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Ministers' cars exposed!

Here's a story that will make all taxpayers feel queasy. Not only does South Africa have an unnecessarily bloated government, with extra salaries paid to ministers who arguably aren't required – these ministers are stretching their car perks to the limit. Most noticeable for conspicuous consumption by his choice of wheels is Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources Godfrey Oliphant, who drives a Porsche Cayenne purchased for R1,3m.

Minister of Mineral Resources, Mosebenzi Zwane drives a Mercedes Benz in the R1,2m price range. Minister of Arts and Culture Nathi Mthethwa has two BMW 5 Series, each worth about R750 000. But they are by no means alone in their taste for expensive cars.

The communists among the group aren't too worried about what the proletariat might make of their lifestyles, with Jeremy Cronin and Blade Nzimande also succumbing to the lure of a shiny luxury vehicle. There are many ministers you've probably never heard of – because there's not much for them to do – who are also on this list, driving around in top-end models from Mercedes, Audi, Lexus and others. The details of South African ministers' car spending, highlighted by the opposition DA, is contrasted with the state of the economy: millions struggle to put food on the table and unemployment continues to soar.

This car list is another indicator that the country's leadership has lost its way and is a far cry from the movement led by individuals committed to ensuring a better life for the downtrodden and disadvantaged. – Jackie Cameron

By Sergio Davids

Cape Town – The Democratic Alliance has investigated South African ministers' vehicle expenses and has found that more than R40m has been spent by government on luxury cars.

The party's research covers vehicles purchased by ministers from 2014 to date. It reports that R10m has been set aside for ministerial car purchases in the 2016/2017 budget.

Porsche Cayenne GTS

DA's Shadow Minister of Public Service and Administration, Desiree van der Walt, said: "After submitting a range of parliamentary questions across all governmental departments, the DA can reveal that the government has spent a total of R41 960

075 on the procurement of luxury vehicles for Ministers and their Deputies between 2014 and 2017.

“It is revealing that these ANC ministers continue to spend such outrageous amounts of public money on luxury vehicles, when millions of unemployed South Africans struggle to put food on the table. “Minister of Finance, Pravin Gordhan, has been calling on austerity measures in government spending since 2013. It seems that his colleagues are simply refusing to listen.”

The worst offender? The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, which splurged a staggering R5 505 351 on cars for minister Gugile Nkwinti and his deputies. The Porsche Cayenne is one of the most expensive cars on the list with a pricetag of R1.3-million.

Some of government’s top car spenders:

- Department of Transport: R3 453 870 87
- Department of Justice: R3 275 138
- Department of Public Enterprise: R2 669 377 77
- Department of Agriculture: R2 502 425 10
- Department of Telecommunications: R2 383 769 14

According to the SA ministerial handbook, ministers are allowed two vehicles to be used in Cape Town and Pretoria. The value of the vehicle may not be more than 70% of the minister’s salary. Currently ministers earn upward of R2.3m annually and deputy ministers R1.9m. This means that the value of the purchased vehicle(s) may not surpass R1.6m and R1.3m, respectively.

JPSA responds

Justice Project South Africa chairman, Howard Dembovsky, said: “Wow! So the Porsche Cayenne GTS was purchased for Mineral Affairs? Scandalous!

“The opulence of the Ministers and their deputies speaks volumes of their belief that they must be ferried around in luxury at the expense of the taxpayer and only the most luxurious vehicles are fit for that purpose.”

“Aside from the preference for expensive luxury sedans, I see that there exists a glaring preference for expensive and luxurious Audi, BMW, Lexus, Jeep and Mercedes-Benz SUVs in most departments.

“Apart from the single Toyota Fortuner in the list, I can’t find a single 4×4 with any ‘real off-road’ and/or gravel road pedigree to speak of. Given the fact that the vast majority of South Africa’s roads are unpaved, it stands to reason that the second one has to stray from the tarred roads network, you will need a vehicle which is built for that purpose and won’t break down at the first sniff of dust in its highly sophisticated electronic components.”

What about the DA’s vehicle purchases?

Van der Walt said: Where the DA governs, we spend public money on the people, so that opportunities are created. In the DA-run Tshwane, Mayor Solly Msimanga rejected 10 BMW 3 series, which were bought by the previous ANC administration. They have now been used to form part of a new anti hi-jack unit.

Tshwane mayor Solly Msimanga

Tshwane mayor Solly Msimanga said: “No new luxury cars will be bought or leased for politicians, and if vehicles currently owned by Tshwane require replacement, sensible and low-cost vehicles will be procured. I will not allow public money to be spent on luxury cars, while our people struggle for services, houses and jobs. No more luxury cars will be bought or leased under my government.”

Ministers’ car list

Here’s the list of the Ministers cars: What they drive, when it was purchased and what the cars cost. It’s important to note that some departments are not included, therefore the actual total would be substantially more than just R41-million.

