



**the dpwrt**

Department:  
Public Works, Roads and Transport  
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE



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# The new captain has landed

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*"The State's Handyman In Motion"*





## Editorial Comment



**W**elcome again to another installment of @Work. This issue arrives at a backdrop of new beginnings, signified by the commencement of the fifth term of our democratic government. More than a month ago, the citizens of South Africa took to the polls where the ballot paper reaffirmed the wishes of the masses. The new administration is stepping over a cemented platform of 20 years of achievements. As a result, the Government of the day has a clear message: "Together Moving South Africa Forward." This means we are no longer digging trenches to lay down the foundation but we are already at the roof of service delivery.

In the spirit of new beginnings, @Work pays homage to Ms Dumisile Goodness Nhlengethwa who takes over the reigns as the new MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport. Ms Nhlengethwa is no stranger to the public sector and her credentials are testimonial to the fact that she is indeed equal to the task. Her appointment to this supposedly male dominated portfolio confirms Government's stance on the business unusual approach towards a radical service delivery programme.

As the custodian of public transport and infrastructure in the Province, we have not betrayed the confidence of the masses placed upon us. We have continued to employ radical service improvement strategies to upscale our effort to deliver a safe and reliable public transport system and quality roads infrastructure. Our vision goes beyond the stacks of bricks and mortar which means with every school we build, we have a future engineer, a doctor and an accountant in mind. Hence we are no longer just "Getting Mpumalanga To Work" but we have taken a radical approach of being "The State's Handyman In Motion". Whilst we acknowledge the challenges ahead, we dare not falter on our mandate.

# The New Captain Has Landed

**A** few weeks ago South Africa was a beehive of activities characterised by political campaigns, manifestos and subsequently the elections. Indeed the ballot paper reaffirmed the wishes of the masses to shape the political landscape in order to enjoy the freedom and democracy that many stalwarts like the late Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela fought tooth and nail to achieve.

As the democratic government entered its fifth administrative term, new political leaders were recently sworn in to take the agenda forward. Likewise, the Mpumalanga Province joined the drill. The Honourable Premier, Mr D.D. Mabuza who was officially inaugurated on the 29th of May 2014 announced his new cabinet at a media conference a day after his inauguration on the 30th of May 2014.

Ms Dumisile Goodness Nhlengethwa was appointed the new MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport in the province. She comes in with vast political and administrative experience which she acquired throughout her career both as a politician and a professional. Her most recent position prior to her appointment as the MEC was that of Chairperson of the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Portfolio Committee in parliament, a position she held since 2011.

Born and bred at Gert Sibande District, the land of the lion of the east in Mpumalanga Province as it is affectionately known, she is indeed a lioness in the political jungle. This daughter of the soil, former Educator and Unionist, holds a number of qualifications which include amongst others a Degree in Economics from the University of Western Cape.



**Newly appointed MEC, Ms Dumisile Goodness Nhlengethwa.**

Ms Nhlengethwa's political career dates back from 1986 as a member of the Student Representative Council, an infantry position that hatched her political aspirations. When she joined the African National Congress, she grew within the ranks from the Youth League Branch Secretariat to the Women's League Regional Chairperson. In the year 2013, Ms Nhlengwethwa was elected the member of the Provincial Executive Committee.

As a parliamentarian she has served on various portfolio committees as chairperson and whip. With such track record, it is undeniable that this captain is equal to the task. As the ship takes off, regardless of the storms and waves along the way, it is nevertheless being stirred towards the right direction and the MEC has made a commitment to maximise service delivery.

During a meeting where the MEC addressed staff members in Head Office, she emphasized on her commitment to strengthen service delivery through a radical and business unusual approach. She ascertained that there will be no space for laxity whilst people out there are still without proper access roads, schools and health care facilities.

"As a mother who is also a Christian, caring for other people comes natural. I grew up in Amsterdam where there is no streetlight even to this age therefore I understand the plight of our people. I happen to be a perfectionist hence I expect a high level degree of professionalism and perfectionism on the side of the Department. I urge official to come on board and let us work together to move South Africa forward," stated MEC Nhlengethwa reiterating the President's call.

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Should you wish to comment on this newsletter or share your views with the readers of @Work, you can e-mail your views or comments to the e-mail below:

E-mail: [dsmalamule@mpg.gov.za](mailto:dsmalamule@mpg.gov.za)  
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### Talk shows

Tune in on the following radio stations every Tuesday fortnightly:  
LIGWALAGWALA FM : 19H45 – 20H00  
IKWEKWEZI FM : 19H15 – 19H30

### Disclaimer

Although care has been taken to verify the accuracy of information, the editorial team extends sincere apologies for any inaccuracies



# Mpumalanga raises the bar on infrastructure



**The newly constructed P17/6 (R538) Road at the Ehlanzeni District.**

During the beginning of the 2013/14 financial year, a number of roads construction projects were pronounced to be implemented by the Department in order to improve road networks within the province. A number of completed roads were handed over to various communities in Mpumalanga and a series of sod turning ceremonies were conducted with an aim of paving a way for the construction of new roads.

