

■ ARREARS

R14m spent on ministerial homes; R1.2m in rent owed

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THE Department of Public Works spent more than R14 million on maintenance on ministerial houses in Pretoria and Cape Town in 2017/18.

This emerged in a written response from Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi to a parliamentary question.

Nxesi answered a question posed by the DA's Malcolm Figg.

"The total amount spent on maintenance on each ministerial house in Pretoria and Cape Town for the 2017/18 financial year is R14 589 975 and from April 2018 to date is R7 991 958," Nxesi said.

He also said maintenance on Pretoria ministerial residences was done through day-to-day maintenance and in Cape Town through a facility management service provider.

Nxesi said the last renovations



Minister of Public Works Thulas Nxesi has said that in the past he had engaged with ministers on the debt owed to the Department of Public Works. African News Agency (ANA)

conducted were in the 2015/16 financial year to three houses and the total cost was R9 391 355. "The works mainly comprised of security measures including the construction

of boundary walls, guard huts, installation of cameras and monitors, as well as installations of electric fences."

Nxesi also revealed that in terms of the municipal valuations, the total

monetary value of ministerial residences in Pretoria was R116 720 199 and for Cape Town the total value was R824 735 471.

He said the current total amount outstanding in rental income for ministerial residences was R1 214 064.

Asked how the ministers ended up being in arrears, he said they found there were a number of systemic flaws.

"The building up of arrears is largely not through faults of or negligence by the ministers.

"It would therefore be unfair to name which ministers are in arrears, save to mention that the problem is being addressed with the departments concerned."

Nxesi would not name the ministers who owed rent for ministerial houses due to security reasons.

The monthly rental cost for ministerial residences ranges between R988 and R1 200. "Once ministerial

residences have been allocated, the Department of Public Works submits the documents indicating the amounts payable monthly to the client departments, whose responsibility it is to action the stop orders from ministers and deputy ministers' monthly income.

"Despite numerous reminders some departments fail to action the stop orders leading to escalating debt."

He also said that in the past he had engaged with ministers on the debt owed to the Department of Public Works and that was done with relative success.

"Ministers are always willing to co-operate in terms of paying their monthly rentals.

"The challenge that we must resolve is a systemic one to ensure that the monthly rentals are collected without fail on an ongoing basis."