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Port pollution problem

Embattled Transnet aims for 30% dust complaint reduction



Dave Savides

TRANSNET is heading for trouble over port dust pollution. It admits it faces 'significant operational, legal and reputational risks' related to air quality management, particularly in high-impact areas such as Richards Bay.

This as harbour-bound coal dust issues continue to dominate the list of complaints from angry city residents.

The port pollution concern was published in the Transnet Integrated Report 2025, circulated last week.

"Dust emissions associated with bulk material handling have increased community complaints and threaten Transnet's social licence to operate.

"Non-compliance with Atmospheric Emissions Licence (AEL) conditions may result in the rejection of future expansion applications, stricter regulatory requirements, loss of operational permits, fines, legal penalties or litigation," stated the report.

"This may also result in disrupted operations or failure to meet production targets."

Transnet plans to boost air quality management programmes at both the ports of Richards Bay and Saldanha Bay, targeting a 30% reduction in air quality-related complaints by this December.

The entity said it had engaged with environmental authorities on air pollution in hotspot areas, and aims to strengthen its air quality monitoring and data collation and improve the integrity of its air quality data.

It also plans to establish a community forum for engagements regarding dust management and mitigation, and establishing a real-time air quality information management system.

"At the Port of Richards Bay, an integrated Corrective Action Plan (CAP) is in place and being implemented to address dust emissions, with monthly group-level oversight and targeted site inspections.

"The Joint Action Plan responding to the Richards Bay compliance directive is being executed by both Transnet National Ports Authority and Transnet Port Terminals," Transnet stated.

Continued on page 2

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