

Ford invests \$1bn in SA's automotive manufacturing operations

Ford Motor Company has invested \$1bn (R15.8bn) in the country's automotive manufacturing operations. This was announced during a media briefing that was attended by President Cyril Ramaphosa and several key government leaders.



Source: quickpic.co.za

Dianne Craig, president of Ford's international markets group, says: "This investment will further modernise our South African operations, helping them to play an even more important role in the turnaround and growth of our global automotive operations, as well as our strategic alliance with Volkswagen."

Ford's Silverton Assembly Plant

With this investment, Ford's Silverton Assembly Plant is expected to generate revenues exceeding 1.1% of South Africa's gross domestic product.

The annual installed capacity at the Silverton plant will increase to 200,000 vehicles from 168,000, supporting the production of the new Ford Ranger bakkie for the domestic market and export to over 100 global markets. The plant also will manufacture Volkswagen bakkies as part of the Ford-VW strategic alliance.

The expanded production will reportedly help create 1,200 incremental Ford jobs in South Africa, increasing the local workforce to 5,500 employees, and adding an estimated 10,000 new jobs across Ford's local supplier network, bringing the total to 60,000.

A new high-tech stamping plant

The overall investment includes \$686m (R10.3bn) for extensive upgrades to the Silverton Assembly Plant that will increase production volume and drive improvements.

These include the construction of a new body shop with the latest robotic technology and a new high-tech stamping plant, both of which will be located on-site for the first time.

Both facilities will modernise and streamline the integrated manufacturing process at Silverton while contributing to higher quality and reducing overall cost and waste.

Extensive upgrades also will be made to the box line, paint shop and final assembly to improve vehicle flow within the plant, along with the expansion of the container and vehicle yards.

Ford also will build new vehicle modification and training centres – the latter developed to ensure all Ford employees are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to maximise the efficiencies of the enhanced Silverton facilities.

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