



**TRANSPORT MINISTRY
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**MEDIA STATEMENT ON THE RELEASE OF THE RAIL AND PORT FREIGHT RFI RESULTS
AND THE LAUNCHING OF THE PASSENGER RAIL RFI FOR POTENTIAL PRIVATE
SECTOR PARTICIPATION PROJECTS,
BY MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, MS BARBARA CREECY (MP). 26 OCTOBER 2025,
PRETORIA**

**Members of the media;
Distinguished Stakeholders,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Today we announce another important milestone in our collective journey to make rail the cornerstone of our national transport and logistics system.

We are releasing Requests for Information (RFI) for potential private partners who are interested in investing in our passenger rail system.

By the end of May 2025, PRASA had successfully commissioned 35 out of 40 passenger corridors and had achieved an annual audited figure of 77 million passenger journeys.

To continue on the recovery path, PRASA requires additional investment that cannot be carried by the fiscus alone. Participation in the RFI process will assist the organization to gather information, innovative ideas, and solutions

which will guide future Requests for Proposals for private sector investment in the passenger rail sector.

The request covers a range of different areas including fare collection systems; depot management; utilization and commercialization of Prasa's fibre network to enhance digital connectivity, and operational resilience within the rail sector and beyond; as well as insights and innovative ideas for a new era of long distance regional rapid transit.

Today, we are launching a series of Requests for Information — or RFIs — that will invite ideas and investment from the private sector to modernise and grow our rail system.

Let me take a moment to explain, in simple terms, what each of these projects is about. **Most importantly, each one of these projects are being announced today with the sole purpose to attracting the interest of private sector to make these projects a reality.** The projects are as follows;

Smart ticketing for seamless travel

We're moving towards a single, tap-and-go ticket that you can use across trains, buses, and even taxis.

No more queues or paper tickets — just one account-based system that makes travel easier and helps us manage revenue transparently and efficiently. The private sector has an important role to play to make this a reality.

Upgrading PRASA's train depots for better reliability

We're partnering with the private sector to modernise our major maintenance depots at Braamfontein and Wolmerton.

This will mean faster train repairs, better reliability, and new investment in nearby areas — creating jobs and boosting local development.

It is for this reason that the private sector participation is of paramount given the magnitude of this project.

Turning PRASA's fibre optic network into an asset

Along our railway lines, PRASA is rolling out thousands of kilometers of fibre-optic cable as part of its new signaling system.

We're opening the door this for private partners to help us turn that network into a source of income — by offering broadband and digital services — while strengthening safety and real-time communication across the rail system.

Introducing regional rapid trains

We're planning a new generation of regional trains — faster, safer, and more frequent — connecting cities like Pretoria, Johannesburg, Polokwane, Musina, Mbombela and Durban using our existing network up to 120 kilometres per hour, building new 160 to 200 kilometres per hour regional lines, and testing the water for a new 300-kilometre-per-hour high-speed railway between Johannesburg and Durban.

These lines will shorten travel times, reduce travel costs, take pressure off our roads, and stimulate new development in towns along each route. These regional projects are not possible without private sector partnership.

Leasing PRASA's new Blue trains, building trains for the African continent, and repurposing the old Yellow trains.

PRASA's new blue trains, built at the Gibela factory in Nigel, are world-class. We also have older yellow trains that can be repurposed for new uses.

Through this RFI, we're inviting skilled private operators to lease and manage our new and old fleet under clear performance standards — keeping them safe, reliable, and on time.

At the same time, we're partnering with manufacturers to position South Africa as Africa's leading train builder — creating jobs, boosting local manufacturing, and turning our country into a regional export hub, in line with the African Union's 2015 resolution.

These RFIs are not tenders — they are an invitation for the market to help us design the future of rail.

Together, we can rebuild confidence in public transport, open up investment opportunities, and connect South Africans to the growth we all deserve.

The rail and port freight RFI process is part of our broader Freight Logistics Roadmap, which seeks to restore efficiency, reliability, and competitiveness in the movement of goods across our economy.

It also reflects the government's commitment to implementing the National Rail Policy (2022), the National Ports Policy, and the Private Sector Participation Framework (2023), all of which recognise the critical role of partnerships with the private sector in revitalising our transport infrastructure.

Both policies enshrine public ownership of our rail and port network while promoting private sector investment to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

To guide the improvement of the passenger rail, we have set a clear target over the next four years, which is to:

- Ensure 600 million rail passenger journeys per annum by 2030.

We are eager to partner with the private sector to realise this target, setting us on course to build a 21st century transport system that transcends mobility challenges to strengthen industrial competitiveness, deepen regional integration, and drive inclusive economic growth.

The RFI process is a critical step in this private sector participation journey and reflects the government's acknowledgement of the importance of considering the rail passenger and freight logistics landscape from the perspectives of all interested and affected parties to develop effective and sustainable solutions.

We have concluded a Memorandum of Agreement with the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) and the National Treasury, appointing DBSA as the implementing agent on behalf of the Department of Transport for the PSP Unit. The PSP Unit is in the process of being capacitated and will be ready to commence with the conceptualisation of bid windows and development of Request for Proposals (RFPs).

On 23rd March 2025, we launched the first phase of online Requests for Information (RFIs) to Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) in the Transnet rail and port freight logistics sector.

The first RFI phase closed on 30 May 2025, and we received a total of 162 formal responses with 52 respondents being from 12 external countries.

Following on from this process, Transnet will issue the first Request for Proposal before the end of 2025 and three more Requests for Proposals in the first half of 2026.

Both the RFI analysis results report and the rail passenger RFIs will be made available on the Department of Transport and DBSA's websites or directly at www.psp-rfi.co.za.

- The RFI must be completed online, and the portal will remain open from 26 October 2025 to 15 December 2025
- The Interested and Affected Parties will be prompted to register their details before accessing the RFI Analysis report.
- Inputs and comments for the freight analysis results should be provided within 30 days
- The Passenger Rail RFI will remain open for a period of eight weeks.

Thank You