

- The Minister of Safety and Security, Mr Charles Nqakula
- The MEC for Public Safety, Security and Liaison in the Free State, Mr Tate Makgoe
- Former Premier of the Province, Mme Winkie Direko
- Deputy National Commissioners of the SAPS, Commissioners Hlela and Singh
- Provincial Commissioner Gaobepe
- Area Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner Baile Motswenyane of SAPS in Southern Free State
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me take this opportunity to apologize for the Minister of Public Works, Ms Stella Sigcau, who could not be with us today. The Minister is on her way from visiting the United Kingdom and China, where she went on an official study visit to benchmark with the construction industries in those countries. Judging by that you will agree that the work to host the World Cup 2010, has begun and the construction industry is expected to lead the country in the provision of essential infrastructure, including roads and stadia, accommodation, shopping malls, airports and world-class public buildings, including the Police Station we are handing over to the SAPS this morning.

The key mandate and function of the Department of Public Works is to provide physical space for accommodation of government and its departments. This includes functional accommodation such as police stations, prisons, courts of justice and military bases. As a Department we are also responsible for providing residential as well as office accommodation to these client departments, including the police.

Not only do we **acquire** this space on behalf of other government departments, we also are responsible for the **maintenance** of these buildings, to ensure that our clients have a conducive physical environment that meets their technical, social and financial needs. This function would not be possible without the partnership with the private sector. Hence a special word of gratitude should go to the construction and property industries, who at the behest of government, jump at an opportunity to bequeath us with these beautiful assets, including this Mangaung Police Station.

This R15 million Police Station was constructed over a period of nearly twenty months. The main work consisted of the construction of:

- The police station with the community service point, offices for police personnel, ID parade room as well as store rooms
- The project also consisted of the construction of modern living space for police members
- It also boasts crime investigation unit offices for detectives as well as police cells for males and females, and a visitor's room.

This is by no means the only investment that Public Works is making in the province. In 2002 we handed over the newly constructed R11 million Magistrate Offices at Botshabelo as well as the R13 million revamped Magistrate Court Building at Kroonstad. In the same year, we completed the renovation of the Oliewenhuis Museum here at Bloemfontein. The R26 million Deeds Office Building in the Bloemfontein City Centre is also complete. Currently we are upgrading, repairing and renovating prisons at Kroonstad (R3, 6 million), Viljoensdrif (R5, 6 million) and Brandfort (R3, 9 million).

Also on stream is the construction of a new maternity ward for the Bloemfontein Military Hospital at an estimated cost of R15, 5 million. The Namahadi Police Station near Frankfort will be completed soon at a cost of R15, 3 million. These projects constitute a tiny fraction of our extensive building programme, hence our frantic efforts to bring about the growth, development and transformation of the construction industry. With 2010 six years away, the pressures for infrastructure development, and delivery, will be immense.

Also a fertile, imaginative and competent construction industry is a prerequisite for the successful rollout of the government's job-creation plan called Expanded Public Works Programme. With this programme, the government wants to see more people entering the productive labour market than having many of our citizens lining up for social grants and other welfare measures.

I like to congratulate the people of Mangaung for receiving such a pristine and useful structure. We hope they will continue to work with government in the spirit of Letsima and Vukuzenzele to keep our public buildings safe from ruin, vandalism and neglect. The success of all government programmes to build a better life for all will mean that lesser and lesser people will pass through the door of this building, as people join ranks of the employed and resist temptations to commit crimes.

On behalf of the Minister of Public Works and her Department, I like to officially hand over this Mangaung Police Station to the Minister of Safety and Security, Mr Charles Nqakula. Thank you.

*(Deputy Minister hands-over the Key)*

