

# State vehicle abuse stymied

Fleet management system has led to a decrease in misuse of vehicles, roads and public works MEC says.

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THE provincial government has put measures in place to deal with negligence and the misuse of state vehicles, the department of roads and public works said yesterday.

MEC Mxolisa Sokatsha said the department was experiencing challenges around the abuse of vehicles belonging to the state and late payments by client departments.

"We have implemented the fleet management system, which led to a decrease in the misuse and abuse of the fleet. There are continuous engagements with chief financial officers regarding the outstanding debt and we are planning to institute punitive measures to defaulting departments. Despite these challenges, on a positive note, we can confirm that the department has successfully implemented a lot of service delivery spin offs," Sokatsha said.

The MEC said the department had managed to implement the entity migrated from the private sector lease to the government lease model, which, in comparison, was much more cost effective.

"All old and aging vehicles are being replaced as per their life span and service delivery has improved because client departments are utilising relatively new and reliable vehicles."

Sokatsha said for the 2017-18 financial year, the department had allocated an amount of R65m to fleet management, to enhance service delivery.

Meanwhile, Sokatsha said the department continued to be the driving force in creating jobs through the expanded public works programme across the province.

"For the 2016-17 financial year, the



**NEGLIGENCE:** Transport MEC Mxolisi Sokatsha says the department has implemented a fleet management system to curb misuse and abuse.

province reported a total of 16036 work opportunities inclusive of the municipal and provincial spheres.

"The annual target for the Northern Cape for 2017-18 is 28377 and the target for the department is 9600, including women, youth and people with disabilities."

He said the department was also

aiming to enrol more young people to take part in the contractor programme, which seeks to skill the youth in becoming actively involved in the maintenance of roads.

"Four internal roads employees and four Northern Cape-based emerging consultants are further targeted for capacitation as road safety audit

assessors and roads visual assessors respectively."

He said the department was successfully implementing the Phakamile Mabija artisan programme and 25 pupils had successfully qualified.

"For the 2017-18 financial year, the department will implement the artisan in construction programme and 60

youth participants will be trained as plumbers, carpenters and electricians to the value of R6.3m."

The MEC said the focus had shifted from roads construction to the maintenance of roads in order to preserve the assets that the province had.

He said during this financial year, the department would work around the clock to ensure that roads in the province were of good quality.

"The heavy rehabilitation from Postmansburg to Jenn-Haven has commenced and will be completed by March 2018. The design of the rehabilitation of Mamatwan has been completed and the local mining companies were approached to evaluate possible partnerships as the main users of the road."

Sokatsha said the department was also focusing on upgrading gravel roads to tarred roads in rural communities, especially in the John Taolo Gaetsewe district.

"Our plan to upgrade the main road to Laxey is a continuation of the roads prioritised in the John Taolo Gaetsewe district. These roads aim to improve the access to communities in the rural areas. From Hotazel to Tsineng in the John Taolo Gaetsewe district, the road will also be upgraded.

Phase five is the final phase of this partnership with the South 32 mining company, with the project objective to develop a commuter route for mine employees in the surrounding communities."

Sokatsha said the department was working around the clock to ensure that it serves the people of the province. He said the recent audit outcomes of an unqualified audit were an indication of how committed the department was.

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