

■ SPEECH

# Land use, reform focus of De Lille's budget projection



Patricia de Lille

## MWANGI GITHAHU

PATRICIA de Lille's maiden budget speech as Minister for Public Works and Infrastructure this week highlighted the issue of land use, management and reform across the country, including in the province.

"The department has for the past nine years sought to compile an accurate asset register, including valuations.

"The asset portfolio under the custodianship of the department currently comprises approximately 29 000 land parcels. On this land are approximately 89 000 buildings.

"It is by far the largest estate portfolio on the continent. Closely linked to the asset register is land reform. As a department we are part of the

rapid land release programme that also includes land restitution, land redistribution and land tenure.

"In this regard, 51 land parcels were released in the last financial year for land restitution. In addition, eight land parcels were released to support economic development. This included the release of two properties to the Airports Company of SA for the expansion of Cape Town International Airport," said De Lille.

She also spoke of the country's small harbours.

"South Africa has approximately 3 000km of coastline studded by 12 proclaimed harbours (in the Western Cape) and 55 unproclaimed harbours in the other provinces. These harbours provide critical infrastructure

for the creation of local jobs.

"Small harbours and state coastal properties are important to Operation Phakisa: The Ocean's Economy.

"The Special Intervention Repair Programme to proclaimed fishing harbours in the Western Cape has thus far created a total of 274 jobs and empowered 35 local SMMEs.

"The department will now be taking this programme nationally."

De Lille's speech meanwhile underlined a number of immediate interim austerity measures to avoid exorbitant expenditure on areas such as accommodation and state functions.

Among these measures is the new requirement that members of the executive must minimise their water and electricity consumption.