



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Joint statement by Presiding Officers of Parliament and the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure

Issue date: 1 April 2022

Today, Friday 1 April 2022, the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) updated the Joint Standing Committee on the Financial Management of Parliament on the progress with the independent assessment of the Parliament fire damage.

Today's briefing follows a meeting between the Speaker of the National Assembly and Minister Patricia de Lille earlier this week where the Minister and DPWI provided an update to the Speaker with regard to the independent assessment of the fire damage to Parliament buildings.

With the support and guidance of National Treasury, on 11 February 2022, the Coega Development Corporation was appointed by DPWI to conduct an independent assessment of the fire damage at Parliament.

Following the DPWI Engineering Services' recommendation that specialised structural engineering assessment work be undertaken in order for the buildings to be made safe for access, a scope of works was generated from the DPWI's Engineering Services team for this work.

The scope of work for the assessment by COEGA includes:

- Assessment of the fire damaged buildings in the parliamentary precinct to pronounce on the extent of the damage
- Provide professional advice on the safety of the structures.
- Provide measures to temporarily make the structure safe to allow the investigations to proceed unhindered

Deliverables:

- Initial Assessment report: Upon completion of the assessment, the service provider is to submit a report within one week of appointment.

COEGA delivered their initial assessment report which revealed the following:

The Coega team completed the bulk of the preliminary assessment on 22 February 2022 and report on the fire damage to the National Assembly Building and the Old Assembly Building following the fires of 2 and 3 January 2022.

The basement floors of the National Assembly Building are flooded and more inspection work needs to be done in this area.

The assessment confirmed that the fire in the National Assembly building caused significant damage to the central structural elements from the 2nd floor up to the 6th floor, but the structural integrity is such that the structure is not vulnerable to collapse.

The Coega final structural assessment report has designated 3 zones within the National Assembly Building. They are designated as Red, Amber and Green Zones. The colours designate areas within the buildings and their status with respect to SAPS access for their imminent investigations.

Green zones represent areas which are fairly lightly damaged structurally and which may be accessed almost immediately by a properly inducted SAPS teams following defined safety protocols.

Amber zones are badly damaged zones which may be accessed almost immediately by properly inducted SAPS teams following defined safety protocols, provided they are accompanied by a member of the Coega structural team.

Red zones are severely damaged “no-go” zones which may not be accessed by SAPS teams.

The Coega structural engineers have recommended certain short- to intermediate-term safety measures be put in place to safeguard personnel and certain remaining portions of the structure. These measures are recommended to be put in place after the conclusion of the SAPS investigation.

During the briefing to the Joint Committee today, the following updates were provided to the Members of Parliament:

Current structural damage does not pose a risk of the collapse of the buildings.

However there is severe structural damage to central structure of National Assembly floors 2 to 6.

Urgent work is required to make parts of the Old Assembly safe to exterior walls and to provide a temporary roof to prevent rain causing damage to lower floors.

On 25 February 2022, an on-site meeting held with Fire Department, City of Cape Town officials from various departments, DPWI, and Facilities Management service provider to resolve basement water extraction into municipal sewers due to a high volume of water.

The City of Cape Town issued the permit for water pumping into sewer system on 19 March 2022 to DPWI with specific conditions that must be complied with.

Various meetings were held to ensure compliance to the conditions stipulated on the permit.

On 26 March 2022, the Term Contractor was on site to conduct an assessment, including the measuring of the pumping that commenced on 29 March 2022.

Once the extraction is completed, the COEGA team will inspect the areas and incorporate findings into the Phase 1 Initial Assessment Report and issue Final Report.

The final report by COEGA will provide a detailed assessment to determine the extent of damage for full restoration of the building including providing a cost and time estimate for such works.

HAWKS & Fire Forensic Investigations after Structural Pronouncement:

COEGA initially inducted the HAWKS and fire forensic team on health & safety and other hazardous aspects to enter the National Assembly on 24 February 2022.

COEGA issued official correspondence dated 5 March 2022 to DPWI confirming HAWKS and other investigations may access National Assembly as from 7 March 2022.

Investigation started on 15 March 2022 and HAWKS projected completion by 1 April 2022.

Damage Assessment Status:

- Loose debris material (roof sheeting, ceiling boards, etc.) on roof level and 5th floor must immediately be removed which may blow off during windy days and poses a risk.
- Water in basement delayed the Final Initial Assessment Phase 1 conclusion
- HAWKS and fire forensic investigation must first be completed before Phase 2 (final assessment report) can commence
- Making safe of National Assembly fire damaged areas to immediately start after the HAWKS and other investigations
- Phase 2 Report submission envisaged by early May 2022 (subject to completion of investigation by Hawks by 1 April 2022)
- The restoration project will commence as soon as all the internal project registration processes have been completed

The Speaker of the National Assembly, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Amos Masondo and Minister Patricia de Lille were all pleased with the progress and professionalism of the teams thus far, given the challenges experienced and impressed on the teams to continue working with urgency to complete the final assessment report.

ENDS

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AND
THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

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