.com](mailto:sipho.dibakwane@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

The National Transport Master Planning, Implementation and Review Directorate of the National Department of Transport initiated a project to address the challenges that are inherent in the transport planning field and the poor plight that is faced by transport planners in South Africa since 2022. The paper departs from the argument that a traditional state function such as transport planning has been captured by career consultants due to the lack of a professional mechanism that governs the discipline and the ongoing lack of adequate capacity in all spheres of Government.

Evidence that has been collected has demonstrated that the National Department of Transport and Provincial Department of Transport have their various transport plans, policies and strategies in place. Some of these transport plans, policies and strategies have been developed by third parties in the form of consultants. The local government situation is worse than National and Provincial governments. Some municipalities have their integrated transport plans in place whilst others have none. The common reasons about the lack of integrated transport plans in some municipalities across the country relates to lack of capacity, funding and prioritisation of bulk infrastructure services over the transport field.

This situation has resulted in the proliferation of career consultants in transport planning processes and projects; Quantity of transport planners employed by the State not known; lack of formal recognition of the role of transport planners in Government and transport planning in general; lack of standards and procedures in the employment of professional transport planners across all spheres of Government, lack of a regulatory body and the stagnation the transport planning discipline and lack of evolution thereof.

Data collection was done through literature review and consultations with a variety of stakeholders. The emerging insights from the data illustrate the need to professionalise the transport planning fraternity and especially the establishment of a regulatory body within the State. Some of the additional proposals that are advocated by the paper includes; professional registration of all transport planners (old and new), formulation of a training programme on transport planning and the National Transport Master Plan 2050; continuous professional development of transport planners; and formal recognition by the Minister of Transport through national transport legislation.