



MINISTER MACPHERSON MARKS ONE YEAR IN OFFICE

Article by Fanisa Makhubela, Pictures by Caroline Mokotedi and Mahlogonolo Makwela

Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Dean Macpherson, marked his first year in office by reflecting on key reforms and investigations that have shaped the department's new direction.

Briefing the Media at the GCIS Imbizo Centre in Cape Town, the Minister outlined progress made in rooting out corruption, repurposing public assets, and overhauling the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Minister Macpherson described his tenure as a deliberate shift from passive custodianship of neglected buildings to positioning the department as a dynamic economic delivery vehicle. "We came up with a bold vision: to turn South Africa into a construction site," he said.

Key updates include;

1. *Investigations and Accountability:*

The Minister gave updates on major investigations into failed projects, including the Telkom Towers deal and the PSA Oxygen Plant initiative. Both reports are expected by the end of July and will be handed over for possible criminal prosecution. He also reaffirmed the Department's commitment to lifestyle audits, with 400 high-risk officials currently under review, and efforts underway to eliminate ghost employees.

2. *Asset Repurposing:*

Under Macpherson's leadership, 17 unused state properties have already been converted into shelters for victims of gender-based violence and substance abuse. Plans are underway to make state-owned properties income-generating assets through public-private partnerships and property funds.

3. *EPWP Reform:*

The Minister acknowledged challenges with the current EPWP model, including politicisation and irregular recruitment. A national Listening Tour has led to a proposed overhaul, which includes longer-term placements, skills development, enterprise support, and biometric attendance systems.

4. *George Building Collapse:*

Macpherson confirmed he will meet with the families of the George building collapse victims on 19 July to present the investigative report, which he described as revealing "preventable errors and regulatory failure." He cautioned political actors against undermining ongoing police investigations and stressed the need for accountability.

Looking ahead to his Budget Vote presentation, the Minister outlined five core pillars of focus: fighting corruption, fast-tracking infrastructure delivery, restructuring asset management, reforming EPWP, and digitising departmental systems. "This past year has not been easy, but it has been incredibly rewarding," says Macpherson. "The Department is in better shape than it was a year ago, and we're only getting started."



DG CONDUCTS OVERSIGHT VISIT TO NKANDLA POLICE AND CORRECTIONAL

Article and Pictures by Mannea Maselesele

Following the official handover of state-owned land to the Nkandla Local Municipality for socio-economic development, the Director-General of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI), Sifiso Mdakene, conducted an oversight visit to the Nkandla Police Station and Nkandla Correctional Services facility in KwaZulu-Natal.

Demonstrating a hands-on approach, the Director-General physically inspected infrastructure conditions, and engaged directly with on-site teams to identify areas requiring urgent attention and long-term improvement. The visit aimed to assess the functionality, safety, and overall environment of the facilities, which are critical to the delivery of justice and security services in the area.

The DG was accompanied by DPWI Durban Regional Manager Mr Nkosi Vilakazi, head of the REMS unit at the Durban Regional Office, Mr Philip Shozhi, as well as officials from the South African Police Service (SAPS).

