



public works,
roads & transport

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Departmental Newsletter

April - June 2015

Issue 22



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As the sun rises across the hedge of our mountainous splendour that forges through the rivers that feed our nation, you can hear gentle breeze whispering and waterfalls roaring like our majestic *Big Five*. It could only be Mpumalanga, “*The Place of the Rising Sun*”, whose rays beam with infinite possibilities. It is the glimpse of the sunshine that recharges our strength to deliver on our mandate, safe, efficient and reliable public transport and infrastructure.

We step into the new financial year 2015/16 with clear marching orders accentuated by the Honourable Premier, Mr D.D. Mabuza during the State of the Province Address (SOPA) on the 27th of February 2015. Indeed there is certainly no time for fatigue behind the starring wheel of service delivery, neither laxity nor complacency should swallow our resilience to deliver.

Ours, is to reaffirm the position of our stalwarts like the late Dr Nelson Mandela, precisely because the baton is in our hands to deliver on all the imperatives engraved on the Freedom Charter. This is a sentiment equally embraced by our Honourable MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa which she alluded to during a Special Top Management meeting on the 17th of March 2015 when she said, “There shall be no room for slumber at the expense of the poor.”

In this episode, we tackle the pros and cons of our daily grind as the *Handyman of the State*. Though we are navigating our way through the mist of global economic turmoil, service delivery is not taking a back seat.

MINISTER DIPUO PETERS LAUNCHES 2015 EASTER ARRIVE ALIVE CAMPAIGN IN MPUMALANGA



HARD AT WORK: Minister Dipuo Peters and MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa during the national launch of Easter Arrive Alive

Dwaarslop came to a standstill when Transport Minister, Ms Dipuo Peters accompanied by both MEC'S of Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport Ms Dumisile Nhlengethwa and MEC for Department of Community Safety and Security Liaison, Mr. Vusi Shongwe and Bushbuckridge Mayor, Mr Renias Khumalo, launched the National Easter Arrive Alive Campaign in Bushbuckridge Municipality on 27 March 2015.

Various agencies also formed part of the launch. These were Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), Cross Boarder Road Transport Agency (CBRTA), South African Revenue Services (SARS), South African Police Service (SAPS) and Road Accident Fund (RAF) to name a few.

Dignitaries led a successful roadblock which started at 10:00

and motorists were not spared any mercy when it came to road safety issues. Minister Peters lashed out at Public Transport Operators for not abiding to road safety rules. “All road users must abide by the law of face prosecution” assured Peters.

A total of (149) vehicles were stopped and checked by transport inspectors. Summonses for operating without valid operating licenses were issued to seven operators. A further seven mini-buses were impounded and two were fined for overloading. Offenders had to pay a fine raging from R2000 to R2500, depending on the fine issued.

All public transport operators are urged to always ensure the road fitness of their vehicles before undertaking any trip. The fitness relates to a pre-trip inspection of validity of roadworthy certificate, checking whether wipers are working, cracks on windscreen,

tyre treads and pressure, whether engine oil and brake fluids are enough, ensuring head and tail lamps are working, handbrake is working, check oil leaks, etc. Operators are also required not to overload as it leads to fatalities on the roads.

Public Transport Inspectors were deployed throughout the province to intensify law enforcement operations. In the main, they were in the lookout for people operating without documentation such as operating licenses and are operating within the rules and regulation of their operating licenses.

Pleading to the masses, MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa urged motorist to rest every two hours or after 200 kilometres of driving to avoid fatigue which is a contributor to many road fatalities on the roads.

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Talk shows

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

Disclaimer

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

The community of Mjejane and Malekutu have been struggling because of the poor condition of the road. The two villages share a clinic and a High School. Learners, community members and even ambulances were forced to use this road despite its state. Ambulances and community members had to travel in the five km road when going to the clinic.

It has been a struggle because the road was so damaged that it was difficult for people to travel on that road. Vehicles could not travel on that road especially when it has rained. The struggle is over after the Department started with the regravelling project in Ehlanzeni District.

The project started with an aim to assist all villages and communities that have been struggling with roads not been accessible and that are in poor condition.

According to Richard Matavele who is an Engineering Technician based at Ehlanzeni District, the D2971 road is one of the five projects under regravelling in the district. Some of the roads that have been earmarked for regravelling includes D326 in Barberton, D2945 in Driekoppies, D2949 in Tonga, D1645 in Louville and D2160 in Nelspruit Clermont.

