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DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS

NO. 7715 **20 July 2026**

INVITATION TO CORPORATE EMPLOYERS TO SUBMIT AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN PHASE II OF THE TRUSTED EMPLOYER SCHEME OF

THE DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS

BACKGROUND

Following the highly successful first phase of the TES, the Department will be rolling out Phase II of the Trusted Employer Scheme in July 2026. The second phase of the TES will be expanded to include infrastructure projects and companies that maintain and manage a Global Head Office or Regional Head Office in South Africa for their operations.

The purpose of the Trusted Employer Scheme system is to allow South Africa to more easily attract skills and manage immigration, particularly in the processing of applications for senior executives, technical personnel, corporate employees and investors. TES is not for the employment of unskilled and low-wage labour.

The overarching objective of TES Phase II is to support the government's efforts in positioning South Africa as Africa's premier investment destination.

To qualify for membership to the TES, an employer, investor, or business needs to demonstrate that it has the financial strength to employ a foreign national, that it runs training programmes for South African citizens, and that it is a good corporate citizen.

Within this programme, a business, investor or corporate employer will qualify for priority processing of their visa applications due to the reduced requirements and supporting documents. The TES membership will be acceptable for local applications as well as at all South African High Commissions abroad. Current Corporate Account Clients are encouraged to apply.

SELECTION CRITERIA

To ensure that the selection process of companies is fair, ethical and transparent, the Department of Home Affairs will make use of the following scorecards:

SCORE CARD 1: PATHWAY FOR SOUTH AFRICAN-BASED OPERATIONS

NR	FACTOR	EXPLAINER	POINTS
1	Pledges/ Proven Investment	Annexure A	30
2	Employment		25
3	Economic Sector		25
4	Skills Development		20
TOTAL			100

SCORE CARD 2: PATHWAY FOR COMPANIES WITH EXISTING OR INTENTION TO ESTABLISH A REGIONAL / HEAD OFFICE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

NR	FACTOR	EXPLAINER	POINTS
1	Local Presence	Annexure B	15
2	Financial Contribution		50
3	Employment		20
4	Economic Sector		15
TOTAL			100

SCORE CARD 3: PATHWAY FOR SYNTHETIC FINANCIAL CENTRES (SFC) IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN FINANCIAL SECTOR.

NR	FACTOR	EXPLAINER	POINTS
1	SARB Exchange Control Authorisation / Extended DTMC Framework	Annexure C	40
2	Recognised Regulatory Standing (International or Domestic)		20
3	SFC Market Infrastructure Commitment		20
4	SFC VFO Certification		15
5	Skills Transfer Commitment		5
TOTAL			100

For more information on the application process, the qualification criteria, and the determination and awarding of points, kindly visit the www.dha.gov.za website.

SELECTION PROCESS

1. Corporate companies that are registered and are operational in South Africa and are interested in being considered for registration onto the Trusted Employer Scheme (TES) Phase II should submit their expression of interest using the Trusted Employer Scheme link available on the www.dha.gov.za website.

2. Applications must contain all information specified in the Selection Criteria set out above and supported by the documents mentioned in the TES Phase II Application Form. Only one of the pathways indicated above should be selected. Please only use one pathway to avoid disqualification.

3. A minimum score of 80 is required. The results will be reviewed and validated by an interdepartmental committee comprising one or more technical officials from the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Employment and Labour, the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, and other relevant departments.

4. The full details of how points will be determined and allocated are attached to Annexures A, B, and C of this document. The opening date for expressions of interest is 20 July 2026. The closing date is 4 September 2026. Outcomes regarding the expressions of interest will be issued within 30 working days after the closing date.

5. The Department of Home Affairs will make the final selection, and the applicants will be advised of the outcome. Companies that are approved for admission to the scheme should be willing to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department.

6. The decision of the TES Inter-Departmental Committee is final. The Department of Home Affairs reserves the right to grant or refuse TES Phase II membership status to any company.

