



Empowered to Deliver

Gibela factory on track for March completion, says new CEO

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Construction of the Gibela plant, in Dunnottar on the far East Rand, is on track for completion in March next year, says Gibela Rail Transport Consortium CEO Thierry Darthout.

Alstom Southern Africa is the majority shareholder in Gibela (61%), while BEE partners New Africa Rail and Ubumbano Rail hold 9% and 30% respectively.

“We are in the process of commissioning the industrial equipment at the plant,” says Darthout. “The first locally built train should be delivered to the client in December 2018.”

The Gibela consortium has to deliver 600 new X'Trapolis Mega commuter trains (3 600 cars) to the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) in a R59-billion deal signed and sealed in 2014. Local content on the trains is promised to be between 65% to 70%, by volume.

Darthout says a particular challenge in providing the 600 new trains is that Gibela will have to build one train car a day in 2019, at the peak of production. “And we’ll have to do this in a brand new factory with new staff and a new supplier base.”

Gibela has already identified and developed 100 local component suppliers for the project. These components include bogies, traction systems, converters, control systems and looming.

Employment at the plant will reach 630 people by March next year, peaking at 1 000 people, excluding employment at component manufacturers.

