

DRC to SA transport corridor considered

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Transnet Freight Rail (TFR) had started negotiations with the four railway organisations - the National Railways of Zimbabwe, Zambian Railways Limited, *Societe Nationale des Chemins de Fer du Congo* (SNCC) and Beitbridge Bulawayo Railway line - to create a unified railway system on the North-South Corridor linking South Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Transport Minister Ben Martins said on Wednesday (28 November).



He said a joint operating centre would be established in Bulawayo to ensure that integrated resource planning took place to achieve operational efficiencies.

The centre would also improve rail time as all the organisations would be accommodated in one facility. This would also facilitate "effective and quick deviation management" across the different borders.

Martins said in a written reply to a parliamentary question by National Council of Provinces member Darryl Worth that six committees would also be established to drive an alignment in joint operations, investment planning, new business development, safety, skills development and security across the railway lines.

"The joint planning and business development will allow all four organisations to develop a joint marketing drive which is intended to encourage not only exports from South Africa, but also jointly identify the return cargo that will optimise the use of the same wagons for imports coming into South Africa," the minister said..

"SADC (Southern African Development Community) countries will financially benefit from this rail-corridor," he added.