
4 000 jobs earmarked for youth

FOUR thousand jobs, many in government-supported cooperatives, is a big deal.

These jobs are being created over three years by the roads and public works department, MEC Thandiswa Marawu said.

One out of three youths in the province have no job or education prospects, she said. Most of these jobs will see Eastern Cape people receiving six months of training. These include the creation of security guard cooperatives but there will also be work for unemployed graduates and youths who were unable to study further.

A breakdown of the percentages sees 2 400 guards being trained, 400 graduates, 400 youths, 400 Umkhonto we-Sizwe Military Veterans Association (MKVA) members – or family members – and 400 jobs going to women and people with disabilities.

“Co-operatives will contribute positively to the province’s economy. Our dependence on the private security industry to safeguard our assets and personnel has led to under- and non-payment of security guards which sparked strikes and protest action by security guards leaving government facilities unguarded and vulnerable,” Marawu said.

Guards have been ill-treated and exploited yet the department spends R120million on security, money which could be channelled to the cooperatives.

As proof of its intention, the department will recruit and train the first 750 job-seekers starting in April or May.

Once trained, the new job-holders will be put to work in August or September on sites in these municipalities: Amathole, Alfred Nzo, Chris Hani, Joe Gqabi, OR Tambo and Sarah Baartman.

Co-operatives will cut out the middle man, saving the cost of company directors. Workers owning their own business will improve service delivery, she said.

The risk of theft and damage to state property will be reduced to a minimum because “workers are also owners of the company”.

Her department had an operating model which would be championing the cooperatives as a new way of protecting and securing government assets and creating a new culture of property custodianship, she said. The department’s extended public works programme (EPWP), intends to offer 51 100 work opportunities to the jobless.

The department performed so well in running the EPWP that the Department of Transport increased its grant by a huge 70% from R53-million to R90-million. This year the plan is to match 300 youths to work opportunities through the Amathuba Jobs Portal.

There will be support for 200 emerging contractors and 50 will be upgraded to higher levels set down by the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB).

This year, 900 pupils will receive artisan training, and 90 will be supported in passing their trade test.

There is room for 500 young people who are unemployed and not studying to join the department’s National Youth Service programme.