



Publication: Star, The (Early Edition) - Main
Title: Repairs due to fire will cost R1.5bn
Publish date: 27 Sep 2022
Page: 5

Reach: 74520
AVE: R 20137.79
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PARLIAMENT

Repairs due to fire will cost R1.5bn

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MPs want real-time audits on the more than R1.5 billion in funding to restore the buildings damaged by January's fire to Parliament.

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure commissioned the Coega Development Corporation to conduct a detailed assessment of the damage and looked at structural issues in the damaged buildings.

The Old and New Assembly building were gutted by fire on January 2.

The report provided four restoration options, which included demolishing and rebuilding the Old and New Assembly to their pre-fire condition.

Coega programme manager Christos Beukes said they recommended the restoration of the Old Assembly. At a cost of R528m, it will include replacing the roof structure, timber floor, electrical, electronic and water services.

He also said they were recommending the restoration of the existing building housing the New Assembly by retaining the floor layout and upgrading the equipment – R1bn.

Secretary to Parliament Xolile George said he would soon be holding a meeting with acting directors-general for the National Treasury and Department of Public Works. "I need to convene a meeting to thrash out the implementation scope," he said.

George said he has already met the head of National Treasury to discuss their request for funding.

"Our engagement with the National Treasury has at least gone to a stage where we are now ready for subsequent engagements of executive authority of Parliament with the executive authority of National Treasury, which is scheduled to take place fairly soon so that prior to October there is certainly on the allocation, including issues that relate to unforeseen and unavoidable expenses."