



public works & infrastructure

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DEPUTY MINISTER AND MEC JOIN FORCES FOR AN OVERSIGHT VISIT TO ASSESS KEY PROJECTS IN THE MANGAUNG DISTRICT

By Tseke Masemola, Pictures by Mahlogonolo Makwela

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) conducted the first day of its Operation Siyahlola oversight programme in the Mangaung District of the Free State. Led by the Deputy Minister (DM) Sihle Zikalala, accompanied by Provincial MEC for Public Works and Infrastructure Dibolelo Mance, the delegation, which included officials from both national and provincial departments, began with a morning briefing at the DPWI Bloemfontein Regional Office to outline the purpose and the programme of visits.

The first stop was the Grootvlei Correctional Centre Chicken Broiler Project, an agricultural initiative aimed at supporting food security and offender rehabilitation. The facility comprised of four temperature-controlled broiler houses, each are able to accommodate 6,000 chickens, supported by automated feeding and watering systems linked to an on-site silo. The project also included an abattoir, guard post, and facilities for staff members. Offenders were earmarked for specialised training to manage the systems and operations, equipping them with valuable skills for reintegration into society.

The second site was the Park Road Police Station, where refurbishment works had faced delays since the project's launch in 2016. DM Zikalala and MEC Mance chaired a critical meeting with SAPS leadership to assess progress and challenges. Among the key issues raised were overcrowding in police cells, contractor terminations, and persistent funding constraints. The DM committed to escalating these matters at MINTOP and requested a report focused on three priorities: the Community Service Centre, the gate, and the cells.

The final stop was the Bultfontein Magistrate Court, which has now been fully refurbished and is 100% operational. Upgrades included a completely redone roof, perimeter and guard fences, a generator and water tank, refurbished bathrooms, benches, soundproofing, and security gates. All work was carried out to standard while preserving the integrity of the heritage building. At the site, DM Zikalala praised staff, stating: "We want to thank you and congratulate you on the continuation of public service."

Day one of Operation Siyahlola reaffirmed government's commitment to service delivery and transparency regarding ongoing and completed infrastructure development projects. Through visible leadership, constructive engagement, and direct oversight of projects across the district, the DPWI demonstrated its determination to accelerate progress and strengthen public confidence in the government's delivery.



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