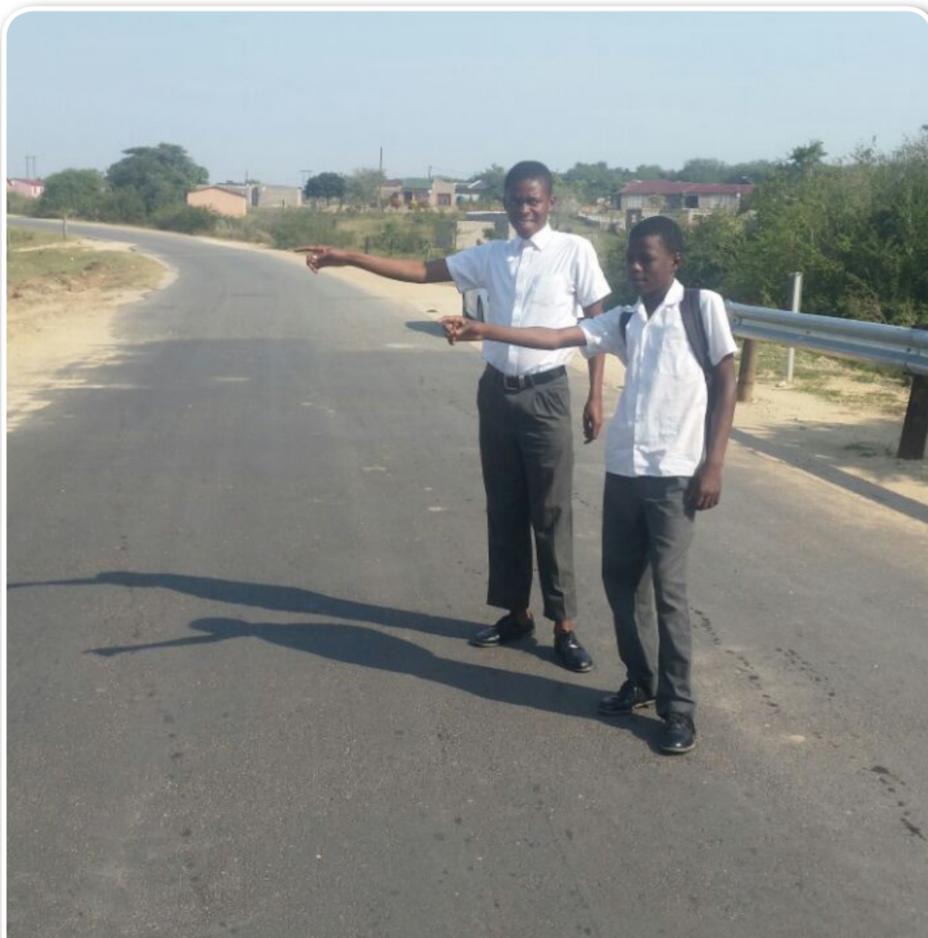
Mr Matavele explained that there was really an outcry about these roads because communities could not travel. The roads were not in good condition and it was worse during rainy seasons.

“We are really happy about the projects and the work that has been done because even the community members are really happy”, he concluded.

REGRAVELLING OF ROADS BENEFIT VILLAGERS



ROAD REGRAVELLING: D2971 under major regravelling.



BRIDGE OF HOPE: Tshwarelo Mabuza and Thabo Mkhathshwa travel on the newly constructed bridge on their way to school.

Bridge brings hope to Mzinti community

The community has been struggling after the bridge was destroyed by heavy floods. Mzinti villagers have something to celebrate after the reconstructed bridge by the Department. The bridge which is situated on the access road towards the village collapsed during the heavy floods that struck the Nkomazi Local Municipality area in 2013.

It has been a struggle for community members of Mzinti Village to travel in and out of the village. The community had to use an alternative road which is far.

According to Mr Mfaniseni Mabaso, a Roads Superintendent in the Department, the bridge was reconstructed at the cost of R1,3 million. He also explained that the reconstructed project also benefited the community through employment opportunities. Thirteen (13) people were employed during the construction.

Thabo Mkhathshwa (15) who lives at Mzinti Village, mentioned that they struggled because the alternative road is far.

“When we went to school in the morning it was hard for us because you have to wake up early in the morning. It was not even safe because the alternative road is in the bushes. We are so grateful for the construction of the bridge. It is safe for us and we arrive early at school. Busses as our mode of transport have an easily access to the village.” concluded Thabo Mkhathshwa.

CONSTRUCTION OF D797 ROAD BRINGS RELIEF TO RESIDENTS OF TONGA

The community and road users of the D797 road between Tonga and Ngwenyeni are singing a tune of excitement and jubilation after the Department completed the construction of the road. The much awaited rehabilitation of the 14 km D797 road between D2940 (Tonga) and D2950 (Ngwenyeni), is complete and open for traffic.

Despite the challenges, the Department worked tirelessly to address the needs of the people and resumed with the rehabilitation of the road. The rehabilitation of the project started on the 16th of March 2013 and was completed this year. The scope of work included the 14km replacement of base and sub-base, the surfacing of the asphalt, 8km of new concrete kerbing, 5km of new concrete V draining, improvement of the existing intersection and storm water draining facilities and placing new road signs and markings. The Department built the project at a cost of more than R136 million with at least 166 local people employed during the construction period.

One of the resident at Tonga who is celebrating the completion of the road is Mr Elphus Nkosi. The 48 year father of two is excited that the road is finally complete after years of hardships and struggles due to bad condition of the road.

“We are very excited that the department has built and completed the road, because driving on this road has been a nightmare. We have been complaining about the bad condition of the road, but we are now happy and we say thank you for the completion of the road,” he explained.

The rehabilitation of the road has been plagued by major delays which were due to heavy floods hampering the construction of the road as well as other unrest within the area. The abnormal rainfall caused damage to some parts of the new road. This prompted the department to put the project on halt with the aim of sourcing funds to fix the damages of the new road, before proceeding with the rehabilitation of the entire road project. The delays instigated community protest, which further made it difficult for the contractor to proceed with the work.



SMOOTH RIDE: People with disabilities are now enjoying the smooth and tarred D797 between Tonga and Ngwenyeni.

Changing lives of people who live in rural areas



NO MORE FLOODING: MEC Nhlengethwa and MEC Mhaule during the official handover of the footbridge at Ezakheni.

The Department did it again. A footbridge was built for the community of Ezakheni at Thembisile Hani Local Municipality. The project was completed on the 24th of April 2015. The department has spent up to R252 830.00 to build the bridge.

The purpose of building the footbridge was that there was a challenge facing the community to access services. They had to cross a river in order to access basic services such as schools, clinics and transport. It was worse during rainy seasons because school children could not cross the river without facing the danger of being swept by the water.

The footbridge will bring a new lease of life to the community. The community of Ezakheni and surrounding neighbourhood now will have a safe pedestrian footbridge.

