

Press Release: Immediate

On 13 October 2013, a national Sunday newspaper carried an article alledging that the Gauteng Provincial Department of Health had imported clothing and textile products for its hospitals. This was in serious contravention of the government procurement regulations – an innovative national employment creation policy – which requires that clothing and textile products (amongst others) bought by government must be manufactured locally.

In that article, the SA Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (SACTWU) noted the existence of an imminent larger tender for clothing and textile products, which closes on 8 November 2013, and which is apparently worth around R180m.

In order to ensure that the Gauteng Department of Health procures these goods locally and in order to ensure that no supplier hoodwinks the Department into importing more of these goods, SACTWU calls on the Department to invite the Department of Trade and Industry (dti) to participate in the bid adjudication process. We believe the dti has the requisite knowledge of the industry to guide adjudication in the correct manner, and to ensure that the job creation, industrialisation, social and health multipliers of this tender are maximized.

This tender should and can do much to support the local textile and clothing manufacturing industry, and workers within the industry, if the Department adheres to the regulations and ensures that all of these products are locally made. However if the Provincial Department imports these goods again, not only will it be breaking the law and undermining the job creation efforts of National Government, but it will also compound the crises of unemployment and poverty in South Africa. Ironically this will exacerbate poverty-related diseases experienced by clothing and textile workers, their families and working class communities in general, and it will further strain national healthcare infrastructure who will turn to clinics and hospitals for support.”

Issued by
Andre Kriel
General Secretary
SACTWU