The inaugural National Skills Competition and Exposition is to take place at the Ramatex Complex from the 14th to the 17th of September, this year.

Acting CEO, Jerry Beukes made the announcement at a media conference in the capital on Thursday, 19 May 2016. Beukes highlighted the importance of the event as a key deliverable under the Namibian Government’s Harambee Prosperity Plan, which advocates for the staging of a “National Vocational Education and Training (VET) skills competition bi-annually, to promote VET as an education subsector of choice.

“It is also a deliverable under the NTA’s rolling five-year Strategic Plan to support the promotion of technical and vocational career paths amongst young Namibians, and to challenge societal perception under which such career paths are stigmatised as low-status options, with limited prospects for career advancement”, he noted.

The event has two main components: A National Skills Competition, which is to serve as a platform from which to select Namibia’s competitors to represent the country at the next WorldSkills International (WSI) competition; and an exposition, in which credible and accredited local and international technical and vocational training institutions are going to participate and share information about their institutions and course offerings to young Namibians, wishing to embark on career paths within the VET sector.

The competition is open to all public and private training institutions and industry sectors. While the scope of occupational skill areas is expected to increase at future competitions, only the following 10 (ten) occupational skill areas will be staged at the inaugural competition. This is a strategic decision to keep the inaugural competition manageable to allow for a meaningful evaluation and to inform the development of a sustainable national skills competition framework.

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Members of the respective management teams of the public Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) under the supervision of the NTA, gathered at the Heja Lodge outside the capital from the 26th to the 29th of April 2016, to focus on issues pertaining to overall efficiency and effectiveness in their service delivery.

Opening the two-day meeting, Acting CEO, Jerry Beukes highlighted the importance of the VET sector in meeting Namibia’s national development objectives, which is articulated under the Social Progression Pillar of the Harambee Prosperity Plan. “Our VTCs have an important role to play under this pillar and in supporting the realization of its targets, which include improving the countrywide image of VET through expanding quality VET opportunities; increasing the annual number of VET trainees from the current 15-thousand to 25-thousand per annum by the end of the Harambee period, and to introduce apprenticeship, mentoring, coaching and equipment aid, including financial assistance to enable VET graduates to start their own businesses”, Beukes explained.

“The targets and commitments under Harambee for VET are clear and unambiguous. And there is an expectation that we meet these targets and commitments. Yes, some may reason that we have done a lot of good work and that we should be well on our way. But, I think we all agree that a lot of hard work still lies ahead of us. And that in living up to expectations, we will have to work harder and work smarter”, the Acting CEO emphasised.

Beukes also reassured the participants of the NTA’s continued commitment in rendering all the VTCs under its supervision, the necessary support and cooperation towards establishing these centres as preferred VET institutions. “The success of the NTA’s support to the VTCs ultimately depends on all of us working together as partners in a spirit of engagement, teamwork, togetherness and Harambee”, he noted.

Amongst others, the meeting also focused on assessing the progress VTCs have made through their respective business plans for the 2015/16 financial year and to discuss common approaches to the NTA’s VET Expansion Project, especially as far as the diversification of their course offerings is concerned. Other discussion areas included procurement and other financial management functions and common methodologies to optimise operational output. WorldSkills Namibia Manager, Sens Shoolongo also shared information about how the VTCs were to be involved in the upcoming selection competitions to identify participants for the National Skills Competition and Exposition, which is to take place from the 14 to the 17th of September 2016, at the Ramatex Complex in the capital.

SH: What are your aspirations for 2016? The year 2015 has been a bit hectic. Having graduated with my honours degree in Project Management last year, I have taken a deliberate decision to take a break from studying, and rather focus more on learning more about the VET sector. I would love to travel to Paris, France.

SH: What do you enjoy about being a Quality Systems Auditor? It allows me to discover a lot about my own interpersonal skills, as I have to interact with people from different backgrounds, on a daily basis. I also love the travelling that comes with the job and to see and appreciate what a beautiful country we have. Most definitely, being a Quality Systems Auditor allows you an opportunity to appreciate Vocational Education and Training and its potential for our country. Auditing also allows you an opportunity to think out of the box to finally get what you want from your auditee.

SH: Where do you see yourself in the next five years? Quality assurance is a very broad field and would certainly work towards diversifying my knowledge and expertise. I am ambitious though and I want to grow and climb the professional ladder.