Young school children of Musi Primary School will be able to access school on the other side of the river. They will not be compelled to walk long distances to get to school. The community at large can access shops, clinics or any other service that is across the river.

Community member, Mr Lazarus Themba who has children who attend Musi Primary School, says he is excited about the footbridge.

“My children will be able to cross safely to attend school when it rains, our lives will be changed and improved for the better when the bridge is complete. The bridge will not only help my kids, but I believe it will go a long way in helping a large number of children to get to school safely,” concluded Mr Themba.



EASY PASS: Community members of Ezakheni enjoying the newly constructed footbridge.

NEW LOOK OF 6 GUEST HOUSES IN PILGRIMS REST

Efforts to rejuvenate Pilgrims Rest are slowly taking shape. Pilgrim Rest is a renowned international tourist attraction which over the years have deteriorated due to inadequate investment on maintenance. However, the Department as custodian of the historic town managed to refurbish the District guest houses with the limited funds in order to attract tourist into the town.

According to the Acting Town Manager, Mr Alex Dibakoane the Department is managing the guest houses, therefore needs to ensure that visitors book at the guest houses for accommodation whilst visiting the historic town. "Many people do not know that there are guest houses at Pilgrims Rest owned by the Department, where people can enjoy with their families at an affordable price," he explained. Visitors can enjoy the luxurious guest houses at an affordable price

ranging from R322 for a two bedroom to R690 for a four bedroom house per night. He urged visitors to come and experience the beauty of an ancient lifestyle by sleeping at the Department's District 6 Guest House.

Meanwhile, work is underway to enhance the beauty of Pilgrims Rest with extensive landscaping already complete and renovation of braai areas on cards. Workers are busy cutting the grass with daily maintenance taking place in town. When asked about the contingency measures at Pilgrims Rest in case of veld fires, Mr Dibakoane confidently assured visitors that the Department has a team of fire fighters which have previously received training at the Hoedspruit South African Defence Force and can handle veld fires if the disaster strike. **"They have been trained to deal with basic fire fighting skills,"** he added.



ENJOY YOUR STAY: One of the 6 Guest Houses renovated in Pilgrims Rest.

Siyahlola Projects benefits the KaNyamazane Community

It is not an honour but a privilege when your house is visited by the high office such as the Office of the Presidency. The province was so privilege to be visited by the Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation in the Presidency during the Siyahlola meeting held in the Office of the Premier on 11 March 2015.

The meeting comes after the President visited Mbombela Municipality in Mpumalanga to commemorate the International Day of Persons with

Disabilities that was held at Bergvlam Hoerskool on 4 December 2012. During the visit the main focus was to raise awareness of improving the quality of life for persons with disabilities

It was during this event that the President urged departments to make a commitment of improving the lives of people living with disabilities. Some of the projects which were identified during the project visits by the President were the renovation of KaNyamazane Community Health Centre (CHC).

The renovation also included the building of the ramp for people living with disabilities. The Department was committed to renovate KaNyamazane Community Health Centre.

To this end, the Siyahlola meeting was held in the Office of the Premier where Departments were expected to give progress reports on the commitments made. During the first day of the meeting the Department's Deputy-Director General of Public Infrastructure, Mr Charles Morolo presented that the Department has managed to renovate the CHC.

"The reconstruction included the construction of new disability toilets for both males and females. A ramp for people living with disability was also built. We have also managed to reconstruct the storeroom which was too small and not user friendly for the general workers," presented Mr Morolo.

The presentation received a warm welcome from the Office of the Presidency as they were happy about the progress done in the KaNyamazane CHC. They were very excited especially about the issue of the disability ramp and disability toilets for both male and female. The meeting ended with a site visit in all the projects which were committed by Department including the KaNyamazane CHC.



BUSINESS UNUSUAL: Presidency visits KaNyamazane Community Health Centre.

Construction of Ronaldsey footbridge to change lives



WORK IN PROGRESS: The construction of the Ronaldsey Footbridge underway.

Progress on the construction of the Ronaldsey footbridge outside Mkhuhlu within the Bohlabela District is on track and will soon bring relief to the local communities. The construction of the 180 meter bridge with a walking part of two meter started in October 2014 and is expected to be completed in 2015 at a cost of R7.1 million.

The project was identified in 2013 during an Executive Cabinet Outreach Programme which was held around the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality. As a result the Department saw it imperative to prioritize the project hence its implementation.

The construction of the foot bridge is being implemented by the Department through its Integrated Rural Mobility and Accessibility (IRMA) project. IRMA projects are aimed at addressing transport challenges in rural areas that impact negatively to the communities.

Such project further helps communities with the reduction of unemployment levels, facilitation of an efficient infrastructure and the provision of accessible roads particularly in rural areas. During the construction of the

Ronaldsey footbridge, at least 20 job opportunities were created thus reducing poverty and unemployed.

Previously, villagers especially learners often had to pass through the Fayani river in order to access schools on the other side of the village. This therefore posed health hazard with regard to water diseases and the risk of the possibility of being washed downstream especially during rainy seasons when the river experience regular and floods.

A grade seven (7) learner Khosi Msimango who attends school at Thwasani Primary School said she was very excited about the construction of the bridge as it will change many lives in the community.

“I can’t wait for the completion of the bridge, I will be able to get to school safe and clean because I was forced to pass through the river when it was flooded which was very dangerous” said the excited learner.

Local vendor Mrs. Rose Nyatsi who makes a living by selling food to school

kids said she was happy from the day she started to see construction vehicles and construction materials at the site.

“This is indeed the power of our vote, positive change is what we want. Once the bridge has been completed, we will be able to access shops, banks and other services on the other side of the community safely and quick without any worries. It’s all thanks to our caring Government,” said Mrs Nyatsi.