DR L.A. SCHREIBER, MP
MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS
DATE: 11/07/26

ANNEXURE A: PATHWAY FOR SOUTH AFRICAN-BASED CORPORATES

NR	FACTOR	EXPLAINER
1	PLEDGES / PROVEN INVESTMENT	Pledges to SAIC or Proven Investment since 2018. Investment within the boundaries of RSA. Fixed capital investment above R100 million (no operational expenditure included). **0 points** for historical investments or SAIC Pledges less than R100 million **20 points** for historical investments or SAIC Pledges between R100 million and R200 million. **30 points** for historical investments or SAIC Pledges above R200 million.
2	EMPLOYMENT	At least 60% of the staff complement are South African Citizens or Permanent Residents, and in terms of points allocation, the following are applicable: **0 points** for fewer than 100 employees. **20 points** for 100 employees minimum, of which 60% are SAC or PRP holders. **25 points** for more than 150 employees, of which 60% are SAC or PRP holders.
3	SECTOR	A certificate from the DTIC confirming that the company operates in one of the priority sectors identified by the DTIC. Sector 1: Manufacturing Sector 2: Advanced manufacturing Sector 3: Services Sector 4: Resource-based Industries Sector 5: Energy (Power Generation and Renewable Energy) Sector 6: The Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs) – (In energy, transport, water management, and digital communications) **0 points** if not any of the sectors above **15 points** for the sectors 1 to 4 **25 points** for sectors 5 and 6

4	SKILLS TRANSFER/DEVELOPMENT	Proof of a Skills Transfer Programme, Bursary Scheme or Graduate Development Programme for South African Citizens or Permanent Residents. **0 points** for no proof of an active Skills Transfer Programme, Bursary Scheme or Graduate Development Programme **20 points** for proof of an active Skills Transfer Programme, Bursary Scheme or Graduate Development Programme

ANNEXURE B: PATHWAY FOR COMPANIES WITH EXISTING OR INTENTION TO ESTABLISH A REGIONAL / HEAD OFFICE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

NR	FACTOR	EXPLAINER
1	LOCAL PRESENCE	Regional/Global Head Quarters: **15 points:** Existing company that operates a Regional or Global Head Office in South Africa as an external company (branch) or majority-owned subsidiary. or **15 points:** A company that undertakes to set up a Regional or Global Head Office in South Africa as an external company (branch) or majority-owned subsidiary within 12 months of obtaining TES status. Infrastructure: **15 points:** Company in the construction or maintenance of infrastructure, as an external company (branch) or a South African-registered company with a . The Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs) – (In energy, transport, water management, and digital communications)
2	FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION	Regional/Global Head Quarters: **50 points: F**or a company that operates a regional or global head office in South Africa and has contributed Corporate Income Tax and PAYE Contributions to SARS > +R500 Million cumulatively in the last two tax years. (Income tax contribution is defined as taxes that have been assessed by SARS and paid to SARS by the company but specifically excludes import duties and VAT). **50 points:** Regional office not yet established - factual findings report confirming that more than R500 Million in Income Tax and PAYE is budgeted to be paid in the future will be accepted. Proof of taxation will be presented by way of a factual findings report, in accordance with international standards, by an independently registered auditor or an Externally Accredited person, confirming that the amount meets the minimum threshold requirement.

ANNEXURE B: PATHWAY FOR COMPANIES WITH EXISTING OR INTENTION TO ESTABLISH A REGIONAL / HEAD OFFICE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

NR	FACTOR	EXPLAINER
3	EMPLOYMENT	**20 points:** Employs at least 60% of South African Citizens or Permanent Residents employed permanently in various positions. or **20 points:** submission of an undertaking to employ at least 60% South African Citizens or Permanent Residents, employed permanently in various positions within 12 months of obtaining TES status.
4	ECONOMIC SECTOR	**10 points**: Should obtain a certificate from the DTIC confirming that the company is operating in one of the priority sectors determined by the DTIC.

ANNEXURE C: PATHWAY FOR SYNTHETIC FINANCIAL CENTRES (SFC) IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN FINANCIAL SECTOR.