## THE P17/6 (R538) ROAD

Amongst other projects that the Department pronounced was the P17/6 (R538) road from Jerusalem to the R40 at Casterbridge in White River within the Ehlanzeni District. The sod turning ceremony was conducted on the 11th of March 2014 at Masoyi stadium and was graced by Mpumalanga Premier David Mabuza. The rehabilitation of the 16 Kilometre project will be completed in 21 months at a cost of R149 million. The project is set to employ 400 local community members thus reducing poverty as job creation remains a high priority of Government.

After the completion of the road, users will be able to smoothly access

tourist attractions such as the Kruger National Park hence the road is also used by many tourist travelling to the Park.

## THE D481 ROAD

Shovels and picks were at the Gert Sibande District on the 19 of March 2014 where the department continued with its service delivery mission and conducted a sod turning to pave a way for the construction of the D481 road between Embuleni Hospital to Ekulindeni phase (1). The community of Mooiplaas within the Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality were part of the event to witness the soon to be implemented R28 million projects.

During the construction of the 12 kilometre road, 200 job opportunities will be created boosting the local community. The 19 months project is expected to be completed before the end of 2015.

## THE D2915 AND D2916 ROADS

The Department further extended its drive to the Nkangala District where a number of roads infrastructure projects were conducted. The community of Bundu - Machipe used to experience

challenges as the road they used was gravel. Over and above, the road was not accessible during rainy seasons leading in many community members being unable to access places such as clinics, schools and shopping centres.

The challenges of the community of Bundu - Machipe has since been a thing of the past hence the department managed to construct and handed over the seven (7) kilometre D2915 and D2916 between Bundu and Machipe. The project started in October 2012



**The rehabilitation of the P17/6 (R538) road from Jerusalem to the R40 at Casterbridge in White River within Ehlanzeni District.**

and was successfully completed in February 2014 at a cost of R55 million. The official handing over of the road was conducted on the 20th of March 2014 at Mabena open space at Bundu.

This is where more than 1000 community members who attend the event could not hold back their excitement about the wonderful job that has been done in the area. During the construction of the road, 34 people benefited in terms of employment resulting in changing many people's lives at the end of the day.

## THE P52/3 COAL HAULAGE ROAD

The service delivery train did not stop there as it further headed to Emalahleni Local Municipality within the Nkangala District. This is where another hand over was conducted after the successful completion of the P52/3 coal haulage road between Kriel and Ogies.

The road was known to be used by trucks transporting coal to various power stations on a daily basis, resulting in the development of potholes thus causing accidents.

This prompted the department to prioritise the implementation of the 31 kilometre project. A total of 342 work opportunities were created during the construction of the road that started in April 2012 and was completed in March 2014 at a cost of R189 million.

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#### THE D2908MADJAKANENG ROAD

The last sod turning ceremony that was conducted by the department was held within the Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality on the 25th of April 2014. The sod turning was conducted to pave a way for the construction of the Madjakaneng D2908 road from Moripe garden to Pieterskraal. The construction of the road from gravel to tar road is expected to cost R67 million and is planned to be completed in April 2015. After the completion of the project, the local community will be able to smoothly access areas such as Siyabuswa without any delays of taking a long route.

#### THE P53/2 (R50) ROAD

The 27 kilometre P53/2 (R50) from Leandra to Standerton (Phase 1) was amongst the major projects that were implemented and officially handed over by the department within Gert Sibande District. The construction of the multi-year project started in December 2010 and was completed in January 2014 at a cost of R175 million. The community of Govan Mbeki Local Municipality did not only benefit with the road but further benefited with 155 work opportunities.

#### THE D3969, D4385 and D4387 ROAD

Construction vehicles were also all over the show within the Bohlabela District as the department

handed over the D3969, D4385 and D4387 phase one and two which interconnect between the area of Rolle and Oakley. The first phase of the project is a 16 kilometres stretch and its construction started in March 2013 and an amount of R98 million was spend to implement the first phase.

The second phase of the project was 11 kilometres in length and includes the D3969 road between Xhimungwe to Timihiheli which connect to Oakley within the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality. An amount of R70 million was spent in order to successfully implement the construction of the project from gravel to tar road. The projects were completed in January 2014 and it took 15 months to be completed.

#### THE P95/2 ROAD

Other projects that were successfully completed by the department includes the newly rehabilitated P95/2 road from Delmas to Gauteng Border south of Bronkhorstspuit in the Victor Khanye Local Municipality. The rehabilitation of the 18 kilometre road started in October 2012 and was completed in February 2014.

During the project a total of 298 job opportunities were created. A budget of almost R150 million was made available for the rehabilitation of the road. Road users travelling from Delmas to Bronkhorstspuit are now able to easily reach their destinations safely.

#### THE D1398 ROAD

The Nkangala District is one of the districts in the highveld known for as a coal haulage which has a high volume of trucks thus contributing to the national economy. The department managed to complete the D1398 road from Arnot Power Station to Hendrina. The rehabilitation of the 26.5 kilometres project commenced in May 2011 and was completed in May 2013 at a cost of R201 million. The project further opened job opportunities to at least 191 community members.

The department ensures that when implementing projects the local community benefits in terms of job opportunities and skills transfers.

#### THE WAY FORWARD

Mr Dancy Malatji who is responsible for Road Infrastructure in the province, said the department will continue to implement such projects in order to improve rural development and accessibility thus providing world class road networks in Mpumalanga.