IRMA project is government initiative which seeks to employ innovative means to address the difficulties facing rural communities in accessing

basic services such as schools, health centers, pension payouts, graveyards and markets.

Further more, the IRMA projects approach is to find innovative and sustainable solutions to challenges relating to accessing socio-economic opportunities by communities through the provision of appropriate and integrated rural transportation infrastructure and services complete with adequate funding streams for maintenance and development.

The Integrated Rural Mobility and Accessibility (IRMA) projects started during the 2006/07 financial year and they include amongst others, the construction of foot bridges, walkways, bus shelters and cycle paths.

Transport Inspectors lend a hand to the needy



BLESSED HANDS: Transport Inspectors preparing food for New Ermelo Primary School learners.

They are not only Transport Inspectors but angels sent from above to lend a hand to the needy. It was proven when Transport Inspectors in Gert Sibande District donated food and school uniform to disadvantage learners at New Ermelo Primary School.

New Ermelo Primary School is situated in small village at Ermelo in Msukaligwa Local Municipality. The school caters mostly for learners who come from disadvantaged family background.

During the event the learners could not hide their excitement when they

gave them the school uniforms including school shoes and jerseys. The Inspectors also took their time out of their busy schedule to cook lunch for the children which was a great experience. It was a day filled with emotions when learners were crying as they received their uniforms.

It was so amazing that the Inspectors pop out the money out of their pockets to buy the school uniform and the food for lunch. About 100 learners received the uniforms which was a great achievement.



PREPARING FOR A BETTER LIFE: Residents of Ronaldsey will soon be able to pass to the other side of the community after the completion of the foot bridge.

NEW LIBRARY EMPOWERS UMJINDI COMMUNITY



THE HUB OF KNOWLEDGE: Newly constructed Umjindi Community Library.

The Umjindi community has joined a long list of jubilant communities that enjoy the privilege of receiving a new library. In an effort to improve service delivery, the Department recently completed a state-of-the-art public library in Barberton. The construction of the library as the hub of information has unleashed new opportunities and improved the quality of learning and research among others for the thriving community.

The community which is situated 45 kilometres from Mbombela, previously had a one room library which made it difficult to accommodate necessary material. Through this facility, the poor will be able to acquire necessary information material at no cost.

The new library was built with the aim of improving academic knowledge and restoring dignity to learners around the area who previously struggled to access such facilities.

Sipho Mabuza, a grade twelve learner from one of the schools around the area stated that the library would play a very important role in the community since there are many people who love reading but cannot afford to buy books because the prices are very high. “The library is open to all people. If one becomes a member he or she can borrow books and keep them for a couple of weeks. Some students find it very difficult to study at home due to various reasons. The study room in the library assists a lot because it provides a calm and quiet environment. The library does not only provide books but newspapers, magazines and government gazettes to mention a few. I am certain that my academic results will improve,” said Mabuza.

The Department as an implementing agent has been working tirelessly to ensure that the project is completed on time. The project has reached a great milestone with women and men benefiting through job opportunities. The project which started in 2013 managed to create a total of thirty five (35) job opportunities.

Ms Anna Mnisi, a community member at Umjindi said that she is very delighted that the government has made a commitment of building a new library in her community. **“We used to have a smaller structure which made it difficult to accommodate more people and material all at once.”** said Ms Mnisi.

According to Ms Johanna Malatji, who is the Project Manager, the project was completed on time and this is yet another indication that the government is hard at work and serious about service delivery. “This library will assist the community a great deal and it will make their lives simpler,” elaborated Ms. Malatji.

During 2012/13 the Department lost millions on roads infrastructure due to the raging torrential rains and floods which destroyed culverts and low-level bridges and most roads, leaving gaps, gigantic potholes and washed away bridges.

Magogeni – Gomora Bridge in Boschfontein under Nkomazi Municipality was washed away by floods leaving communities struggling to connect from point A to Point B, making it difficult to access social amenities such as clinics and schools.

The new eight metres high bridge was built at the cost of R14 million. The project which started in April 2014 has since benefited 19 young people with job opportunities.

Ms Joana Mhlongo could not hold back her emotions as she expressed how the community appreciates government’s effort in re-building the bridge. Mhlongo explained how her two children used to miss school during rainy season as they could not pass due to floods. **“I was terrified that these high water would swallow my kids, hence I made them to stay at home until the water level subsided,”** said Mhlongo.

Another washed away bridge due to the 2012/13 floods was the Leiden Bridge on the D1299 road in Msukaligwa Municipality, Gert Sibande District. Leiden village is 45 kilometres outside Ermelo, was also in the Department’s intervention programme to address flood damaged road infrastructure.

The washed away culvert structure has since been replaced with a rectangular culvert box of 1.5 metres size installed to ensure that the low-level bridge can carry an excessive amount of weight. The new bridge was built at a cost of R3.2 million. The road leading to a bridge was also re-gravelled at a cost of R3 million. The road had developed deep potholes after the heavy rains.

Local farmer, 64 years of age Mr Robinson Sibanyoni who owns livestock in the area is excited about the bridge and the re-gravelled road. “These services could not come at a better time. We were really struggling, said Sibanyoni. During rainy season, we would travel by foot to get to the main road since vehicles could not drive through the slippery, potholed road and live stock would go for days without food since they could not cross to the other side because of high water. We really appreciate our government for hearing our cry,” said Sibanyoni.

FLOOD-DAMAGED INFRASTRUCTURE GETS REVAMPED



MANAGING DISASTER: Leiden Bridge under construction.

Snap Shots of Service



HOW CAN WE HELP YOU: Thembisile Hani Cost Centre staff waiting to serve.



