

**SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

## Lending a Hand

Ecsa calls on retired engineers to mentor graduates

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SOUTH AFRICA had to ensure that retired engineers impart what they had learnt over the years to new entrants in the sector, the Engineering Council of South Africa (Ecsa) said last month,

*You should bow low and be thankful for your enemies. They help you to grow.*

hailing efforts by some municipalities to recruit retired engineers to mentor juniors in the field.

Ecsa noted that municipalities like eThekweni Metro had gone to the extent of recruiting retired personnel to help train young graduates emerging out of universities as a result of shortages within the profession.

“We hail such intervention initiatives and, with the current situ-

ation, all relevant stakeholders should play a role in addressing the situation.

“We also encourage those retired individuals to lend a hand and ensure knowledge and skills are passed on to the young professionals to allow skills rotation in the industry,” Ecsa acting CEO Professor **Hu Hanrahan** said in a statement.

South Africa, like many other regions, faced a brain drain crisis in the engineering field and was battling with shortages in the sector, with the Department of Labour indicating there are serious shortages in the civil and mechanical engineering fields.

A recently published report by

the Human Sciences Research Council had found that South Africa’s ratio of engineering professionals to citizens remained much lower than those of other countries.

The report, entitled ‘Engineers in a developing country: the profession and education of engineering professionals in South Africa’, by **Renette du Toit** and **Joan Roodt**, highlighted that South Africa had only 473 engineers for every one-million citizens. This was in comparison with other FIFA World Cup hosting countries, like Japan, which had 3 306 engineers for every one-million citizens, the report showed.