“By implementing such projects we want to ensure that we do so to meet the departmental vision of an integrated transport system and infrastructure that promotes socio-economic development” said Mr Malatji. He further indicated that the department will prioritise roads infrastructure projects to ensure that road users access safer and user-friendly roads.

## BUS SHELTERS BRING BACK DIGNITY TO COMMUTERS

The construction of bus shelters by the Department in some of the rural villages in the province has brought relief to villagers living at Dr. JS Moroka Local Municipality. For many years, villagers within the municipality had to endure unfavourable weather conditions whilst waiting for the public transport, but that has since changed as a result of the Department's intervention. The Department has built bus shelters at Katjibane, Makola, Magononong as well as Lefiso villages.

Ms Thembi Sibiya is one of the villagers who resides at Makola village and enjoys the benefit of the bus shelter. She explained that the lack of bus shelter in the village has been a major headache for villagers living in the area as they had to endure the bad weather conditions whilst waiting for public transport. “In the previous years we waited in vain for the municipality to provide us with the infrastructure but we never lost hope that one day the bus shelter and pedestrian paths would

be built. We used the nearest shops for shelter when it was raining but finally our concerns were addressed”, said Ms. Sibiya with a smile.

Cllr. Jack Mahlangu from Dr. JS Moroka Local Municipality explained that the project was part of the Integrated Development Planning. However lack of funds within the municipality hampered the implementation of the projects. But it was through the intervention of the Department through the Integrated Rural Mobility Access (IRMA) programme that changed the situation by providing the infrastructure.

The Department invested a total of more than R3.1 million towards the project which created work opportunities to at least eighty three (83) local people. The construction of the project started in November 2013 and completed in February 2014.

The IRMA programme is a government intervention aimed at improving the use of non- motorized transportation



One of the bus shelters constructed by the Department.

system and infrastructure. The initiative was officially launched eight years ago by the National Department of Transport.

Similar projects implemented built in other local municipalities such as the

Mbombela Local Municipality including the DR JS Moroka. To date a total of one hundred and seven (107) bus shelters have been built at a tune of more than R45 million through the IRMA programme.



# Better school facilities improve education results

**E**ducation is one of the five priority programmes of the current government.

The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport together with the Department of Education have identified a number of farm schools in the province that were in dire condition with only a few number of learners in each school.

The Mpumalanga government decided to close the farm schools with a vision to construct proper schools with adequate facilities. This led to the construction of four state of the art boarding schools in the province of which three are operational whilst one is still under construction.

Historically, the apartheid government constructed such school only to accommodate some sectors of the community. The government of the day through the Rural Development Strategy has made significant roads to improve the quality of education in rural areas.



**The State-Of-The-Art Izimbali boarding school at Amsterdam.**



**Learners from one of the neighbouring farms who are now enjoying the benefits of democracy.**



**Another newly built Ezakheni Boarding School at Driefontein.**

The Ezakheni Boarding School at Driefontein and Izimbali Boarding School at Amsterdam in the Mkhondo Local Municipality in Gert Sibande District and Shongwe Boarding school in the Nkomazi Local Municipality at Ehlanzeni District are fully operational, while the boarding school at Machadodorp at Emakhazeni Local Municipality is still under construction.

The boarding schools have helped the learners from the farms to focus more on their studies than to worry about the journey to school. Some of the learners indicated that they used to wake up around 4am to prepare for school in order to arrive on time.

Most of the learners are coming from poor households and majority of the parents are unemployed.

Each school consists of an administration block, computer lab, library, boys and girls dormitories, sport fields, kitchen and school hall.

Education Department has employed general assistants who are responsible

for the day to day activities of the school. Mr. Aaron Sibiya a member of the School Governing Body (SGB) at Izimbali Boarding School said the school has brought relief to many parents who were struggling to give their children proper education.

He also said that some were adamant to take their kids to the school because they wanted the kids to look after their cattle after school hence they understand now that education is the best tool for their kids.

According to Sihle Vilane of Ezakheni Boarding School, they fill like they are in the "Model C" school since the quality of education have improved. She further stated that there is huge difference in her studies because after school she does not travel, but focuses on doing homework.

"We were at the farm schools. We walked long distances and we were distracted from our studies since we arrived home late and too tired to focus on books", said Sihle.



# EPWP CHANGING MANY LIVES FOR THE BETTER



Some of EPWP candidates who benefited through the programme which has become the catalyst of service delivery.

**T**he Mpumalanga province created a total of 174 718 work opportunities under the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) during Phase two (2) of the programme which covers the five year period from 2009-2014.

The Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, which is the custodian of the programme for the entire province made the announcement during a three day road show held recently within the various district municipalities

The main objective of the roadshow was to report back to all public sector bodies which include municipalities, provincial departments as well as the Non Profit Organisations (NGO) on the performance of the Province on

EPWP within the past five year period. According to the report which was presented by the National Department of Public Works, the Infrastructure Sector created at least 74 364 job opportunities with only 43 883 jobs created under the Environmental and Culture Sector. The Social Sector contributed 56 471 work opportunities. Some of the major achievements of the programme in Phase 2 was the introduction of the Non state sector.