Audi Q7

R955 500 (base price, March 2017)

- Deputy Minister in the Presidency, Buti Manamela
- Minister of Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor

Purchased July 2015: 3.0-litre TDI 180kW Quattro Tiptronic – R697 733

Purchased March 2016: 3.0-litre TDI Quattro – R798 020

- Minister of Telecoms, Siyabonga Cwele

Purchased 2014/2015: 3.0-litre TDI – R681 841

- Deputy Minister of Basic Education, Mohamed Enver Surty

Purchased September 2015 – R680 878

- Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa

Minister of Higher Education Blade Nzimande

Purchased January 2015, Q7 TDI – R878 701

- Minister of Higher Education, Blade Nzimande

Purchased September 2015 – R680 878

- Minister of Rural Development, Gugile Nkwinti

Purchased February 2015: 3.0-litre TDI Quattro – R731 584

Purchased January 2017: 3.0-litre TDI Quattro – R1 039 872

- Minister of Agriculture, Senzeni Zokwana

Purchased August 2014: 3.0-litre TDI R630 953 plus R626 199

Audi A6

- Minister of Labour, Nelisiwe Oliphant

Purchased July 2014: R513 508

Audi A7

R1.0-million (base price, March 2017)

- Deputy Minister of Public Service and Administration, Ayanda Dlodlo

Purchased June 2016: Audi A7 Sportback 3.0-litre TDI Tip-tronic – R735 700

Audi A8

R1.2-million (base price, March 2017)

- Deputy Minister of Public Service and Administration, Ayanda Dlodlo

Purchased June 2016: A8 3.0-litre TDI Quattro Tip-tronic – R750 000

- Deputy Minister of Public Enterprise, Bulelani Magwanishe

Purchased June 2014: A8 TDI – R881 629

Mercedes Benz GLE

R973 704 (base price, March 2017)

- Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Rejoice Mabudafhasi.
- Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa.

BMW X5

Transport Minister Dipuo Peters

R977 064 (base price, March 2017)

- Minister of Communications, Faith Muthambi
- Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Rejoice Mabudafhasi
- Minister of Transport, Dipuo Peters

Purchased 2014/2015: R789 924

•Minister of Public Works, Thulas Nxesi

Purchased November 2015: xDrive 4.0-litre D – R918 459

BMW X6

•Deputy Minister of Transport, Lydia Chikunga

Purchased 2014/2015: R790 000

BMW 335i GT

•Deputy Minister of Basic Education, Mduduzi Manana

Purchased March 2016: R727 770

Minister of Arts & Culture Nathi Mthethwa

BMW 5 Series

R740 299 (purchased August 2016)

•Minister of Arts and Culture Nathi Mthethwa has two.

Purchased August 2016: R740 299

•Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga

Purchased August 2014: R769 022

•Minister of Home Affairs, Malusi Gigaba

Purchased January 2015: BMW 535i – R750 122

•**Deputy Minister of Public Works, Jeremy Cronin**

Purchased January 2015: BMW 535i – R681 432

BMW 535i Gran Turismo

- Deputy Minister of Transport, Lydia Chikunga

Purchased 2014/2015: R789 634

BMW GT 550

- Minister of Women, Susan Shabangu

Purchased February 2015: R926 007

Minister of Telecoms Siyabonga Cwele

Jeep Grand Cherokee

- Minister of Telecoms, Siyabonga Cwele.

Purchased 2014/2015: 3.6-litre Overland – R626 661

- Deputy Minister of Telecoms Professor Hlengiwe Mkhize

Purchased 2014/2015: 3.0-litre LTD – R637 114

- Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa

Purchased February 2015: 3.0-litre LTD – R762 443

- Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Bheki Cele

Both purchased August 2014: R622 661 plus R622 611

- Minister of Labour, Nelisiwe Oliphant

Purchased February 2017: R899 241

Lexus ES250

R554 200 (base price, March 2017)

- Deputy Minister of Telecoms Professor Hlengiwe Mkhize

Purchased 2014/2015: Lexus ES250 – R438 152

- Deputy Minister of Justice, John Jeffery

Purchased July 2014: ES250 EX – R438 152 plus R438 152

Lexus LX570

- Minister of Transport, Dipuo Peters

Purchased 2014/2015: R1 084 312

Public Enterprises minister Lynne Brown

Lexus ES

- Minister of Public Enterprise, Lynne Brown

Purchased September 2014: Lexus ES Hybrid 300H EX – R514 649

Purchased April 2016: Lexus ES350 EX – R464 819

Lexus 460

- Deputy Minister of Public Enterprise, Bulelani Magwanishe

Purchased September 2016: R808 279

Mercedes-Benz E400

- Minister of Mineral Resources, Mosebenzi Zwane

Purchased February 2017: R1.2million

Mercedes-Benz E200

- Deputy Minister of Finance, Mcebisi Jonas

Purchased January 2015: R661 387

Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga

Mercedes-Benz GLE 500

- Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga

Purchased September 2016: R849 900

Mercedes-Benz S400

- Deputy Minister of Justice and correctional services, Thabang Makwetla

Purchased September 2014: R1 198 834

Mercedes-Benz ML

Deputy Minister of Justice and correctional services, Thabang Makwetla

Purchased September 2014: ML 400 – R1.2million

•Deputy Minister of Rural development, Mashego Dlamini

Purchased March 2015: ML350 Bluetec – R898 155

Purchased June 2015: ML350 Bluetec – R898 155

•Deputy Minister of Rural development, Mcebisi Skwatsha

Purchased March 2015: ML350 Bluetec – R999 864

Purchased June 2015: ML350 Bluetec – R937 755

Porsche Cayenne

R979 000 (base price, March 2017)

•Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources, Godfrey Oliphant.

Purchased November 2016: Cayenne GTS – R1.3million

Ford Everest

R458 900 (base price, March 2017)

•Minister of Public Service and Administration, Ngoako Ramatlhodi

Purchased April 2016: 3.2D LTD 4X4 6-speed auto – R714 500

Minister of Trade & Industry Rob Davies

Toyota Fortuner

R438 000 (base price, March 2017)

- Minister of Trade and Industry, Rob Davies – owns two
- Minister of Labour, Nelisiwe Oliphant

Purchased July 2014: 3.0-litre D – R469 450

Volkswagen Touareg

- Deputy Minister of Public Works, Jeremy Cronin

Purchased November 2014: 3.0-litre V6 TDI – R709 484. – News24