

**Deputy Minister of Public Works
Ms BM Nzimande
13 May 2000**

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Official Opening of the Knysna Magistrate's Office Knysna

Dr PM Maduna, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development
Mr AL Kock, His Worship the Mayor of Knysna
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

I indeed feel proud to share this opening day with you - to know that we are bringing public services to our communities through the provision of infrastructure and accommodation for departments.

Please accept the apology of Minister Stella Sigcau and her sincere thoughts on this occasion - she unfortunately has to attend a funeral and has requested me to be here.

This complex enhances service delivery in respect of the administration of Justice for the community of Knysna, eradicating the need to travel to your neighbouring town for court cases. The six courtrooms and facilities provided here, for High, Regional and District Courts (criminal and civil), for Children's and Family Courts and special facilities for sexual offences, actually makes this a model office for the province of the Western Cape. Adequate waiting areas for witnesses, consultation rooms for councillors, a cash hall for payments as well as offices for administrative staff and a new cell block linked to the adjacent new police station will all enable improved work flow and security. Parking has also been provided.

It is indeed an improvement on the old courtroom, which was too small, with no room to accommodate Regional Courts and Circuit Courts of the High Court. In the past, all the cases for the Circuit and Regional Courts had to be transferred to George, precisely because of a lack of courtroom facilities and chambers for the Judges of the High Court, Regional Court Magistrates and Advocates. The old building was also partly destroyed by a fire and therefore it was important and urgent to erect this new complex.

The new Magistrate's Office complex, linked to the new Police Services complex, is part of a historic complex that reflects old Knysna. The historic Victorian House and Police Station are located on the site, as is the discovery of the old spring after which Spring Street has been named. The complex is designed in the old Knysna Victorian vernacular so that the new buildings match their surroundings. In particular the Old Victorian House is an interesting architectural gem.

Due to the locality of the site, its fall and the high water table, the design and construction of the complex was a great challenge to the Department of Public Works who managed the project, working together with the architects, engineers and contractors. The complex is constructed on concrete piles and comprises a parking basement with two floors.

Please allow me to acknowledge the professional team who delivered this complex within time and budget. They are:

- * As project manager: Mr JC Pieterse from Public Works Head Office
- * As architects: Brink Stokes Marais & Moolman (Pty) Ltd from George in association with Ian Napier in Knysna
- * As civil and structural engineers: Kantey & Timpler from George
- * As electrical engineers: V3 Engineers from George
- * As quantity surveyors: Law Hepple Ayton & Thomson in association with Rossouw Nevay Grobler Inc from George
- * As contractors: Makhosi/Group 5 Joint Venture.

The contract was executed in compliance with the APP1 affirmative procurement stipulations on construction work from the Department of Public Works. This method of procurement allows for previously disadvantaged people to be included in the mainstream economy on building contracts and embodies one of the objectives of Public Works to contribute to black economic empowerment. On this project, it provided employment and imparted skills to local inhabitants during the 24 months of construction, and, I am convinced, further employment opportunities now that the complex has been completed.

Local subcontractors executed the steelwork, roofing, formwork, reinforcing, brickwork, plastering and tiling during construction. Approximately 150 people were locally employed. On the management side a local

foreman was employed as well as a trainee student. The women who participated on this project include a quantity surveyor, a land surveyor, a cost controller and several labourers. Training in the various skills was also done on site, equipping the participating local workforce to enhance their future employment possibility.

We are looking at the facilities created, and I think that you may all be proud of this particular delivery of service by government.

I trust that this new complex and the service it brings to Knysna, will indeed respond to our collective quest for reduced crime in South Africa and that our very important criminal justice function will be fulfilled, here in the center of Knysna.

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