



MINISTER MACPHERSON TAKES DECISIVE ACTION TO CURB ONGOING DELAYS AT CONSTRUCTION SITES



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Minister Macpherson has warned that contractors who do not meet their obligations on time and within budget, will face immediate repercussions from now on.

Minister Macpherson said this while addressing the National Assembly in Parliament this afternoon.

During his address, Minister Macpherson detailed the problematic experiences that are a direct cause to delayed infrastructure projects. The department remains sensitive to the communities that have been affected by construction project delays, affecting their daily lives.

Communities have waited for periods of time for public amenities that would restore dignity to their lives. "Stalled projects result in half-finished buildings, idle construction sites, and, most importantly, wasted public funds - funds which could have been used to improve the lives of our people," said the Minister.

"Furthermore, criminal engagement, where contractors are paid in full for incomplete work, is what robs the country of economic growth and communities for hope and a better life."

"These incomplete projects don't just stand as unfinished structures; they are monuments to inefficient management, corruption, lost opportunities, deferred dignity, and unfulfilled promises to the public," says Minister Macpherson.

While unpacking the consequence management protocols that the department has put into operation to put a stop to delayed construction projects, Minister Macpherson said the following,

- Contractors who underperform or engage in non-compliant practices will be blacklisted and therefore no longer have the privilege of working on public projects.
- New regulations for tender evaluation to ensure transparency and accountability, such as the adoption of a public-facing system that does audio and video records of every step of a tender process, for openness in contractor selection.
- Empowering the Council for the Built Environment, or CBE, to set mandatory standards across the sector. Legislation will require registration for all practitioners in the built environment.
- The creation of a Contract Management Unit within our department. This unit will be responsible for actively managing all contracts by monitoring contractor performance to ensure projects adhere to budgetary and time constraints.
- developing a pre-approved panel of contractors who have demonstrated their capacity to complete projects on time and within budget. This panel of contractors will also serve as an intervention unit to finish incomplete projects.
- establishing payment protocols to ensure client departments meet their financial obligations promptly.

One of the key initiatives the department is implementing to address project delays, is the National Construction Summit on Crime-Free Construction Sites, taking place next Tuesday, 19 November 2024, at the Durban ICC.

"Often referred to as the 'construction mafia', these criminal syndicates have disrupted countless projects, costing both the public and private sectors millions of rands. As I stated shortly after my appointment, we are committed to restoring the rule of law at construction sites across the country," said Minister Macpherson.

This summit will bring together key stakeholders, including Police Minister Senzo Mchunu, Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana, and Public Works MECs from all nine provinces, to develop comprehensive solutions to combat the disruption to construction sites across the country.

