

MEDIA STATEMENT: PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER GEOFF DOIDGE SIGNS EPWP IMPLEMENTATION PROTOCOL WITH KWAZULU-NATAL PREMIER DR ZWELI MKHIZE AND HANDS OVER INCENTIVE GRANT CHEQUE TO THE PROVINCE'S TRANSPORT, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LIAISON MEC WILLIES MCHUNU

PIETERMARITZBURG – The National Minister of Public Works, Mr Geoff Doidge, MP, today (Wednesday, 26 August 2009), together with KwaZulu-Natal Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize, signed an Implementation Protocol Agreement for the roll-out of the Expanded Public Works Programme Phase 2 in the Province.

Minister Doidge also handed over a R 19 million Incentive Grant Cheque to Transport, Community Safety and Liaison MEC Willies Mchunu, for his department's achievements in creating over 29 000 work opportunities in the first quarter of this year, surpassing their set targets for the infrastructure sector.

The purpose of the Implementation Protocol, which all Provincial Premiers are required to sign, is amongst others, to establish an agreed framework for cooperation and coordination between the National Department of Public Works and the Province, to confirm the Province's agreement and commitment to achieving the targeted number of full time equivalent jobs in the Province by 2014 and to confirm the Province's agreement and commitment to assisting and mobilizing municipalities in the Province.

Speaking following the signing ceremony, Minister Doidge highlighted the importance of the Implementation Protocol and emphasized the cabinet's accountability to the people of the Province.

“The successful roll out of EPWP Phase 2, as well as the reporting of its progress, will give us an indication of how far we are in truly addressing the challenges faced by our people and acting on the mandate we were given following the National Government elections in April this year”.

Minister Doidge also emphasized the importance of the already established National EPWP Coordinating Committee consisting of EPWP units at national and provincial level as well as representatives from EPWP national sectors.

“This team is tasked with monitoring and evaluating the progress of EPWP across all sphere and sectors of government, provide possible solutions to constraints faced in the implementation of the programme, as well as reporting to me as Minister of Public Works on EPWP and the progress in meeting our targets”.

In response to Minister Doidge, KwaZulu-Natal Premier Dr Zweli Mkhize lamented his cabinet’s commitment to the achievements of work opportunity targets set by the Province.

“The handover of the cheque by the Minister this morning is a sign of our Province’s commitment to contributing to the targets set out by President Jacob Zuma in the State of the Nation address earlier this year. We will continue with these achievements in service to the people of our Province and our country”.

Expressing his congratulations to MEC Mchunu’s department, Minister Doidge described the achievement as a good return of investment to people of the Province for pinning their hopes and trust in government to respond positively to the electoral mandate period of 2009 to 2014.

“Government is confident that the performance of the KwaZulu Natal Department of Transport in the first quarter will act as a much needed stimulus to encourage

other provinces, municipalities and public bodies to accelerate their employment creation efforts and respond appropriately to our electoral mandate”.

In accepting the cheque, MEC Mchunu congratulated officials in his department for the achievement and paid a special tribute to his predecessor, now Police Commissioner Bheki Cele.

“It is due to Commissioner Cele’s leadership as MEC that we have achieved this milestone. All men and women in the Department can indeed pat themselves on the back for having been true to the tenet of this government – that to serve out people, and in the process restoring their dignity through creation of decent work opportunity”.

END.

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