



public works
& infrastructure

Department:
Public Works and Infrastructure
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Media Statement by Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Patricia de Lille, MP

Department of Public Works and Infrastructure's update on the state of readiness with quarantine sites as level 3 stage of lockdown commences on Monday 1 June 2020

It has been just over two months since the nationwide lockdown started in order to contain and curb the spread of the COVID 19 virus.

As part of government's response to address the pandemic, various departments had various roles and mandates to fulfil to safely navigate the country through this trying time. In terms of the Regulations, the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure's (DPWI) role is to identify and make quarantine sites available and the Department of Health assesses and confirms a facility as a quarantine site once the department establishes that it meets their criteria.

Once a facility is confirmed as a quarantine site, the Department of Health will operationalise the site and it will be activated and procured by DPWI when the site is needed.

Our task was to identify quarantine sites in all 44 districts and 8 metros.

As part of the work in identifying sites, the DPWI also engaged all provincial Public Works departments and local governments to ensure that we are able to identify possible quarantine sites in all 44 districts and 8 metros in cases where there are no available DPWI owned properties.

As level 3 starts on Monday 1 June 2020, we would like to update the media and public and on the DPWI's state of readiness with quarantine sites as the infection rate is expected to increase with millions of people returning to work on Monday.

DPWI has been working on all fronts over the past two months to ensure that we are ready for all eventualities and the worst case scenario by having enough quarantine facilities available as the need arises and should the number of people who need to be quarantined increase dramatically.

DPWI was also approached by the private sector, specifically the hospitality sector who were willing to avail their sites to be used for quarantine purposes as these properties were empty due to lockdown regulations and therefore had no guests and we want to thank them for their offers.

There are now 1 751 facilities that have been identified as proposed sites representing more than 129 600 beds across the country, in all 44 districts and 8 metros. Of these 1 751 facilities, 642 are state-owned facilities and 1 109 are privately-owned.

In the Western Cape for example which is currently the epicenter of the virus, there are 358 facilities that have been identified representing more than 27 500 beds.

Some of these sites have been assessed and confirmed as compliant and been activated and the Department of Health is in the process of assessing the remainder of the sites.

To date, 395 facilities nationally have been assessed by DoH and are compliant according to the Department of Health's requirements for quarantine facilities, representing 35 759 beds.

In addition to state-owned and private facilities, there are also sites from State-Owned Entities (SOEs) such as the Transnet and Eskom facilities and these have been activated and managed by the SOEs.

The public sector sites have been set up and activated by government and in the various provinces, these sites are managed by the respective provincial governments.

With these numbers, we can assure South Africans of the DPWI's state of readiness to have enough quarantine facilities available as the need arises with an expected increase in infections and repatriations.

The DPWI's state of readiness will be improved as more sites are assessed and confirmed by the Department of Health.

To date the DPWI has assisted with procuring quarantine sites for more than 10 000 South Africans who have been repatriated from all over the world and were required to be in quarantine for the mandatory 14 day period in order to confirm that they test negative for COVID 19 before they can return to their homes in South Africa.

There is also work underway by the provincial public works departments in relation to field hospitals.

In the Eastern Cape, 32 hospitals have been identified for refurbishment.

In KwaZulu Natal, 19 hospitals are being refurbished and in Mpumalanga, 10 sites have been identified for field hospitals and the province is currently busy with technical assessments.

In the Western Cape, the CTICC has been completed as a field hospital site and other sites have been identified and are being considered to be converted to field hospitals.

In the North West, teams are focusing on augmenting the capacity of existing hospitals by constructing additional structures.

The remaining provinces are still in the process of finalizing their plans for field hospitals.

We are committed to continuing our task and doing all we can to keep citizens safe during this time and do all we can to curb the spread of the virus.

ENDS

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