



public works

Department:
Public Works
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MEDIA STATEMENT

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MINISTER NXESI PASSES HIS CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES OF THE DECEASED WORKERS

The Minister of Public Works, Mr Thulas Nxesi, MP, has expressed his deepest condolences to the families of the Department's service provider's workers and members of the South African National Defence Force who died in a tragic accident at the Durban Naval base yesterday morning.

The tragic incident happened when the Department's service provider's workers were working on an underground sewer pump station to repair a damaged sewer pump.

The Department of Public Works maintains facilities at the naval base and had appointed a contractor, Kwayando Investments as a registered mechanical contractor with CIDB grading.

Kwayando Investments started to work on the naval base septic tank last year and he removed the pump for repairs. The service provider took out the pump and put in a stopper whilst the pump was taken for repairs.

The service provider only returned to the site on the 16th of February 2017, to deliver a repaired pump. The service provider went back to the site on Friday the 17th of February 2017 to reinstall the pump.

Two workers who were working in the pump house encountered breathing problems as they were working on removing the stopper. According to witnesses, a nearby contractor doing another service tried to assist and was also overcome by the gas.

Subsequent to that three SANDF officials who went into the pump house to help out were unfortunately overcome by the deadly methane gas in the pit. All six people were declared dead at the scene.

Government departments that are affected in this incident will work together with relevant experts in an investigation to determine the cause of this loss of life.

“I would like to express, on behalf of Deputy Minister Cronin, the DG and the whole family of our Department, our sincere condolences to the families of the departed. We would like to say, Kwanga bekungenzekanga,” the Minister concluded.

ENDS

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