



Lesotho Highlands Development Authority

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LESOTHO HIGHLANDS WATER PROJECT PHASE II

LARGEST CONTRACT AWARD TO DATE

Maseru, 10 January 2018 – The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) has awarded the contract for designing and supervising the construction of the Polihali water transfer tunnel, the largest of all the Phase II engineering design contracts, to the Metsi a Senqu-Khubelu Consultants (MSKC) joint venture. Work on the approximately M900 million design and construction supervision contract commenced in December 2017.

“The appointment is a significant milestone in the implementation of Phase II,” commented Mr Samonyane Ntsekele MP, the Lesotho’s Minister of Water. “The MSKC joint venture combines local, regional and international tunnel experts, well qualified to deliver on the brief within the timeframe and to the highest standards.”

MSKC comprises Lesotho-based FM Associates (Pty) Ltd, and South African firms Aurecon South Africa (Pty) Ltd, Hatch Africa (Pry) Ltd, Knight Piesold (Pty) Ltd and SMEC South Africa (Pty) Ltd. Sub-consultants include White Life Consultants (Pty) Ltd, Lesotho; S5 Construction Consultants, Lesotho; and ILISO Consulting (Pty) Ltd, South Africa.

The consultant’s scope of services includes reviewing the existing project information and preparing the preliminary design of the transfer tunnel; preparing the tender design for the construction of the tunnel, tender drawings and tender documents; supporting the LHDA through the contractor tender and contract award process, preparing construction design and drawings, and providing contract management services during the construction of the tunnel.

Training LHDA staff for the purposes of operating and maintaining the tunnel is part of the skills and technology transfer element of the project. The project also makes provision for the training of Young Professionals.

The envisaged transfer tunnel will be approximately 38km long with a nominal bore of five metres. It will transfer water by gravity from Phase II’s Polihali

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reservoir in the Mokhotlong district into the Katse reservoir for eventual delivery to South Africa via the existing transfer scheme. Construction of the tunnel is expected to commence in 2020 and to be completed by the end of 2025. Both tunnel boring and drill and blast methods will be used to excavate the tunnel.

Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project builds on the successful completion of Phase I in 2003. It delivers water to the Gauteng region of South Africa and utilises the water delivery system to generate hydro-electricity for Lesotho. Phase II will ensure a reliable water supply to South Africa by 2025, and progressively increase the current supply rate of 780 million cubic metres per annum to more than 1 270 million cubic metres per annum. At the same time, it will increase the quantity of electricity generated in Lesotho and is a further step in the process of securing an independent electricity source to meet Lesotho's domestic requirements.

About

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) is multi-billion Maloti/Rand project between the governments of the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of South Africa.

It comprises water transfer and hydropower generation components and ancillary developments. The water transfer component entails the construction of dams and tunnels in Lesotho, enhancing the use of the Senqu (Orange) River and its tributaries by storing, regulating, diverting and controlling the flow to effect the delivery of specified quantities of water to South Africa, and utilizing the delivery system to generate hydro-electric power in Lesotho.

The major works of Phase I included the construction of the Katse Dam, the water transfer and delivery tunnels, 'Muela Dam and 'Muela Hydropower Plant and the Mohale Dam. The Phase II water transfer component comprises a dam at Polihali and a gravity tunnel that will connect the reservoir at Polihali with the Katse Reservoir. The envisaged hydropower component will comprise the Kobong Pumped Storage Scheme, or a similar scheme. The implementation of the Kobong scheme is subject to agreement on the outcome of a joint final feasibility study which is currently underway.

The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) is the implementing and management authority for the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, on behalf of the government of Lesotho.

For additional information, contact Ms 'Mabasia Ntoi on +266 22 246 000 or +266 22 311 280.