MEDIA STATEMENT

TRIM and Grindrod Successfully Complete First Private Test Train on the North-East Corridor

[Komatipoort, Mpumalanga, 3 November 2026] – Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager (TRIM), a division of Transnet SOC Ltd, and Grindrod Limited have marked a major rail reform milestone with the successful completion of Grindrod's first test train on the North-East Corridor.

The operation commenced from Komatipoort on 01 November with the empty leg, and returned on 02 November with 2,991 metric tons, making Grindrod the first private Train Operating Company (TOC) to operate on South Africa's national freight rail network under the country's open-access framework.

The milestone follows the signing of Rail Access Agreements with 12 Train Operating Companies (TOCs), including Grindrod, and marks the culmination of extensive safety, regulatory and operational readiness processes required to enable third-party operations on the network.

The operation utilised Grindrod-owned locomotives and wagons and demonstrated the company's readiness to commence services on the corridor.

Grindrod plans to begin commercial operations in 2027, transporting approximately 288 000 tonnes in its first year. Using its two allocated slots on the North-East Corridor, the company will primarily move coal from Mpumalanga to Grindrod's Matola Terminal in Mozambique. Future growth opportunities will be determined by corridor capacity, additional slot allocations and operational efficiencies.

The achievement represents a significant step in implementing South Africa's rail reform agenda and broadening participation in the freight rail sector. It supports efforts to improve network utilisation, move more freight by rail and strengthen the country's logistics system.

As a strategic trade route linking South Africa's mining and industrial heartland with regional markets and export gateways, the North-East Corridor has an important role to play in unlocking additional

capacity, improving competitiveness and supporting regional trade. The successful operation demonstrates the value of collaboration between government, Transnet and industry in advancing these objectives.

Reflecting on the achievement, Moshe Motlohi, Chief Executive of Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager, said: "The successful completion of this test train is a landmark achievement for South Africa's rail reform programme. It demonstrates that open access is no longer a policy concept but an operational reality. Through collaboration with private operators such as Grindrod, we are creating a more competitive and efficient rail network that supports economic growth and strengthens South Africa's logistics capability."

Kwazi Mabaso, Group Chief Executive Officer of Grindrod Limited, said: "This is an important milestone for Grindrod and for the transformation of South Africa's freight logistics sector. As an integrated logistics provider, the ability to combine rail operations with our terminal infrastructure and corridor footprint enables us to deliver greater efficiency, reliability and value to our customers. We are proud to partner with TRIM in demonstrating the practical benefits of rail reform and helping restore rail as the backbone of bulk freight transport."

The successful test train highlights the progress being made through the collaborative efforts of government, Transnet and private sector participants to modernise South Africa's rail network. It provides a tangible demonstration of how open access can unlock investment, increase network utilisation and strengthen the country's position as a competitive regional trade and logistics hub.

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About Transnet Rail Infrastructure Manager

TRIM is the custodian of South Africa's rail infrastructure. It is responsible for managing, maintaining and developing the national network and for facilitating access by Train Operating Companies under the open-access framework. TRIM plays a central role in enabling private sector participation and supporting the restoration of rail freight capacity.

About Grindrod Limited

Grindrod is a JSE-listed integrated logistics and shipping group with extensive operations across Southern Africa. It provides freight services, terminal operations and rail solutions that enable efficient trade corridors and support economic growth through partnerships that improve the reliability and competitiveness of logistics chains.

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