## ROLE OF THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT

The National Department of Public Works, which is spearheading the programme, is expected to launch Phase 3 of the programme later this year. In a bid to enhance the programme thus address most of the

challenges experienced on Phase 2 of EPWP, youth employment and project based training will feature highly on the Phase 3. A total target of 55% youth employment has been set for phase 3. The province is expected to create at least one hundred and eighty seven thousand three hundred and ninety four (187 394) within the Phase 3. This will be implemented under the theme, "EPWP changing many lives for the better".

## EPWP BENEFICIARIES

The programme which was introduced to address the high level of unemployment in the country especially amongst the youth has made a great impact for needy people like Nomasibulele Mgikwa. She works as general worker for Lonerock,

which is a company contracted by the Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport to rehabilitate the P182/1 (R44) towards P30/1(R35). Nomasibulele has been unemployed for more than 8 years, however working at the construction site has made a huge difference into her life as she is now able to buy food and basic needs for her family including her two kids.

## BACKGROUND

The Expanded Public Works Programme is nationwide programme aimed to create job opportunities for the poor and unemployed people. It was introduced in 2003, which covers the three spheres of government including the state owned enterprise.



# NYS PROMOTES CO-OPERATIVES

The youth under the National Youth Service programme now have a new lease of life, after the Department partnered with the Department of Finance and Economic Development paving a way for the participants to renovate buildings at the Nature reserves.

This positive move has opened opportunities for 14 youth cooperatives who were established under the National Youth Service Building Maintenance programme to provide artisanship work such as glazing, tiling cracks, painting wall, paving and landscaping. A total of 308 youth are benefitting from the project.

They are renovating buildings within the nature reserves in the country, which include amongst others the Loskop Dam, Manyeleti, Songimvelo as well as the Blyde Nature Reserves.

The Department has taken the NYS programme a step further by introducing cooperatives aimed at empowering the youth with entrepreneurial and artisanship skills. The initiative is called the National Youth Service Building Maintenance programme

where participants maintain government buildings including the nature Reserves.

One of the beneficiaries from the project is Ms Gugu Malapane who works for the cooperative at the Loskop Dam Nature reserves. She said that the project has brought a positive change into her life and other unskilled and unemployed youth. "I now believe my future is bright together with my team, since the programme has opened work opportunities for us.

We were offered a chance to form cooperatives thus maintain government building which is a positive move by government to address the high unemployment rate amongst the youth. We are currently renovating the rooms and we will later refurbish other parts of the buildings in the reserve" she explained.

The cooperatives are working for a period of a year under the mentorship of a consultant, who has been appointed to monitor and mentor them. Ms Shirley Sibiya who is the Senior Nature Conservator from the National Tourism and Parks Agency stationed at Loskop Nature reserve said she is impressed with the work done by the youth. "I would like to

encourage other unemployed youth to participate into the programme, because it is a life changing programme that will provide them with skills that they will use to secure permanent employment in various sectors" she added.

The programme seeks to integrate young people into the labour market thus prevent the high urban migration and youth unemployment rate. The National Youth Service Building Maintenance programme is part of the exit strategy of the NYS programme, where NYS participants form cooperatives to refurbish clinics, schools and other public facilities. In the past eight years, the Department has contributed quite significantly in addressing youth unemployment since the launch of the programme in 2007 at Pilgrims Rest.

To date a total of three thousands and six hundred and five (3605) youths have been empowered through the artisanship programme, which saw participants undergoing a classroom and practical training. In the 2014/2015 financial year, the department is planning to absorb at least three hundred and fifty five (355) unemployed youth set to benefit.



NYS participants acquire essential skill and experience whilst putting bread on the table.



# THE SOFT SIDE OF BUSINESS UNUSUAL



We are also part of the family



Attention! Salute to the women in uniform



The working class



Quite! The captain is on the podium



There is a new sheriff in town



Listening is indeed a skill



All work and no play is bad for your health



Now we are ready to deliver



At least this camera doesn't come with a fine



After all, auditors are people too



Please hurry Mr Photographer, service delivery is awaiting



Serving with pride



# YOUTH MONTH CELEBRATED IN STYLE



It is back to school



Cheers, it is break time



Communicating in fashion



Being educated is more than just being stuck behind the office desk



Neat and Clean, we deserve a reward



Once again, we have reunited



In my time...



Where were you in those days?



# FOOD FOR WASTE BRINGS HOPE FOR RURAL UNEMPLOYED

A total of one hundred and forty three (143) community members residing at the Dr J.S. Moroka Local Municipality will no longer have to sleep on an empty stomach as they collect waste in exchange for food parcel. The Food for Waste project under the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) remains a beacon of hope for most families as they rely on the food parcel for survival.

The success of the project has since been extended to other areas within

the municipality such Gaphaahla, Molapo Mogale and Digwale. The Food for Waste project is one of the projects under the Expanded Public Works Programme's Environmental and Culture sector which was introduced in 2010 with the aim of reducing poverty as well as assisting the municipalities to address the backlog in rendering waste management service.

Ms Veronica Msiza, who is the District Project Coordinator on Environment and Culture from the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport,



**HARD AT WORK: Sweeping the streets of Dr J.S. Moroka Local Municipality.**



**A REWARD AFTER THE DAY: A group of men and women who have dedicated themselves to clean the environment.**

explained that the project has made great strides in alleviating poverty in the municipality. "The project was identified after we saw challenges with the waste in the area.

