

CTICC 2 opens for business, strengthens Cape Town tourism initiatives

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The CTICC 2, the Cape Town International Convention Centre's (CTICC) R900m expansion was officially opened on 25 January 2018 by Western Cape Premier Helen Zille, and Cape Town executive mayor, Patricia de Lille.

The new facility is set to strengthen Cape Town's reputation as a global business events destination and marks significant progress in the CTICC's strategy of becoming one of the top ten long-haul convention centre's in the world - the facility is a collaborative project by the centre and its shareholders including the City of Cape Town, Western Cape Government and SunWest International.



Chief executive officer of the CTICC, Julie-May Ellingson said the CTICC is now a fully integrated event venue complex never before seen in Cape Town which offers clients unparalleled choice and flexibility.

“What are the benefits of this extra space? Essentially, two things: greater capacity and greater flexibility. We can now host very large events, such as the upcoming 15,000-delegate World Ophthalmology Congress, across the entire complex. Cape Town would never have won this bid if it wasn't for the CTICC's expansion. And we can host multiple large events across both venues simultaneously, which we couldn't do before. Put simply, we can now welcome more events and more people in more ways,” explained Ellingson.

Since the CTICC opened in 2003, expansion was on the cards as the centre's growth exceeded expectations. High occupancy and lack of capacity prompted the company's board to search for expansion sites.

Enhancing socio-economic benefits

Executive mayor, Patricia de Lille said that CTICC 2 boosts Cape Town's reputation as a globally competitive business events destination and will enhance the socio-economic benefits the centre produces.

"The CTICC generated over 16 million visitor days, by local and international delegates attending the nearly 7,000 events the centre has hosted since 2003. This is supported by an equally powerful impact on job creation. Through its operations, the centre sustained a total of 107,000 jobs directly in the Western Cape and nationally since opening. The CTICC has made a cumulative economic contribution to national GDP of R36.3bn and added R32bn to the Western Cape economy," explained De Lille.

De Lille said CTICC 2 provides impetus to Cape Town's development as the ideas capital of Africa: "Cape Town is fast becoming the ideas capital of Africa. Organisations and businesses now choose Cape Town as a place from which to develop their Africa strategies. Many of the CTICC's flagship events is a testimony to Cape Town's ability to connect people from the tip to the top of Africa."

The City of Cape Town which holds 71.4% of the shares in the CTICC, invested R550m in the expansion project which acted as a catalyst for the continued regeneration of the inner city.

Western Cape Premier Helen Zille said the convention centre is a strategic asset of the local and provincial governments. The provincial government gave R162m in funding for the project. Zille confirmed that the expert completion of CTICC 2 is a continuation of the overall support the centre has received from all spheres of government.

Facilitating entrepreneurship and public-private partnerships

"The CTICC has far outperformed original expectation becoming a profit centre in its own right. The CTICC's continued profitability shows that government can facilitate entrepreneurship and that public-private partnerships can flourish in South Africa," said Zille.

The CTICC contributed R193m to the expansion project. "CTICC 2's construction sustained 1,337 job opportunities of which 75.5% benefited black construction workers and specialists and 7.2% of the manpower on site was female. There were also 11 engineering students working on the project and 10 were black women who are building their careers in the industry," reported Ellingson.

Western Cape minister of economic development Alan Winde said: “The CTICC’s important role in job creation and bringing revenue into the province cannot be underestimated. My hope is that the new, expanded convention centre will radically accelerate the creation of jobs for residents in this sector. As part of Project Khulisa, my department has been focused on growing the tourism sector and creating more jobs.

We know that business travellers tend to spend more money when they travel which benefits suppliers, retail and our economy as a whole. Delegates at CTICC-hosted conferences spent R1.3bn in 2016/17, while international delegates brought R363m in foreign exchange into our economy.”

The interactive opening ceremony gave guests the opportunity to experience several of the state-of-the-art meeting spaces within the facility.

Maximising MICE offerings

“CTICC 2 adds an additional 31,148m² to our complex, including 10,000m² of conference and exhibition space, as well as a further 3,000m² of formal and informal meeting space. These numbers translate to six exhibition halls, four meeting suites, five meeting pod rooms, an executive boardroom, three open-air terraces including an impressive rooftop venue, a coffee shop, and a multi-level parking garage,” said Ellingson.

The centre located opposite and due east of the original convention centre boasts an environmentally sustainable design, high-tech venue control systems, high-calibre IT infrastructure, free public Wi-Fi, three production kitchens to cater for every type of event, and a service tunnel under Heerengracht avenue connecting CTICC 2 with CTICC1.

“CTICC 2 is seriously high-tech. The facility is served by 1,792 network points with 100km of CAT6 network cable, an extensive fibre optic network with 1,496 fibre optic points and 28km of fibre, catering for high-speed, high-volume traffic. Wi-Fi connectivity is enabled through a combination of high and standard density points catering for a combined total of 15,000 connections with an internet connectivity uplink of 10 GB/s ensuring sufficient capacity for current and future demands,” said Ellingson.

The centre will now be further integrated with CTICC 1 to ensure seamless event operations.

“Phase 2 of the CTICC 2 project is well underway. In the next few months, we will be able to start construction of the skybridge linking the two buildings across Heerengracht,” confirmed Ellingson.

Future event planning

Prior to the official opening CTICC 2 had already hosted several “event firsts” to showcase the centre’s capabilities welcoming close to 50,000 delegates. The 21st Annual Congress of the SA Council of Shopping Centres which took place in September 2017, was the very first event hosted in the centre, with both clients and delegates complimenting the centre’s

modern, world-class design.

“The centre performed well at our first consumer exhibition. Overall, 22,000 children, parents and exhibitors put our venue through its paces during MamaMagic – The Baby Expo 2017. We were excited to host the much-publicised Africa launch of the Chinese Liquor Brand Kweichou Moutai and CTICC 2 also enabled a longstanding client, KNect 365, organiser of the AfricaCom international conference, to grow their event,” said Ellingson.

The new centre opens with exciting upcoming events in the pipeline. The CTICC has a total of 133 bookings for events, with 58 international conferences secured and 75 national events contracted until December 2023. Thirteen of these events will take place concurrently in both our buildings and 20 events have already been contracted to take place in CTICC 2.

Comic book fans and movie buffs can look forward to the 2018 edition of FanCon Comic Con taking place in CTICC 2 in April 2018. During the same weekend consumers can also enjoy Decorex 2018.

In February 2018, IT professionals and developers can build their cloud skills at the Microsoft Tech Summit – a free training event. Africa's largest power, energy and water trade expo and conference, Africa Utility Week will also take place at the CTICC 2 in May 2018.

Optimising water saving strategies

While Cape Town's severe drought remains, the key talking point in the city, Ellingson explained that the CTICC has implemented several water savings measures to reduce the centre's water consumption.

“Events at the CTICC are taking place as usual. Most of our water savings initiatives take place ‘behind the scenes’ and is part of our facilities management operations,” confirmed Ellingson.

The CTICC has been running water conservation initiatives for several years. By the 2015/16 financial year, the centre had already been using 10 million litres less water than it did five years earlier. As the drought intensified, the centre also installed storage tanks to capture rain water and increased the grey water storage capacity. Additional augmentation systems are under consideration but the focus remains on minimising water usage wherever possible.