ON DUTY: Workers at Dr JS Moroka hard at work.



READY TO RIDE: Some of the learners who benefited from the Shova Kalula programme.



PICK AND SPADE: Barberton Cost Centre staff clearing roadside.



GLOBAL PROBLEM: HOD Mohlasedi addressing the staff regarding economic challenges.



WHEELS OF SERVICE DELIVERY: Officials from Dr JS Moroka Cost Centre.



ROLL CAMERA: Officials from Mayflower Cost Centre.



MUD AND BRICK: Departmental team hard at work constructing offices.



RIGHT TOOLS AT HAND: Departmental workforce showcasing their skills in carpentry.



HAPPY SERVANTS: Team Elukwatini Cost Centre.



BENDING WITH PRIDE: Team Chochocho Cost Centre patching of potholes.



TIME TO REST: Ladies who keep government offices sparkling.

Delivey In Mpumalanga



NOT PLOUGHING: Road Workers removing grass by the road side.



ALL EARS: Departmental staff attentively listening to the words of wisdom.



NO LAUGHING MATTER: Driver receiving traffic fine for non-compliance.



REAL MEN AT WORK: Road workers patching potholes.



HANDYMEN: Electricians fixing lights in government premises.



PAINT WORK: EPWP team painting government offices at Ehlanzeni District.



ORANGE AT HEART: Departmental employees ready to inspire the youth.



SUITS AND OVERALLS: Officials from Ehlanzeni district rolling out service delivery.



POWERTOOL: Chief Albert Luthuli 1 Cost Centre officials patching a grader tyre.



ATTENTION: Law Enforcers ready to take off during Easter Arrive Alive campaign.



GLITZ AND GLAMOUR: MEC DG Nhlengethwa and colleagues during SOPA 2015/16.



ENVIROLOO: Newly constructed toilets at Shanke Primary School.

NEW ENVIROLOO TOILETS REPLACES OLD PIT TOILETS

Shanke Secondary School is situated in a place called Oakley in Mkhuhlu under Bushbuckridge Local Municipality. The school accommodates more than 700 children around Oakley. It is an established fact that to have a good sanitation is a basic need especially in an environment like a school.

The project of constructing new toilets is under the Department. The School used to have 24 pit toilets that were not in a good condition. They were replaced with 30 enviroloo toilets. The total cost of the

whole project was more than R1,9 million. About 13 job opportunities were created during the construction. The project is expected to be completed by May 2015.

The Enviroloo encourages children to be more hygienic since they are installed with hand washing basin with running tap water that is used to wash hands after using the toilet. Enviroloo specialist was assigned to give training to the general workers and educators on how to service and look after the toilet systems, no newspapers only toilet papers to be used.

MORE THAN 30 YEAR OLD SAMUEL MHLANGA PRIMARY GETS NEW LIFE LINE

Mpumalanga Provincial Government has made a priority of building new schools in the Province. Samuel Mhlanga Primary School is situated at Allendale in the Bushbuckridge Municipality. It is one of many schools that have been demolished and reconstructed.

The old structure was more than 30 years old and it was no longer safe to be used as a facility for education. Construction of the new structure started in February 2013 and was completed by April 2015. The structure consist of 18 new classrooms, 2 Grade R Centres, Kitchen, Guard House, 24 Enviroloo Toilets and Fencing. The total cost of the construction of the school is more the R31 million.

The construction project was under the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) guidelines. More than 40 work opportunities were created under this project. An amount of more than R1million was spent on local labour and R2, 5 millions on local subcontractors. Skills like drainage work, reinforcing steel fixing, concrete work and brick laying was also developed during construction of this project.



NEW HOPE FOR LEARNERS: Newly constructed Samuel Mhlanga Primary School at Allendale, Bushbuckridge Local Municipality.

OHS set to improve employees' working environment

Creating a safe and healthy working environment is critical for the success of any organisation. The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) sub-programme within the Department seeks to promote a safe and healthy working environment for all employees. The

ultimate objective is to ensure reduced unnecessary injury on duty cases which could otherwise be prevented. The programme also saves the Department a lot of money on medical costs and sick leave among others. In general, OHS promotes productivity through ensuring employee fitness to deliver the required service.

The programme conducts inspections in the Departmental buildings, sites and other workstations to identify hazardous areas and ensure compliance with the OHS Act by monitoring the use of protective clothing and equipment.

According to the Manager: OHS, Ms Linda Labuschagne, information sessions are conducted regularly to

empower employees with sufficient knowledge regarding priscrpts such as the Compensation of Injury on Duty Act (COIDA), Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and procedures to follow when reporting an Injury on duty.

“A wide array of workplace hazards also present risks to the health and safety of people at work, these include but not limited to chemicals, allergents, physical hazards, etc,” elaborated Ms Labuschagne. In a case where hazards are identified, a report is submitted to the relevant section to immediately address such concerns.

The programme also coordinates the nomination of Health and Safety representatives in the Department and further coordinates the training of these representatives. The representatives are required to meet on regular basis to discuss health and safety issues related to the workplace and possible solutions for identified areas of concern. In order to improve health and safety in the workplace, employees have a constitutional right to demand for a conducive working environment that does not pose threat to their lives.

If an employee is injured while on duty, it is their right to make a compensation claim. However, it is imperative for employees to follow procedures when reporting an injury on duty. An

Continued on 11



YOUR WELLBEING IS OUR CONCERN: Ms Linda Labuschagne, Manager OHS and Ms Susan Metiso OHS officer.

Continued from 10

employee should report the accident to the supervisor immediately after it has happened, that is according to section 38 of the COID Act.