The community did not do much to collect the waste and this kept the area dirty. As an intervention, we decided to introduce this project where community collects the waste in exchange of food parcels as their rewards. The community members collect the waste once a month. We are currently planning to replace the food parcel with money seeing that most beneficiaries need the funds to address other needs" said Msiza.

The community members who benefit from the project are selected by ward committees who evaluate the

living condition of each household. The households that have bread winners who are unemployed are then registered on the database of the Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality.

One of the beneficiaries of the project, Ms Maria Mogonyane from Vaalbank was full of praise for the programme as she gave details of how the project has helped her. "I am an unemployed single mother of four girls and I have been living on handouts from neighbours for survival. Sometimes we slept without having eaten anything since there was no food until I was advised to join the Food for Waste project so that I can feed my children. Through the project I am now able to put food on the table and my kids are grateful," She concluded with a beaming smile.



**Fire Fighters from Pilgrim's Rest Fire Fighting Section ready to fight fire.**

## PILGRIMS REST GETS READY TO FIGHT THE FIRE

During fire seasons the Department is always ready to fight veld and households fires at Pilgrims Rest and surrounding areas. The main objectives of the fire fighting unit are to suppress and extinguish fires to prevent the loss of lives, damage to property and the environment. The emergency team consist of ten members of which out of ten only two of them are women.

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The Department is well equipped with a Fire Fighter Truck that is always on standby for any kind of emergency. The Fire Fighting Section gets a Fire Danger Index (FDI) report on a daily basis from the Fire Controlling Centre. The FDI report alerts the section whether or not it is safe to start fire belts. Fire belts are deliberate fires that are started in order to minimise uncontrollable veld fires.

The FDI report comes in three phases; yellow meaning it is safe to start the fire belt, Red means it is too dangerous to start fire and Green means the grass might be wet to start the fire.

Fire fighters do not just start fire belts, but they make sure that it is safe and every fire belt that has been started is under control. They act cautiously not to put their lives and others in danger.

The team uses drip torches containing petrol and diesel to start fire belts. Another team quickly comes in with



Fire fighters engaged on a fire belt in one of residential locations at Pilgrims Rest.

fire bitters and knip sacks containing 15 to 20 litres of water so that they can control the fire.

The emergency section does not only deal with fire fighting but they also cut trees around households and Government facilities like clinics, schools etc, that can pose danger to the community.

Ms Pankie Luzenda Mashego from Moremela in Thaba Chweu Local Municipality is a 57 year old woman who is very energetic and has fallen in love with her job. She joined the Department nine years ago on the 1st of May 2005, working as a grass cutter.

She later joined the Fire Fighting team under Emergency Section. Ms Pankie

Mashego said, "I am proud to be part of the team that is male dominated. It is not easy to be a Fire Fighter as we all know that fire is dangerous. However each and everyday Fire Fighters engage on a fire belt . It is an opportunity to save someone's life and that is my motivation".

## DISTRICTS AT YOUR FINGER TIPS

The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport has hatched yet another milestone in its nest of service delivery. This time around it is not about the handover of state-of-the-art facilities and opening of remarkably engineered roads but it is all about Information Technology (IT).

The Department has maintained its reputation, although it is not the usual cutting of ribbons but the red tape of access to information through the introduction of the departmental district offices websites.

Whilst the country was celebrating Youth Month, the Department geared itself to youthful thinking hence on the 13th of June 2014, along with the glitz and glamour of officials in school uniform, the Department officially launched the district offices websites in a bid to enhance access to information. Since the launch of the websites, the Department has widen the scope of access to information because the public can now be able to zoom into the district or even the cost centre they are looking for. Previously, most information on the departmental website although it was helpful, it was limited to Head Office. However, the tide has turned.

The districts are accessible through the main departmental website address which is [dpwrt.mpg.gov.za/districts](http://dpwrt.mpg.gov.za/districts). Each district has been allocated its own 'home' which is slightly unique from the rest but with a common corporate identity. The websites contain district specific information such

as the programmes, services and activities of the Department within a particular district, the management team and various functions, the locations and operations of cost centres and relevant contact details amongst others.

Department through the Communications Directorate has also introduced an enquiries e-mail address



([CommunicationDpwrt@mpg.gov.za](mailto:CommunicationDpwrt@mpg.gov.za)) that the public can use to send enquiries which upon receipt would then be directed to the relevant section. More features and upgrades are already on the pipeline in order to maximise the impact of this service. Statistically, the number of mobile phones in South Africa greatly exceeds the number of television sets. Cellphones have become the bible of every

household. So from communication's perspective, there is a significant need to tap in this platform as well to maximise access to information. The Department is making strides to occupy the space so that the public is able to access information as an when it is required.

Mr Bonginkosi Dlamini, from the Communications Directorate within the Department, who is also one of the Graphic Designers responsible for the website said, "I guess ensuring that the public does not needlessly travel long distances to access information is naturally inherent within the Department as the custodian of transport infrastructure. The Department provides not just public infrastructure but equally so there are tons of opportunities as well that the public can take advantage of if they had adequate access to information hence the Department invests heavily on communication endeavours such as this."