SH: How would you describe the NTA work environment? The team building activities, departmental retreats and stakeholder engagement have been highlights since joining this vibrant organisation. Indeed, I have joined the friendliest division where teamwork always comes to the fore. However, the never-ending renovations at NTA Village and having to work from boxes is a thumbs down.

SH: What is the first thing you do after awakening up? I drink water, check my phone for any news and messages I have missed out on, then I hit the shower.
ANNOUNCEMENT
NATIONAL SKILLS COMPETITION & EXPO

competency standards in the industrial trades and service sectors of the annual competitions also provide a means of exchange and comparison of sharing platforms for members to learn from and with each other. The biannual international skills competitions and establishing an organisation that promotes skills excellence through the staging of biannual skills competitions. Namibia, through the NTA, is a member of WSI, which is a non-political organisation that promotes skills excellence through the staging of biannual international skills competitions and establishing networking and sharing platforms for members to learn from and with each other. The biannual competitions also provide a means of exchange and comparison of competency standards in the industrial trades and service sectors of the global economy.

Beukes also highlighted that the NTA intended using the platform to give further impetus to current efforts to promote technical and vocational careers amongst young Namibians.

“The strategic policy rationale behind the exhibition component of this event is clear - Young Namibians need to make decisions about their future careers in a well-informed and well-thought-through way, linked to their interests, their capacities and their aspirations. As such, the exposition component is aimed at bringing together on a shared platform, public and private registered training providers, corporate entities and other industry stakeholders to partner the NTA in the promotion of technical and vocational careers; and in countering negative societal perceptions and stereotypes stigmatising technical and vocational training as last-choice education”, he said.

He added that the NTA expected to bring together under a single umbrella credible public and private VET providers, corporate entities and other industry stakeholders to partner it in the promotion of technical and vocational careers.

Beukes also encouraged eligible competitors and training institutions to register for participation. Application forms and detailed information can be accessible on the NTA website: www.nta.com.na or obtained upon request from the WorldSkills Namibia Secretariat at 061-2078 580. Alternatively, information can be collected from the NTA Head Office (NTA Village, Rand Street - Khomasdal) or from the nearest public Vocational Training Centre.

The Namibia Training Authority and Bell Equipment Ltd. entered into a Memorandum of Understanding on Thursday, 19 May 2016.

Focal areas of cooperation under the partnership between the two entities include the development of training programmes, assessment and certification services, quality assurance support, provision of apprenticeship and job attachment opportunities and the sharing of best practice in the Earthmoving and Construction sectors.

Acting CEO, Jerry Beukes remarked at the signing ceremony that the partnership can go a long way in establishing and securing regular apprenticeship and job attachment opportunities and internship programmes for local trainees and trainers in the broader construction sector. “Under the agreement, the NTA undertakes to facilitate the work visas of BELL Equipment trainers and assessors when visiting Namibia, to conduct training to BELL Equipment employees and customers, and to register BELL Equipment’s trainers and assessors on its database”, Beukes highlights.

On its part, BELL Equipment is to communicate to the NTA how many trainees and trainers it can accommodate for job attachment annually, and to specify the period of attachment and location, and to provide technical guidance, expertise and capacity building to trainers and trainers on industrial attachment. BELL Equipment is also to facilitate the assessment and certification of operators in Namibia through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), using its operator trainers and assessors. It is also to render further support to the development and review of Diesel/Earthmoving Equipment unit standards, qualifications and training programmes.

In support of local capacity building efforts in the Diesel/Earthmoving Equipment occupational area, BELL Equipment has committed itself to availing its training facilities and experts for the provision of training to vocational training centre trainers, in this field.

BELL Equipment is a global supplier of heavy-duty equipment and articulated vehicles.

The National Skills Competition is to be preceded by a series of regional selection competitions at various training institutions from 27 to 28 May 2016 to select competitors to participate at the National Skills Competition. Only eligible competitors who meet age and other technical requirements as stipulated in the WorldSkills International (WSI) competition rules will be considered for representing the country at the WorldSkills Namibia Secretariat at 061-2078 580.

Alternatively, information can be collected from the NTA Head Office (NTA Village, Rand Street - Khomasdal) or from the nearest public Vocational Training Centre.

The areas are Automotive Technology; Bricklaying; Carpentry; Cooking; Electrical Installation; Joinery; Plumbing and Heating; Refrigeration and Airconditioning; Wall and Floor Tiling; and Welding.