“If notice is not given to the employer within 12 months after the date of accident, the employee forfeits the right for compensation, since the claim cannot be considered in terms of the Act. The employee should assist the Department in obtaining medical reports from the treating doctor. Medical evidence plays an important part when liability for the payment of compensation and medical expenses is considered,” emphasized Labuschagne.

She further stated that when an employee is receiving prolonged medical treatment and is off duty as a result of injuries sustained in an accident, progress medical reports should be submitted on a monthly basis to the Compensation Fund to ensure that compensation in respect of temporary total disablement is paid timeously.

Ms Susan Metiso, the OHS officer mentioned that it is the responsibility

of employees to get involved in their cases. “They should not sit back and wait for feedback. On the other hand the employer has to report the accident in the prescribed manner, that is by completing the Employer’s Report of an Accident. The Act requires that an accident be reported by the employer to the Compensation Commissioner within seven days after the accident took place. If a case is reported after seven days, a late submission report must be submitted with the injury on duty case before the Compensation Commissioner may consider that case,” Ms Metiso explained.

The treating doctor has to describe the impairment of function as a result of the accident, if any, to enable the Fund to assess permanent disablement, if any. It is also important that the employee’s banking details form should be submitted, in case the claim qualifies for any compensation. “All employees have a right to return home each day safe and sound,” concluded Ms Labuschagne.

The taxi industry plays a pivotal role towards providing the much needed public transport within the province. The democratic government played a significant role on the transformation of the industry through the regulation and provision of the financial support to the industry which was previously dubbed “A conflict ridden and violence industry”. The recent unrest at the Mbombela Taxi Rank brought back the recollection of the past where brutal attacks and merciless killings dominated the industry, but government’s swift action brought hope to commuters who become victims of the taxi conflict.

On the 30th of March 2015, taxi violence erupted at the Mbombela Taxi Rank which left commuters stranded forcing them to look for other alternative modes of transport. The violence prompted the closure of the Mbombela Taxi Rank, thus suspending all taxi operations. MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa met the warring taxi operators who raised concerns about the delays with the expansion of the Mbombela Taxi Rank, routes and operating licences.

In responding to some of their concerns, MEC Nhlengethwa did not mince her words, as she issued an ultimatum to operators to either work together or face suspension of all taxi operation in and around Mbombela municipality. ““You go back and work together in the Mbombela Taxi Rank or else I will suspend all taxi operations in the entire Mbombela area for 14 days. This means that there will be no minibus taxi that will be allowed to operate in the entire Mbombela Local Municipality whilst I have suspended the operations. I will advise commuters to use other modes of transport in the

“WORK TOGETHER OR FACE SUSPENSION OF ALL TAXI OPERATIONS,” warns MEC



STOP THE CONFLICT: MEC Nhlengethwa at the SABC studio talking about the Taxi Conflict.

meantime, if you do not co-operate and work together. Government takes strong exceptions to unlawful acts and will not hesitate to take actions to protect the rights of all citizens to move freely without intimidation. The Provincial Government express utmost regret and unconditionally apologize to all road users and commuters for the inconvenience caused by the disruptions,” she said.

After the meeting, taxi operators committed to go back and work together whilst engagements were proceeding. The meeting further

resolved to open the Mbombela taxi rank after the temporal closure and all stakeholders were expected to work within the parameter of the law.

The MEC appointed a task team to look at all issues relating to routes and operating licences. The committee started its work in April 2015 and expected to table a report by the end of June 2015 to MEC Nhlengethwa. The Taxi Rank Management committee will continue with its operations of day to day management of the taxi rank. No illegal operations will be allowed to operate outside the Mbombela Taxi

Rank. The MEC and the Executive Mayor are open to any dialogue with the taxi associations through the Mpumalanga Taxi Council.

Similar disruption occurred on the 30 June 2014 where traffic flow in and out of Riverside in Nelspruit was brought to a complete halt, resulting in chaos and confusion. The same taxi operators caused traffic jams and delays to motorist and other road users on the R40 road leading into Mbombela city, however the swift action of the Provincial Government averted taxi conflicts.

The Mpumalanga Province is reaping the good results of job creation through the Expanded Public Works Programme, as the Province reported a total of 43 020 work opportunities created against the 51 136 target which translated to 84 percent. The Infrastructure sector has created more work opportunities with 22 670 jobs created. It was followed by the Social sector with at least 11 600 and Environment and Culture sector with 13 351 work opportunities created.

During the EPWP Phase 3, the Province is expected to contribute at least 300 919 work opportunities towards the National target of 6 million. In a bid to achieve the goal, the Department is galvanizing support in the 2015/16 financial year from other key stakeholders through various mechanisms. This includes amongst others, introducing the EPWP Day, conducting Municipal Summit, road shows and one on one stakeholder engagements.

Meanwhile, the programme is sowing the seed of hope for the unemployed youth in the Province, as the Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA). The youth participating under the EPWP's National Youth Service cooperatives are providing general building maintenance, civil work, installing and repairing animal fences at the nature reserves. In one of the nature reserves, Manyeleti Nature Reserve, a total of nineteen (19) participants will reconstruct the ranger's ablution blocks, renovate reserves main camps, staff houses, dormitories, etc.

The Expanded Public Works Programme is a nationwide programme aimed at addressing the high unemployment rate in the country. As the rate of unemployment continues to grow at an alarming degree. EPWP is one of the main driver of job creation aimed at addressing the situation.

GOOD RESULTS FOR MPUMALANGA PROVINCE ON EPWP JOB CREATION



GETTING HANDS DIRTY: National Youth Service participants hard at work at Manyeleti Nature Reserve.

Mpumalanga Legislature goes to the people



THE ART OF LEADERSHIP: HOD Kgopana Mohlasedi and MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa during TLP.