When the democratic government took office, one of the mandates was to ensure openness and transparency through access to information held by the state that is in the public interest. The government of the day embraced the concept of Batho Pele, by putting people first. This mandate which emanates from the Freedom Charter is enshrined in the Constitution and embraced by the Bill of Rights. The Promotion of Access to Information Act of 2000 compels government departments and other public institutions to develop and implement information dissemination platforms that are accessible, effective and efficient to meet the needs of the public.



# THE BOLTS AND NUTS OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

In a mission to improve corporate governance, the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport has established a number of committees that focus on various faculties of management such as policy development, employment equity and financial management to mention just a few. The ultimate objective of the formation of these committees is to improve service delivery, ensure compliance with relevant legislative and policy prescripts, enhance internal controls and advise the Department accordingly in order to make informed decisions. Most of these committees also play a significant oversight role to ensure that the Department adheres to its constitutional mandate.

In general, each committee focuses on specific area of expertise and make necessary recommendations to the Management. Technically speaking, the committees are an extension of the Management with delegated authority vested upon them to enable them to function effectively within their respective discipline. According to the Senior Manager: Risk Management, Ms Mary Radebe who is also a Chairperson of one of the committees, the committees are fundamentally an operational and constitutional requirement for proper corporate governance. "Whilst Management is faced with the mammoth task of providing strategic direction, the committees focus more on the technical and operational aspects which could naturally render the Department dysfunctional if neglected," elaborated Ms. Radebe.

## POLICY COMMITTEE

One committee which is the authoritative force within the Department is the Policy Committee which comprises staff members from various directorates such as Legal, Human Resource, Labour Relations, Finance, the organized labour (unions), etc. The members give guidance to policy development from various perspectives in accordance with their particular field of competency. This committee sets the tone for all legislative and constitutional requirements of the Department

by ensuring policy development, advocacy and compliancy. Every deed or omission thereof of the Department is judged on the basis of policy hence it is one of the most significant Committees. All committees operate within the scope of policy mandate developed by this committee which is chaired by Ms. Nancy Ngoben who is the Senior Manager: Policy Research and Development. Currently, the Department has about 45 approved policies from Petty Cash to Scholar Transport which are accessible through the departmental website.

## VARIOUS FINANCE COMMITTEES

Apart from the Policy Committee, there is a handful of other equally significant committees that assist the Department with its day to day operations. One of these committees is the Finance Committee that enforces compliance with various prescripts such as the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA). All procurement requisitions under R500 000 are attended and approved by this committee. Due to the complex nature of Supply Chain and Financial Management, there are other sub-committees such as the Bid Adjudication (BAC), Bid Specification (BSC) and Bid Evaluation (BEC) committees amongst others that are in place to ensure accountability, transparency, honesty, fairness and cost effective financial management.

## THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

Over and above these committees there is an Audit Committee which basically renders an oversight function to guarantee that the Department utilizes its resources prudently. It is through this committee chaired by Ms. Thabisile Ranope that the Department has been able to obtain at least unqualified audit reports from the Auditor-General for the past five (5) years.

As indicated, the Department has numerous committees that deal with a range of issues from operational to strategic matters. All have different mandates and terms of reference from enforcing compliance to ensuring administrative justice and provide

technical expertise. These committees include but not limited to:

## THE RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Risk Management Committee which is headed by Ms Mary Radebe focuses on risk mitigation mechanisms which the Department must put in place to alleviate threats of any kind from fraud and corruption to maladministration.

## SECURITY COMMITTEE

Security matters are always high on the agenda hence the Department also has a Security Management Committee. The committee chaired by Ms. Florence Netshifhefhe has 12 members from various directorates including the districts. Its main objective is to ensure safety and security of departmental assets. Like all the other committees, it meets regularly to review and evaluate security matters within the Department and make necessary recommendations.

## THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY COMMITTEE

The Employment Equity Committee is chaired by Ms Thandi Maziko with approximately 25 members. The committee has a mandate to ensure that the Department gives equal employment opportunities in terms of gender and race amongst other factors.

## THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) COMMITTEE

Since technology is the modern language critical to advance service delivery, the Department is not lagging behind either. The Information Technology (IT) Committee of six members which is chaired by Ms. Godisamang Molotsane, is there to ensure technological advancement within the Department. The main purpose of the IT committee is to promote proper usage of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), develop guidelines on the acquisition of ICT solutions and promote Information Systems Security.

## TRANSPORT AND SUBSIDY COMMITTEES

There is also the Subsidy committees chaired by Mr. Sipho Lukhele. The Subsidy Committee on the other hand only focuses on subsidized transport for departmental employees whose job descriptions demand extensive traveling that government transport as mentioned above is unable to complement.

Although each committee has its own unique directive, ultimately they are all there to support the Department. Therefore it is needless to say without these committees, the Department cannot be in a position to carry out its mandate effectively.

One significant aspect of these committees is that they also empower individual members with essential skill critical for the advancement of their personal careers. Mr Bongani Dhlamini, a Policy Committee member bears testimony to this fact especially as a unionist. "As committee members we come from different backgrounds with diverse proficiency on various fields but beyond our multiplicity, I appreciate the skill I have acquired thus far since one cannot be a jack of all trades," said Mr Dhlamini.