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Namibia, through the NTA, is a member of WSI, which is a non-political organisation that promotes skills excellence through the staging of biannual international skills competitions and establishing networking and sharing platforms for members to learn from and with each other. The biannual competitions also provide a means of exchange and comparison of competency standards in the industrial trades and service sectors of the global economy.

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BELL Equipment is a global supplier of heavy-duty equipment and articulated vehicles.
This year technical and vocational skills are set to shine at Namibia’s first ever National Skills Competition and Exposition.

1. WHAT IS WORLDSKILLS INTERNATIONAL AND THE WORLDSKILLS INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION?

WorldSkills International (WSI) is a non-political organization established to promote skills excellence through the staging of bi-annual international skills competitions, which serve as a platform to establish networking and sharing platforms for member organisations to learn from, and with each other. The WorldSkills Competition, to which all 75 member countries are eligible to send competitors is an important platform which provides a means of exchange and comparison of world-class competency standards in the industrial trades and service sectors of the global economy. The competition is staged in a different member country every second year. Namibia made its debut at the last competition held in August 2015 in Sao Paolo, Brazil. The next competition takes place in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in 2017. Six countries, namely Egypt, Morocco, Namibia, South Africa, Tunisia and Zambia now represent Africa. Five new applications from the continent are currently under consideration.

2. WHY A NATIONAL SKILLS COMPETITION FOR NAMIBIA?

The NTA is our country’s national representative body to WorldSkills International. As the custodian for Vocational Education and Training in Namibia, the NTA values the opportunity that comes with participation in the WorldSkills International Competition to benchmark local skills with best practices. In response to the Harambee Plan for Prosperity, which advocates for the bi-annual staging of a national Vocational Education and Training skills competition, the NTA has set up a WorldSkills Namibia Secretariat to develop and conduct a national skills competition, to serve as a platform from which to select young Namibians to represent the country at regional and international skills competitions.

3. OBJECTIVES

- Uplift local training standards and skills levels to support the economy;
- Change negative societal perception about technical and vocational training and skills;
- Create opportunities for young Namibians to compete and showcase their individual skills at local, regional and international level;
- Create opportunities for trainers and other experts in the local training fraternity and industry to benchmark their standards and skills with best practices;
- Create opportunities for Namibia to access standards and other training materials developed by WorldSkills International and/or member countries; and
- Create a platform for networking and partnership with other members, international organisations and industrial bodies relevant to the transformation of VET in Namibia.

4. NATIONAL SKILLS COMPETITION AND EXPO 2016

The National Skills Competition & Expo 2016 takes place from 14 to 17 September 2016 at the Ramatex Complex in Otjomuise, Windhoek. Competitors will be selected through Selection Competitions to be staged at various locations across the country from 27 to 28 May 2016. Eligible trainees at public and private training institutions are encouraged to enter and compete at the Selection Competitions. This includes the training institutions of the Namibia Defence Force and the Correctional Services.

School learners interested in learning more about technical and vocational courses and training options are also encouraged to attend. Accredited technical and vocational training institutions will participate and share information about their courses and training options.

5. COMPETITION CATEGORIES

Eligible trainees are to compete in the following skills areas:

- Automotive Technology
- Bricklaying
- Carpentry
- Cooking
- Electrical Installation
- Joinery
- Plumbing & Heating
- Refrigeration & Airconditioning
- Wall & Floor Tiling
- Welding

The NTA expects to increase the scope of skills area categories at subsequent competitions.

6. REGISTRATION

Application forms and detailed information can be accessed through:

- NTA website – www.nta.com.na; WorldSkills Namibia Secretariat – Tel 061-207858;
- NTA Head Office (NTA Village, Rand Street – Khomasdal); and
- Selected public and private vocational training centres.

7. CONTACT

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Tel: 061-2078580

8. WORLDSKILLS ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES 2017

Only competitors meeting age and other requirements as stipulated in the WSI competition rules will be eligible for representing Namibia at the next competition in Abu Dhabi in 2017. The WorldSkills Namibia Secretariat will however offer attractive rewards to all winners at the National Skills Competition, regardless of whether they meet requirements.
PICTURE FOCUS
From Around and About the VET Scene

LEADERS IN VET
Higher Education, Training and Innovation Minister, Hon. Dr. Itah Kandjii-Murangi shakes hands with COSDEF Chairperson, Former Prime Minister, Nahas Angula and COSDEF Executive Manager, Jeremy Muller.