The table below sets out the criteria for Scorecard 3. A minimum qualifying score of **80 points** is required, consistent with the threshold under Scorecard 1& 2. An entity that holds DTMC authorisation (or approval in principle) under the extended AD Manual framework (40 points), is internationally licensed (20 points), and holds a commitment letter from STRATE, a registered clearing house, the JSE, or an authorised dealer bank (20 points) will qualify on those three criteria alone — the core profile of the institutions the SFC is designed to attract — whether international firms entering the South African market or domestic South African financial institutions establishing dedicated SFC-compliant entities.

1	SARB Exchange Control Authorisation Extended DTMC Framework **(40 Points)**	The applicant entity holds, or has received written confirmation of approval in principle for, an authorisation from the Financial Surveillance Department of the South African Reserve Bank (FinSurv) under the Domestic Treasury Management Company (DTMC) provisions of the **Currency and Exchanges Manual for Authorised Dealers** (the AD Manual), as extended by the February 2026 Budget Review to permit South African-resident entities to manage foreign asset portfolios and trade foreign currency-denominated instruments locally. This authorisation constitutes the primary and definitive proof of SFC participation eligibility. DHA may verify this criterion by a single written enquiry to FinSurv. Entities authorised under any implementing directives issued by SARB pursuant to the February 2026 Budget Review automatically satisfy this criterion without amendment to the scorecard. **Time requirement:** The applicant must achieve full SARB DTMC authorisation under the AD Manual within **24 months** of the date on which TES status is granted under this scorecard. Failure to obtain full authorisation within this period will result in the automatic lapsing of TES status, unless FinSurv provides written confirmation that the application remains under active review and that delay is attributable to processing timelines within the Financial Surveillance Department rather than to the applicant's failure to meet regulatory requirements. **Approval in principle** from SARB — evidenced by a written communication from FinSurv confirming that the entity's DTMC application is under active review — shall be sufficient to qualify under this criterion for the duration of the 24-month window, provided the entity is simultaneously registered or applying as an authorised financial services provider with the FSCA. This prevents the catch-22 in which institutions cannot access fast-track visas to recruit the specialists required to complete their DTMC application.

2	Recognised Regulatory Standing (International or Domestic) **(20 Points)**	The applicant entity holds, or has received written confirmation of approval in principle for, an authorisation from the Financial Surveillance Department of the South African Reserve Bank (FinSurv) under the Domestic Treasury Management Company (DTMC) provisions of the **Currency and Exchanges Manual for Authorised Dealers** (the AD Manual), as extended by the February 2026 Budget Review to permit South African-resident entities to manage foreign asset portfolios and trade foreign currency-denominated instruments locally. This authorisation constitutes the primary and definitive proof of SFC participation eligibility. DHA may verify this criterion by a single written enquiry to FinSurv. Entities authorised under any implementing directives issued by SARB pursuant to the February 2026 Budget Review automatically satisfy this criterion without amendment to the scorecard. **Time requirement:** The applicant must achieve full SARB DTMC authorisation under the AD Manual within **24 months** of the date on which TES status is granted under this scorecard. Failure to obtain full authorisation within this period will result in the automatic lapsing of TES status, unless FinSurv provides written confirmation that the application remains under active review and that delay is attributable to processing timelines within the Financial Surveillance Department rather than to the applicant's failure to meet regulatory requirements. **Approval in principle** from SARB — evidenced by a written communication from FinSurv confirming that the entity's DTMC application is under active review — shall be sufficient to qualify under this criterion for the duration of the 24-month window, provided the entity is simultaneously registered or applying as an authorised financial services provider with the FSCA. This prevents the catch-22 in which institutions cannot access fast-track visas to recruit the specialists required to complete their DTMC application.
3	SFC Market Infrastructure Commitment (**20 Points)**	The applicant entity, or its ultimate holding company, is currently licensed, authorised, or registered as a financial institution by a recognised financial regulator. This criterion is satisfied by either: (a) registration with a recognised South African financial sector regulator, including the Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA), the Prudential Authority, or the South African Reserve Bank, in a capacity relevant to the SFC activities to be conducted; or (b) licensing or authorisation by a recognised international financial regulator, including but not limited to the Financial Conduct Authority (UK), the Monetary Authority of Singapore, the Dubai Financial Services Authority, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, the US Securities and Exchange Commission, the Hong Kong Securities and Futures Commission, or the Mauritius Financial Services Commission. Domestic South African financial institutions that are already licensed by the FSCA or Prudential Authority are expressly eligible under this criterion and are not required to hold an international regulatory authorisation.