All committees operate within terms of reference and are appointed for a specific period by the Accounting Officer who is the Head of Department. The Committee members are often elected mainly by virtue of their expertise not necessarily the positions they occupy although in some instances this may be an important aspect to consider as much as gender, racial and organized labour representation is also taken into great consideration.

The Department clearly has all its ducks on the row for the new administration. 20 years of freedom means 20 years of improved corporate governance. In a nutshell, it is without any doubt that the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport is indeed "Getting Mpumalanga To Work."



# TAXIS AND BUSSES DO REQUIRE SPECIAL PERMIT



**Taxis parked in a taxi rank ready to ferry commuters.**

**T**axis, busses and any other public transport operator must apply for temporary operating licenses, if they are taking special trips; ferrying passengers on the routes which are outside their operating licenses jurisdiction.

According to Mr Matome Matjuda from the Transport Operations Programme, "The operators need to carry their operating license as well as their driver's license and failure to produce the documents can result in prosecution". He further advised those that do not have the documents to apply at the Operating Licensing Board.

The applicant should specify the group to be conveyed (e.g. church members) for the duration of the trip, date on which it will occur, a detailed route

description as well as the stopping places along the routes. Mr. Matjuda added that the application is subject to approval only if the board is satisfied that the existing transport services to such areas are not sufficient to meet the demand and that the applicant would not disrupt the existing service.

He further added that a temporary operating license will be issued to an existing operator who wants to convey an organized group of passengers, who are travelling from the same starting point to a pre-arranged destination as a unit with the sole mutual purpose of attending a common event e.g. sports, funeral, wedding, church gathering, a picnic or any form of entertainment or recreation.

Temporary operating licenses are issued on the basis of one per trip.



**Public Transport Inspectorate hard at work checking licenses.**

# DEPARTMENT CLAMPS DOWN ON OVERLOAD



**The new weigh bridge between Bethal and Ermelo**

**T**he Department has put an end to the overloading of trucks along the N17 road between Bethal and Ermelo after it completed the construction of a weighbridge. It is estimated that more than four hundred trucks per day were passing the N17 road collecting coal from the nearest mines.

The high volume of trucks along the road has been a major headache for the law enforcement authorities as most truck drivers were overloading their trucks without being properly weighed. This made it difficult for law enforcers to weigh the goods thus resulting in the deterioration of the newly built road.

Mr Elphus Nwamba is a truck driver who has been using the road for more than

five years. He works for Temdzambu Logistics collecting coal from Thuthuka to a mine in Emalahleni. He explained that the structure is long overdue as most truck drivers were taking advantage of the situation hence some of the trucks were overloaded. "We are now looking forward to working together with traffic authorities to ensure that there is no overloading" he said.

One of the motorists using the road daily is Mr George Majaki who resides at Bethal. He applauded the Department for building the facility. "I am so pleased that these trucks will finally be weighed. In the past, we had to endure driving in the badly damaged road due to over loaded trucks and now that government has rebuilt the road but a weigh bridge is in policy, we

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**One of the trucks heading towards the weighbridge.**



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hope the authorities will be able to keep things under control.” said Mr Mojaki.

Seeing that the N17 road was experiencing a high volume of trucks without the proper monitoring system, the Department spent more than R49 million to address the challenge. The infrastructure consists of a Digital weighing scale as well as offices.

During the construction process, a total of one hundred and sixty four (164) people were employed. The workers were trained on various skills such as health and safety as well as building and bricklaying.

Mr Moris Mhlongo is one of the workers who benefitted from the project as he was employed to build the structure. He said that the project helped him to provide for his family since he was unemployed for more than five years.

“I would like to say thank you to the Department for affording us such an opportunity. I am sure that the skill and experience I have acquired will go a long way”, said Mr Mhlongo.



Overloading of trucks destroys public roads and cost tax payers millions.

## DEPARTMENT NAPS ILLEGAL TRANSPORT OPERATORS

The Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport’s transport inspectors were tightening all loose ends on the road in a bid to curb illegal operators. The inspectors came down hard on taxi and bus operators who were transporting learners to school without the necessary operating license. They impounded a total of fifteen (16) taxis and four (4) buses which were operating illegally around Emalahleni Local Municipality.

According to Tsotetsi Mojalefa who is the Senior Manager for Registration and Control within the department the operators were ferrying learners without the operating licenses thus endangering the lives of the kids. Since they do not have an operating license it means they do not have a passenger liability insurance which covers passengers when they are involved in accidents. “This is a very serious problem because if they get into an accident, the passengers will not be covered,” he explained

Mr Mojalefa warned parents to be wary of such operators as they might endanger the lives of their kids. “If the parents decide to take their kids to a private school in town, they should



Mr Mojalefa Tsotetsi leading the operation.



Transport Inspectorate Officer checking operating licence.

also ensure that their kids are driven in a safe roadworthy vehicle and that the driver has the operating license,” he stressed.

Learners who were travelling from Hlalanikahle to Duvha park primary school felt the heat of the inspectors as their vehicle was impounded by the inspectors, however immediate intervention was made as an alternative transport was called in to take the kids to school.

One of the learners from the bus is Dieketseng Mahlangu, a grade 7 learner who said that her parents were not aware that the vehicle transporting them to school has been operating illegally, “I will have to alert my parents about this incident so that a similar incident does not occur,” she said.

