



public works
& infrastructure

Department:
Public Works and Infrastructure
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Issue Date: 16 January 2020

Media Statement by Minister Patricia de Lille (MP)

Minister Patricia de Lille visits North West Province to inspect various projects

Today, I visited the North West province to engage with the MEC of Public Works and Roads, Oageng Molapisi, the administrator as well as officials in the regional office of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI).

The purpose of the visit was to assess first-hand the progress made by the DPWI's Intervention Team deployed from the national department to the Provincial Public Works and Roads Department since it was placed under administration.

Cabinet invoked Section 100 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa on May 23, 2018, placing several provincial departments under administration including the Department of Public Work and Roads, which is currently under Section 100 (1) (b).

Mr Samuel Thobakgale is the appointed Administrator and leader of the Intervention Team in the department.

During various engagements with the MEC and officials today, I received updates on key issues and projects in the province.

I visited various provincial Public Works and Roads Department projects including handing over a fleet of new machines to districts as well as a roads maintenance project.

The Rehabilitation of Roads in the Major Towns and Cities in the North West Province project, also known as the "War on Potholes" project started in November 2019 and is set for completion at the end of February 2020.

This roads rehabilitation project will see an investment of approximately R20million by the provincial department to repair and upgrade various key roads by fixing potholes in the province including main roads and major internal roads in Rustenburg, Mahikeng, Vryburg, Potchefstroom, Coliny, Klerksdorp and Venterdorp amongst other areas.

The North West Provincial Government through the Department of Public Works and Roads manages a road network of 19 783 km. Only 5 083 km is surfaced (tarred) leaving a serious backlog of 14 700 km of gravel road network.

The network carries great value not only to the North West Province but also creates direct economic links and benefits with its Provincial corridors to the neighboring provinces such as Gauteng, Northern Cape, Free State, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. The North West road network also links South Africa with other countries such as Botswana and Namibia.

Our provincial road networks are a catalyst for development and economic growth. The road network links the Provincial Roads with Municipal Roads that cuts across a number of towns and cities thereby facilitating economic growth through the movement of goods, services and people.

As part of the Provincial intervention for various municipalities, the Provincial Government has set out to rehabilitate the main and internal major roads in the different towns in the Province. As a result the Provincial Government has requested the Department of Public Works and Roads to prepare an intervention proposal in this regard.

Another project I visited in the North West today is the upgrade and repairs to the Molopo Workshop project which is value at approximately R3.7million.

The project started in May 2019 and is expected to be completed at the end of April 2020 and will include alterations, installation of a new roof for the office block and various other works which will enable staff from the mechanical section of the provincial department of Public Works and Roads to better carry out their duties.

One of the last stops of my visit was to hand over a fleet of new equipment to assist teams in addressing the roads maintenance backlog in the province. The newly procured equipment is valued at approximately R28million.

The provincial department of Public Works and Roads has been experiencing maintenance backlogs in the past financial years. The maintenance backlogs are as a result of shortage of equipment and machinery for roads maintenance.

At the beginning of the financial year (April 2019), the Intervention Team procured new equipment and machinery to augment the existing equipment. The equipment was delivered in December and is due for distribution to various districts in the Province.

The North West Province has been receiving much needed rainfall during the festive season and as a result a number of roads have been damaged and will require maintenance and blading.

The newly procured equipment and machinery will therefor go a long way in supporting the roads maintenance programme in the Province.

I was pleased with the progress made with key projects in the area and my direction to the provincial leadership and officials was clear: we have to step up service delivery and ensure that all our work is geared towards putting people first, in line with the Batho Pele principles.

Across the country, there is still a lot to do to bring progress into our communities not only to improve the living standards of our residents but to also boost economic activity within the construction sector through Public Works projects.

My department remains committed to working with all stakeholders to do our part to enhance service delivery and make a meaningful contribution to infrastructure investment, maintenance and repairs in support of economic growth.

ENDS

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