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Land expropriation on the cards to build more Eskom power lines

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MINISTER of Public Works and Infrastructure Sihle Zikalala said yesterday that his department had received 23 requests for expropriation of private land from Eskom to enable the transmission of electricity.

This would be considered and processed in the 2023/24 financial year upon receipt from Eskom.

Delivering his budget vote speech in Parliament, Zikalala said the power lines would provide much-needed electricity to communities nationwide.

The Department of Public Works

and Infrastructure (DPWI) had also released 24 land parcels for the registration of Eskom servitudes for the construction of generation, transmission and distribution of power lines.

The land parcels would be 117 hectares each.

"A further six land parcels are being considered for release to Eskom in the 2023/24 financial year. The Department also processed 27 requests from Eskom for expropriation of private land parcels to enable the construction of key transmission power lines in the Limpopo province," he said.

"In addition, a further 49 land parcels measuring 211 hectares (ha) from

the DPWI portfolio were also released in transferring the custodianship of 19 Land Ports of Entry to the Border Management Authority (BMA) for their integrated management of the country's border posts," Zikalala said.

He said the transfer of the remaining three Land Ports of Entry to the BMA would be processed in the 2023/24 financial year.

"In support of socio-economic purposes, approximately 2 230ha are earmarked to be released within the 2023/24 financial year," he said.

Meanwhile, 11 land parcels measuring 15ha were released for a variety of Sanral road construction projects.

"We will continue to partner with the Department of Defence, the Department of Transport, and the six participating provincial governments to speed up the construction of the Welisizwe Bridges. To support enterprise development, construction material, and bridge components should be sourced locally. The project budget for the entire Medium-Term Expenditure Framework is R3.8 billion," Zikalala said.

According to Zikalala, in the 2023/24 financial year, 96 bridges at a cost of R1.1bn were planned as follows: KwaZulu-Natal (17), Eastern Cape (17), Northern Cape (17), Mpumalanga (17),

North West (14), Free State (14).

Zikalala said in the year ahead, the department would robustly co-ordinate the provision of a social facilitation framework to mitigate against community unrests that delay construction projects.

"We are determined to enhance the participation of communities in projects, drive localisation of supplies, and involve locals in the maintenance of the property ecosystem.

"We are resolute that our programmes should benefit the youth, women, military veterans, and People Living with Disabilities in the construction and property sector," he said.