During the operation, the inspectors checked a total of 117 vehicles and impounded a total of 67 vehicles including the twenty (20) illegal transport. A total of forty seven (47) other vehicles were impounded for other offenses such as unroadworthy, overloading of vehicle. All offenders were fined with their vehicles kept at the police station at Vosman.



# ABUSE OF STATE ASSETS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED



**Ms Florance Netsifhefhe, the Senior Manager responsible for Security Management within the Department.**

The Security Management Unit, which has mandate to safeguard assets of the department, has issued a stern warning against individuals who abuse state resources for their own personal gains. According to the Senior Manager for Security Management section, Ms Florence Netsifhefhe, "the Department is losing money due to irresponsible actions of some of the officials and most of them go unpunished," she explained. She said that her unit will be working tirelessly together with the Departmental Security Committee members to curb the trend.

This concern comes in the light of reports that one of the cost centres at Gert Sibande district had a water bill which escalated to the extreme prompting an investigation. "It was uncovered that officials have turned the state premises to wash their own private vehicles.

We want to condemn such action and urge those that continue with such practice to refrain from doing that. Such action is costing the Department a lot of money, as people want to save water bills from their own homes at the

expense of government resources. What is even more worrying is that these culprits are using the horse rail pipes which should be used during emergency cases when there is fire, to wash their private cars. The abuse of GG vehicle, water wastage, loss of laptops and other assets will not be tolerated", she warned.

The Security Management section is steadfast in its stance to curb misuse of state assets as is planning to conduct workshops in the department with the aim of educating employees about importance of safeguarding state properties. We are optimistic that after these workshops, the abuse of state assets will be minimal. We therefore appeal to all employees to attend these workshops as it will be beneficial for them" she said.

Meanwhile the Security Management section has established the Departmental Security Management Committee, which assists the section with all security management issues. The committee constitutes employees from various directorates within the department.

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN AUDIT COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Leading an audit committee to monitor how various Departments, Municipalities and private companies manage and utilize their budgets can be a lot of work. It requires someone who is dedicated and willing to work long hours. Well, that is what best describes the Chairperson of the Audit Committee for the Department. Meet Mrs Thabisile Idah Ranape, who has worked her entire career conducting audits for various institutions. She is currently the Chairperson of the Audit Committee for the Department. Her duties are to chair a committee set up and tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that the Department follows its internal controls set up to manage the Department's finances in order to obtain a clean audit.

But exactly, who is Mrs Ranape? She is woman of high calibre who studied in various institutions. She started her tertiary education at Mangosuthu Technikon where she studied and obtained a Diploma in State Finance

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**The Audit Committee led by Mrs Ranape (In Front Line) together with Management.**



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between 1991 and 1993. In the year 1994 and 1995 she continued to study in the same institution where she completed her National Higher Diploma in Public Management and Administration. She is currently studying to completing her Masters of Business Administration (MBA).

In her lifetime, she has been appointed in various institutions which includes amongst others, being a temporal teacher between 1985 and 1988. Between the year 1993 and 2000, she has held various portfolios which includes amongst others, a student librarian, part time lecturer, Accountant, Senior Accountant, Deputy Director in Investments and Loans and Acting provincial treasury. She has served in committees of various government departments and municipalities as an Audit Chairperson and a member of an audit committee. This includes amongst others, the Department of Education,

Public Works, Roads and Transport, Nkangala District Municipality to Mpumalanga Housing Company. She has now left government and has started her own companies. She is the proud owner of two SASOL Garage franchises. She has employed about 64 people.

She says she was motivated to start her business after she worked at the Nkangala District Municipality where they were strategising on how to create employment for the people. "Whilst I was working there I kept on asking myself, who exactly must create those jobs opportunities? I then decided to resign and start my own business. I am now the proud owner of two franchise SASOL Garages where I have employed 64 people. The fact that I am making a difference to the 64 lives makes me feel proud".

Starting her own business has not stopped her from doing what she

knows best, auditing and accounting. "I am assisting a lot of government Departments and Municipalities with auditing. I make sure that the Department's stick to their internal financial controls and help them to obtain clean audits. This has not been easy as a lot of challenges come with the job. I have to work long and irregular hours and most of the time I have to attend long meetings. But one thing keeps me going and that is the fact that I am contributing my skills to make a difference in our government" said Ranape.

She further stated that as the Department's Audit Committee Chairperson she is determined to assist the Department to get a clean audit. "In the last five years the Department has been receiving unqualified audit reports and it is my goal to ensure that this change for the better. The challenges that I have seen as the Chairperson of the Audit Committee is that, most

managers do not understand how to manage their programme budgets and this leads to challenges of improper expenditure. We are however there to see to it that this situation changes. That is why we conducted road shows for all managers in the Department, teaching them about the importance of audit and how it works. We also taught them how this can impact on their operational budgets which can either lead to the Department receiving a qualified, unqualified or a clean audit report.

She says it is very hard to be a member of so many committees and at the same time be a mother and run her businesses. "What keeps me in the game is that I set targets, make sure that I understand them and also make sure that I achieve them. This is what I would advice any person to do if they want to succeed in life", closed Ranape.



**Mrs Ranape hard at work.**



**One of the Audit Committee road shows that Internal Audit hosted where Mrs Ranape was presenting.**

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