VET BLOOD DONORS
NTA Messenger/Driver, Lukas Shinana getting ready to do his part at a recent Blood Donation Day held at NTA Village.

VET VETERAN
ProVET’s Peter Lenhardt smiling for the camera.

IMPORTANT GUEST
Communications & Advocacy Officer, Samantha Benade helps NTA Board Member, Tim Patlihouse to get ready for the Gobabis VTC inauguration ceremony.

VET LEVY LADY
Collection Manager, Genette Shitalangalo pictured at a recent levy information session.

FUN WITH FAMILY
VET Standards Officer, Francois Strauss and his family enjoyed the recent NTA Family Fun Day at the Eros Primary School.

VET BLOOD DONORS
NTA Messenger/Driver, Lukas Shinana getting ready to do his part at a recent Blood Donation Day held at NTA Village.

PASSIONATE ABOUT VET
This group of Rundu Vocational Training Centre Plumbing and Pipefitting trainees was found in their workshop on a Saturday morning, preparing for the upcoming assessments.

TESTING SAMPLES
Water Safety Trainees at the Namwater HRDC outside Okahandja doing work in the laboratory.

PLANNING FOR VET
Finance Manager, Rudolf Gaweseb and Assessment & Certification Manager, Mariane Hara-Gaes at a recent planning session.

SHARE YOUR VET PICTURES AND HAVE THEM PUBLISHED IN OUR MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER info@nta.com.na
A delegation of Nigerian education officials and experts recently visited the NTA to learn more about the Namibian Vocational Education and Training system, with a specific focus on the local funding system for technical and vocational training.

The group of twelve delegates from an array of Nigerian educational and skills development projects, spent their time visiting different Community Skills Development Centres (COSDECs) throughout Namibia. These consultations were aimed at gaining insight into the local quality assurance, registration and accreditation systems and to apply it towards improving the quality of technical and vocational training in Nigeria.

NTA Manager: Quality Assurance, Ian Gicheru and ProVET Key Priority Consultant, Martin Wilkinson, received the delegation. “We are confident that the information shared by our institution can sufficiently aid our Nigerian colleagues in their quest for bettering their technical and vocational training systems back home. Our Nigerian counterparts face a daunting task considering the Nigerian population is more than 176 million, while the Namibian population is a mere 2.3 million, in comparison”, Wilkinson stressed.

On his part, the Team Leader of the delegation, Erling Petersen explained that Nigeria was currently in the process of reforming the technical and vocational skills delivery system in three of her northern states, making it important to benchmark with the systems of other countries.

The NTA’s Standards Assessment and Certification Council (SACC) recently approved the registration of an additional five Vocational Education and Training institutions at its meeting, held on the 26th of April 2016.

The five institutions offer a range of vocational training qualifications from the traditional occupations to civil and mechanical engineering. They are Centre for Training and Projects Development (CTPD) (Windhoek); Katatura Youth Enterprise Centre (KAYEC) (Windhoek & Ondangwa); Valombola Vocational Training Centre (Ongwediva); KLM Likuwa Mechanical Training Institute CC (Otjiwarongo); and Namibia Vocational School.

Quality Assurance Manager, Ian Gicheru told The Stakeholder that the institutions have met all the requirements and criteria, as articulated under Government Notice 300 – Regulations for the Registration of Vocational Education and Training providers. “We are witnessing good and steady progress in growing the list of credible and quality-assured training institutions”, he noted.

Meanwhile, as part of the ongoing effort to increase the number of registered assessment practitioners, the SACC also approved the registration of an additional 32 assessment practitioners, bringing the number of registered practitioners to 98, so far. “Whilst the latest additions to the list of registered assessment practitioners is a far cry from the numbers required to sustainably conduct assessments, I am confident that it will go a long way in helping to alleviate the shortage of qualified and approved assessment practitioners needed to develop assessment instruments, moderate assessments, as well as conduct assessments”, Gicheru explained.

The registration of assessment practitioners is an ongoing process and qualified individuals interested in being registered as such, are welcome to submit applications to the NTA’s Quality Assurance Division.

“Essentially, we are considering modeling our lower-level skills development institutions on a model similar to that of Namibia’s COSDECs, while we are also rendering assistance to Nigeria’s National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), as far as the introduction of sustainable and fit-for-purpose quality assurance systems are concerned”, Petersen highlighted.

SHARE YOUR COMMENTS, PICTURES AND CONTRIBUTIONS AND BECOME PART OF OUR STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITY