



Happy New Year, Metrobuild readers

A new year has dawned upon us and I'm still dazzled as to how fast 2008 flew by. Happy 2009 my Metrobuild readers, another year that we have to build on, brick by brick. My message to all my readers is: May the best of your past, be the worst of your future...!

The Metrobuild team have been working tirelessly to ensure that we bring you, the reader up-to-date news on the happenings in the civil and infrastructure arena.

In this issue, we bring you, the "Global War for talent" that showcases the skills shortage in our country in terms of civil engineers graduating from universities and how so much more needs to be done to ensure that the crucial infrastructure projects reach completion. These are the findings of the Infrastructure Sector Survey 2008, carried out by search firm, Landelahni Business Leaders. See Page 6 for full story.

Black economic empowerment group, Yakani Group has taken over a 51% stake in brick manufacturer, African Brick Centre in a deal said to be valued at R44.6 million. This acquisition is hopefully another building block in the realisation of Yakani Infracore's strategy, further enabling it to leverage its broad networks and relationships in infrastructural spending. Turn to Page 8 for more details.

Metrobuild's selected contractor of the month is Trencon Construction, a fully empowered construction company that is fast making its mark in the industry. The company's yearly turnover is estimated at R550 million and projects to date include, Ellis Park Stadium upgrade and ongoing work at the OR Tambo International Airport. Turn to Page 14 for full profile.

Aberdare Cables touched my heart this month with their whopping donation of R500 000 to a Midrand-based Yenzi Children's Home. This home provides safe housing for children in crisis, protects them from secondary abuse and defends their rights. Well done on your social responsibility initiative, Aberdare as the children are definitely our future. Let's make this year count by supporting our youth, training our staff and offering bursary packages to young, aspiring civil and structural engineering students. See Page 13 for more info. ■

Cheryl Reddy - Editor



Cheryl Reddy

Global war for talent

Landelahni CEO, Sandra Burmeister



The number of civil engineers graduating from South African universities has soared in recent years however much more needs to be done if the skills shortage is not to jeopardise crucial infrastructure projects.

These are the findings of the Infrastructure Sector Survey 2009, carried out by search firm, Landelahni Business Leaders. According to the company's CEO Sandra Burmeister, a creative and comprehensive approach is needed by the sector if it is to deliver on local projects against the backdrop of the global skills shortage.

As the South African infrastructure capital investment soared to an estimated R900 billion, employment in the sector has increased from 634 000 in 2001 to 1,2 million in 2007, with some 44% employed on a permanent basis. In 2006 the sector experienced 15,1% growth and in 2007 topped that at 21,3%. Employment in the infrastructure sector has doubled from 4% to 8% of total employment. Burmeister says, "Globally, research shows that skills shortages are the biggest constraint on construction growth, with project and contract managers, tradesman and engineers cited as the scarcest of all skills. South Africa is well known for its engineering skills, and the infrastructure sector is completing for skills in the global resourcing market."

The 2008 Landelahni Infrastructure Sector Survey researched 82 companies with just over 214 268 employees, representing 40% of permanent in the infrastructure sector, scoped as the electricity, water, waste, road, rail and ports sectors, as well as consulting engineers, major construction companies able to deliver projects of over R30 million, large JSE-listed construction companies and large suppliers to the construction industry, such as cement producers.

Employment equity and gender

The number of blacks in top management in the infrastructure sector has increased significantly over the past two years, from 16,2% to 28,% in 2007.

Blacks in senior management increased from 12% to 32,4% and black professionals from 20,6% to 41,3%.

"The significant increase in black in black representation in these core functions, now at an average of 35% is encouraging, however the sector lags considerably behind the all-industry average," adds Burmeister.

Infrastructure by its nature is a male orientated sector with a large proportion of its operations teams being based on remote sites. Nonetheless, the number of women in top management in the infrastructure sector has increased significantly over the past two years, from 4,3% in 2005 to 12,9% in 2007.

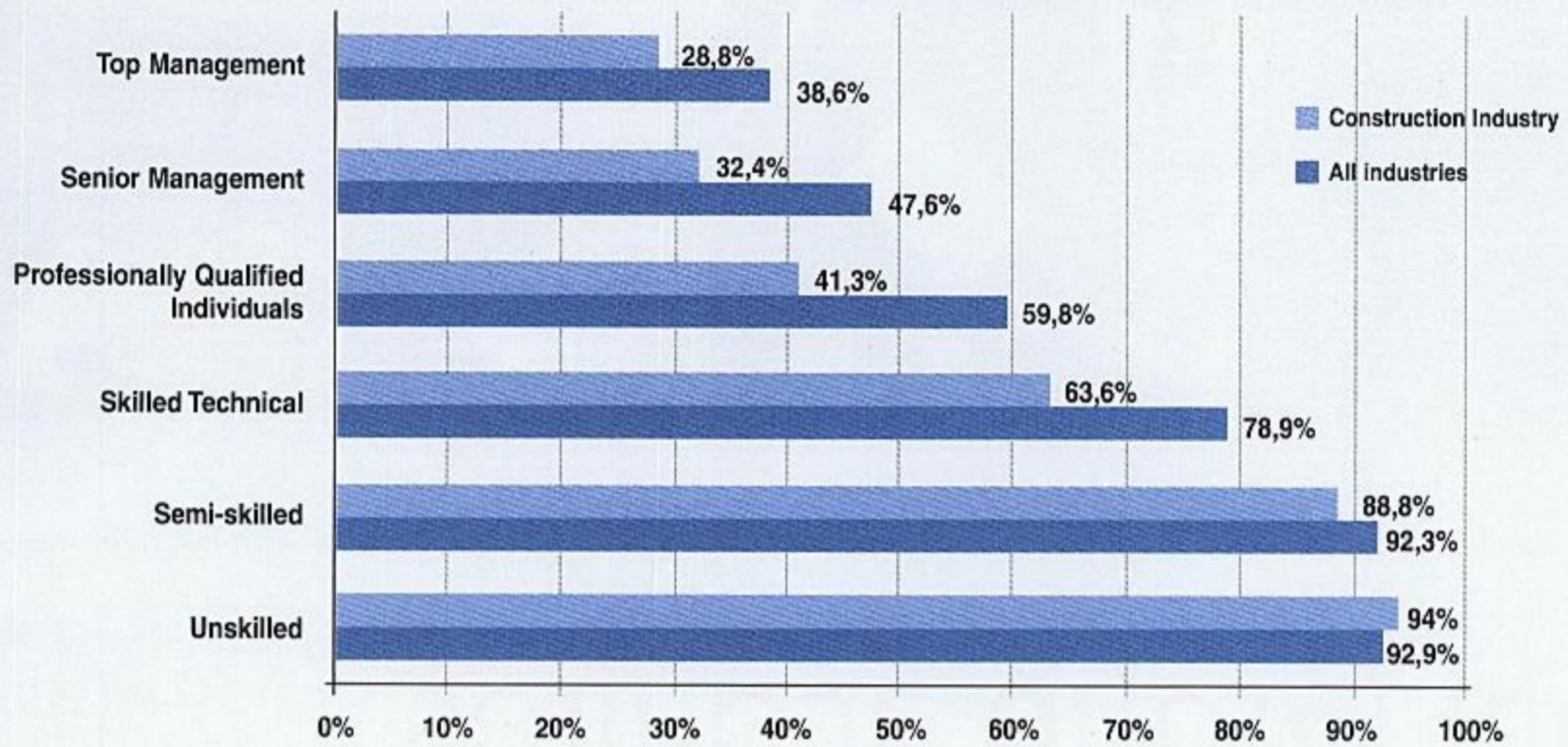
Female senior management increased from 6,4% in 2005 to 19,5% in 2007 and female professionals from 10,1 to 22%. Female employees in core roles have increased significantly from 5% to 15% over this period.

This has been influenced by gender equity programmes in parastatal power, water, road and rail utilities. However, again the sector lags significantly behind the all-industry average.

Throughout the sector, those positive trends that have emerged have no doubt been brought about by black economic empowerment legislation and tender criteria for government spend on infrastructure. ■

Infrastructure sector

Black Representation by Occupation level 2007



Two charts taken from the Infrastructure sector survey 2008

Infrastructure sector

Female representation by occupation level - 2007