		A letter of good standing or confirmation of current registration from the relevant regulator, issued within the preceding 12 months, is required as supporting documentation. For domestic South African institutions, a current FSCA or Prudential Authority registration certificate satisfies this requirement.
		The applicant holds one or more of the following verifiable letters of intent or commitment from a South African financial market infrastructure body: **(a) STRATE:** A letter from STRATE confirming the applicant's intention to participate in STRATE's securities settlement infrastructure as a direct or indirect participant. STRATE's own onboarding due diligence prior to issuing such a letter provides DHA with a second independent layer of regulatory validation; **(b) JSE:** A letter from the JSE confirming a listing application, membership application, or market participation agreement; **(c) South African Clearing House:** A letter from a clearing house registered in South Africa under the Financial Markets Act 19 of 2012 confirming the applicant's intention to participate as a clearing member or indirect participant in that clearing house's clearing and settlement infrastructure; or **(d) Authorised Dealer Bank:** A letter from a South African authorised dealer bank confirming the establishment of a treasury or dealing relationship in support of SFC operations. At least one such letter is required. The four options together cover the full range of SFC business models — securities settlement, listing and trading, cleared derivatives and money markets, and FX/treasury — without creating a single point of failure.
4	SFC VFO Certification **(15 Points)**	Visa applications for SFC-qualifying roles are submitted through the **SFC Visa Facilitation Office (SFC VFO)**, which manages and packages applications on behalf of SFC managing institutions in the same way that a Trusted Employer manages applications for its own staff — pre-screening applications, certifying compliance, and interfacing with DHA as a single institutional counterparty. The SFC VFO certifies that: **(a)** All proposed roles are mapped to qualifying OFO codes on the Critical Skills List, including any additions proposed and accepted by DHA; **(b)** The applicant has passed the SFC VFO's pre-screening process for points-based system compliance; and **(c)** The SFC VFO accepts responsibility for application quality and will provide annual compliance reporting to DHA on skills transfer outcomes across the SFC ecosystem.

5	Skills Transfer Commitment **(5 Points)**	The applicant provides a workforce plan demonstrating a commitment to employ a minimum of **five South African citizens or permanent residents** within 24 months of commencing SFC operations, accompanied by a skills transfer plan approved by the SFC VFO. The lower headcount threshold (versus the 20-employee minimum in Scorecard 2) reflects the specialist, boutique nature of SFC managing institutions and the higher economic value per hire: a single senior portfolio manager or derivatives trader trained locally has a greater skills transfer multiplier than a comparable number of generalist hires in a lower-skill-intensity sector.

Relationship to the Existing TES Framework

Scorecard 3 does not replace Scorecard 2. Established financial institutions that satisfy Scorecard 2's financial contribution and employment thresholds should continue to use that pathway. Scorecard 3 is a parallel route for a specific and well-defined category of new market entrant that Scorecard 2 structurally excludes.

The assessment of Scorecard 3 applications will be conducted by an inter-departmental committee including DHA, DTIC, and the nominated regulatory entity — the addition of financial sector regulatory representation replacing the standard Department of Employment and Labour seat where appropriate, given the specialised regulatory context of SFC managing institutions.

The 24-month time-bound requirement on DTMC authorisation (Criterion 1) provides DHA with a built-in compliance mechanism: TES status granted under Scorecard 3 is conditional and carries an automatic lapsing provision if the regulatory commitment underlying the application is not fulfilled. This addresses DHA's legitimate concern that a fast-track pathway based on forward-looking commitments rather than a historical track record must carry appropriate enforcement teeth.

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