The Mpumalanga Legislature afforded the people of Emalahleni Local Municipality an opportunity to participate in live debates during its annual Taking Legislature to the People that started on the 3rd until the 6th of March 2015. This Sectoral Parliament was held at Lynville Stadium in an effort to deepen democracy, promote development and build a better life for all.

Taking Legislature to the People is an oversight and public participation programme of the Mpumalanga Legislature. Through the programme the Legislature exercises its constitutional obligation to oversee government programmes. This programme is embarked on to fulfil the Legislature's desire to address the issues affecting people on the ground, who have not yet achieved optimal service delivery levels. Public Hearings were held whereby ordinary citizens engage face to face with the elected public representatives on issues affecting them.

Members of the public were invited and encouraged to attend the four day long sitting to interact with the Premier of the Province, Mr DD Mabuza, Members of the Executive Council (MECs), and Members of the Provincial Legislature (MPLs) on issues

affecting them. They also visited government projects. This allowed members of the legislature to have first-hand information on progress, challenges and quality of work being rendered.

Most importantly, during the TLP week, there were sittings of the legislature which saw the debate on the recently delivered State of the Province Address by the Premier. MECs also had an opportunity to respond to questions for oral reply. The community of Emalahleni were able to experience how the legislature conducts their business.

Community members voiced out their problems. A resident of Ward 7 in Vosman, Mr Everton Sindane asked: "When are we going to get our roads fixed, because since 1992 they are not fixed? Another community member from Ward 4, Spring Valley complained about streets without names. Other residents complained about sewerage, lack of youth community centres and skill development centres, especially for youth.

All relevant MECs answered some of the issues raised by members of the community, while other problems were noted down to be investigated further.

A RIDE TO A BETTER FUTURE FOR LEARNERS IN THE PROVINCE

The long walk to school for one hundred and eighty (180) learners from Mkolishi Combined School and Maqhawuzela Combined School is finally over. The relief comes after the donation of bicycles to learners who walks at least 3km to 5km to school through the Shova Kalula Bicycle Project. The two schools received the donation during a handover ceremony on Friday, the 20th of March 2014 at Tjakastaad Community Hall.

One of the recipient is a 13 year old Lydia Masango learner from Maqhawuzela Combined School. She travels at least eight km daily to and from school, but that will soon change with her new wheels promising to change her situation. According to Lydia, her teachers were always complaining about her late coming. "At some point the school principal threatened to lock the gates, but instead he complained to our parents. Nevertheless I am glad that the suffering will be over," she said.

Lydia is one amongst the thousands of learners in the country who will soon be benefitting from the Non-Motorized transport system programme called Shova Kalula. Her life will soon change after the MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Ms Dumisile Nhlengethwa together with the National Deputy Minister, Ms Sindisiwe Chikunga made the donation at the ceremony witnessed by parents and teachers.

In her address to the audience, MEC Nhlengethwa warned parents not to use the bicycles for their personal gains. **"The bicycles will now become assets of the school and should form part of the school's asset register, we therefore appeal to parents not to use the assets for their own benefit. If the bicycle gets broken, there are bicycles shops in all the four district where they could be fixed,"** she explained.

The Deputy Minister explained that the National Department of Transport is donating a total of 3 000 bicycles yearly, which is shared amongst the eight provinces throughout the country. "The bicycles will assist learners who walk at least 3km and 5km to school, but who do not benefit from Scholar Transport," she said. She further explained that the department expects better results from these learners at they are expected to be punctual and not miss lessons.

The bicycles are part of the Shova Kalula Bicycle Programme, which compliments the Scholar Transport System. The Scholar Transport System that caters for learners that travel at least more than five kilometers to school. Shova Kalula bicycle Programme is nationwide and was introduced in 2005.



RIDE ALONG: Deputy Minister of Transport Sindisiwe Chikunga and MEC Dumisile Nhlengethwa donating bicycles to learners.

IRS Improve Information Sharing While Ensuring Security



BEHIND THE MACHINE: Mr Siphso Nkosi, Acting Senior Manager: Knowledge Management.

Information sharing has often proven to be one of the weaknesses of large corporations including state entities. One of the reasons could be attributed to organisational red tapes aimed at fostering information security due to various security threats such as espionage, plagiarism and all kinds of fraudulent activities that hackers are capable of. As a result, information flow is restricted which on the other hand often suffocates productivity and stalls service delivery since critical decisions rely mostly on the instant availability of credible information.

The Department is nevertheless at the helm of information sharing owing to the state-of-the-art Information Repository System (IRS) which was launched in April 2013 to enhance information flow within the Department. According to the Acting Senior Manager: Knowledge Management, Mr Siphso Nkosi, the system allows authorised officials as determined by the Head of Department to retrieve, share and store information on the network server which is critical for the execution of their respective duties with great efficiency. As a result, decision making, reporting, planning and monitoring is maintained because of integrated information coordination which binds the organisation together thereby enhancing its operations to an optimal climax.

"As a matter of fact, information is the most valuable asset of any organisation that employees often take for granted and sometimes personalise it. Usually officials rely on various gargets such as laptops, discs, memory sticks, mobile phones and other storage devices

which can be lost, stolen and even damaged, losing critical information, while on the other hand the Department has invested on a more efficient and reliable system," cautioned Mr Nkosi.

He emphasized the need for staff members to familiarise themselves with the system. Meanwhile the Department is engaged in discussions with the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) to further enhance the flexibility and security of the system so that authorised officials can be able to access information remotely through internet connection especially those who are doing field work such as Engineers, Quantity Surveyors, Architects and Project Managers who may need to access material such as drawings, maps and reports.

