New app improves roads and storm water infrastructure

THE JOHANNESBURG Roads Agency (JRA) has implemented a new app called the "Smart City Solution" method through which it can view 1.6 million images of the conditions of the city's roads and storm water infrastructure, as well the location of 700 000 of its assets.

This has been done for effortless tracking, managing and monitoring of assets, which are divided into the following categories: storm water infrastructure, roads furniture, bridges, street names and document management.

As a result, the agency is now able to respond quicker and more effectively to issues relating to infrastructure, says Christine Walters, City of Joburg member of the mayoral committee for transport.

She says the innovation will result in improved service delivery to the public and better management and planning capabilities for the JRA.

"The last audit of road infrastructure assets was conducted in 2007. It is often forgotten that Joburg is a dynamic, ever expanding city with new assets constantly being created. This has resulted in difficulties in the past in terms of management, maintenance, budgeting and planning. It was problematic to take decisions without access to the most recent and accurate information," she said.

This prompted the JRA to conduct a comprehensive survey to verify and update its asset information.

The year-long programme used field workers recruited from communities and offered employment to more than 50 people.

"The data is now available to the JRA within the Geographic Information System and has resulted in an improved ability to pick up defects, improve proactive maintenance planning and reduce maintenance times, enhance road conditions and boost traffic management," acting JRA managing director, Mpho Kau said.

The database of the agency's assets has been comprehensively updated with geotagged labels, photographs and standardised asset categories and identifications.