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Author: Yogashen Pillay

INFRASTRUCTURE

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YOGASHEN PILLAY
yogashen.pillay@inl.co.za

KWAZULU-NATAL Transport, Community Safety and Liaison MEC Siphon Hlomuka says that the government is making good progress in restoring flood-damaged roads.

Speaking at a briefing in Durban yesterday, the MEC said the province had done exceptionally well in responding to the April 2022 floods.

"We believe we underestimated the magnitude of the work that needed to be done to attend to all the repairs. We can safely say we have managed to restore mobility in many communities. There are areas still under repairs and some need long-term solutions."

Hlomuka commended the department's Infrastructure Unit, South African National Roads Agency Limited (Sanral), municipalities and agencies that came on board to assist.

"Many roads such as the M4 and R102 have been repaired and motorists can now use them. This includes work done on the N2, especially uMhlali bridge which was repaired and re-opened in July. In August we also reopened the R603 in Umbumbulu which had a sinkhole and the M40 in Edendale." Hlomuka added that on the N2 in uMgababa work was being done by Sanral to restore the slow lane, which collapsed during the floods.

He said while the department was addressing "a few challenges" with the repair of the R74 in KwaMaphumulo, it was almost complete.

"The repairing of M4 Tongaat River bridge is also progressing well. The department has also dispatched a team of engineers to assist with providing a solution for the Nhlungwane/ Ntuzuma bridge."

He added that there were projects the department would open soon, including the D1126 in Taylors Halt, Nkunzi River bridge in Ladysmith and Gumatane River Bridge, Ugu District.

"We have also completed constructing eight bridges under the Welisizwe Bailey bridges project we are doing with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure and the SANDE."

The MEC said the department planned to have completed 13 of these bridges by the end of this month.

Hlomuka added that there was major infrastructure work taking place in the province, including the N3 upgrade between Pietermaritzburg and Durban, N2 between KwaMashu and uMdloti and the R5 billion project on the EB Cloete in Durban.

"These are massive infrastructural investments which will play a role in reviving our economy, creating jobs and empowering emerging contractors. There will be serious traffic congestion and we appeal to road users to be patient and to plan their trips ahead. This congestion is very necessary and in few years you will see the difference."