

R40m Beitbridge Border fence trial kicks off

The trial involving the R40 million Beitbridge Border fence repair and construction contract awarded by the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure is expected to be heard in the Special Tribunal sitting in the Johannesburg High Court this week.



Source: Ibrahim Boran from [Pexels](#)

The trial gets underway today.

The 40km border fence project was initiated by the department in March 2020 at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Special Investigating Unit is now seeking to have the contract reviewed and set aside.

According to the Special Tribunal, the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) alleges that the department did not follow state procurement regulations when it awarded the border fence contract to construction companies Caledon River Properties (Pty) Ltd and ProfTeam CC.

The two companies were allegedly paid in advance by the department for the construction of the razor mesh fence before the SIU applied for and received an order preventing any more payments and freezing the bank accounts of the two companies.

“The SIU approached the Special Tribunal on [an] urgent basis to preserve the amount pending the finalisation of the review proceedings. The Special Tribunal granted the preservation order on 16 October 2020.

“The interim preservation order interdicted, prohibited and restrained the Department of Public Works from making further payments to the contractors beyond the R21.8m of the R40m that had already been paid and subsequently preserved,” the Special Tribunal said.

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