The Acting Senior Manger: Monitoring and evaluation, Ms Chantal Barnad who makes use of the system on daily basis due to its reliability said, "The system is very important especially when it comes to retrieving information since we often deal with auditors who frequently request information. Normally, relying on one's own method of storing information has proven many times to be ineffective and unreliable. Documents such as Annual Reports, Portfolios of Evidence, Circulars, Annual Performance and Strategic Plans to mention a few are easily accessible when required because of the efficiency of the system. Sometimes programmes are unable to substantiate their reports or provide information because of poor filing system. However, if we could all make use of the IRS, things could improve," advised Ms Barnad.

CLEANING ROADSIDE DRAINAGE REDUCES ROAD CARNAGE

Cleaning site drainage and culvert pipes is part of core function of the Department. The site drainage team from Chochocho Cost Centre works tirelessly to remove sand and other objects from site drainage and culvert pipes to avoid water from flooding the street during rainy days. The site drainage team consist of eleven (11) officials of whom seven are males and four females are drivers.

“We are going to work hard and put more effort on cleaning the culvert pipes and clearing site drainages on Road D4394 between Thulamahashe and Dwaarsloop,” says Mr Donald Mkhonza who is a foreman under Site Drainage and Road Markings. Mr Mkhonza has been with the Department for more than seven years in a foreman position.

When site drains are not cleared and pipes not cleaned on regular basis, water is flooding the street and can cause danger to the motorist and it will cost the Department lot of money to fix damaged roads.



PICK AND SPADE: Chochocho Cost Centre site drainage team cleaning roadside drainage on the road between Thulamahashe and Dwaarsloop.

DEPARTMENT GEARS TOWARDS THE NEW e-TENDER PUBLICATION PORTAL

The Minister of Finance Mr Nhlanhla Nene, announced during his budget statement on 25 February 2015 that government departments would soon be expected to implement the new e-tender Publication Portal and the Central supplier database systems. The e-Tender Publication Portal is an initiative of the National Treasury and will be implemented through the Office of the Chief Procurement Officer (OCPO). It is aimed at simplifying, standardising and automating government procurement processes. The Mpumalanga Department Public Works, Roads and Transport like all other government department is not exempted from the policy, as is expected to implement the initiative.

Departments would be expected to publish their tenders in accordance with the demand plans for acquisition of goods, services and infrastructure. Benefits of the portal include cost reduction and will also improve transparency and accountability in awarding government tenders.

The portal will carry tender notices, accompanied by official tender and relevant Terms of Reference or other description of functionality that may be applicable and the

publication of Award notices and minimum information prescribed by the OCPO. It is also the first step towards implementing government's e-procurement system as part of the Integrated Financial Management System and will contribute to reducing duplication, fragmentation and inefficiency in government tender publication.

The Other system to be introduced is the Central Supplier Database (CSD) aimed at reducing duplication of effort and cost for both business and government while enabling electronic procurement processes. CSD will have interfaces to South African Revenue Services (SARS) to enable tax clearance status verification of suppliers throughout the Procure-to-pay process and the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) for vetting of business registration and business ownership.

Modernising Supply Chain Management through technological innovation will enable government to reduce the administrative burden for both government and business and improve the monitoring of procurement patterns, contracts and prices.

Infrastructure projects on spot-check by Portfolio Committee



ENSURING ORDER: Members of the Portfolio Committee visiting the construction site of Osizweni Special School.

In order to ensure that all infrastructure projects that are implemented by the department are checked, monitored and that they are at a good state, a delegation comprising members of the Provincial Legislature Portfolio Committee responsible for Public Works, Roads and Transport together with the Management of the Department visited a number of projects to have first

hand information and intervene where challenges are discovered.

The delegation visited a number of infrastructure projects in Gert Sibande District on 15 and 16 April 2015. On the first day, delegates visited the Bethal Weigh Bridge in order to assess the status of the completed project.

Continued on 15

Continued from 14



ENSURING COMPLIANCE: A truck being weighed its mass at the Bethal Weigh Bridge.

The project involved the upgrading of the administrative offices, and the construction of a control room building, guard houses, concrete paved parking area for 24 heavy type interlink vehicles, and the upgrading of the adjacent N17 road to provide for the weigh-in-motion scales in separate dedicated lanes, and to provide for access to and from the N17, which falls under the jurisdiction of SANRAL.

The facility was constructed at a cost of just over R60million over a contract period of 44 months. An amount of R6.3 million was spent on local labour creating 215 jobs and R9.4 million on local SMME's. The SMMEs were involved in the construction of concrete kerbing, paving and channelling, guardrails, in and outlet drainage structures, fencing, carting of gravel materials for layer works, and security services.

On the subsequently day, the delegation visited the construction of Osizweni Special School that is being built at Leandra. The construction of the school consist of eight new classrooms, administration block, media centre, hall, four new workshops, guard house, fencing, installation of electricity and water. The construction of the school at a cost of R46.7 million, started in August 2013 and has thus far created 84 jobs for locals, and is expected to be completed before the end of the 2015.

The purpose of the oversight visit by the Portfolio Committee is to check the status of projects implemented by the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport and make recommendations upon which the Department is expected to make interventions in order to ensure that projects are implemented as per the specifications.



CONSTRUCTION IN PROGRESS: Workers busy constructing Osizweni Primary School.

DID YOU KNOW?

1. BUILDING ON A SAFE ENVIRONMENT: According to the National Environmental Management Act 108 of 1997, everyone has a right to an environment that is not harmful to his or her health or wellbeing. The Act states that the public has the right to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations through reasonable legislative and other measures that prevent pollution and ecological degradation. As the custodian of public infrastructure and other related mandates, the Department has employed highly qualified and experienced environmental experts who ensure that the Department takes necessary precautionary measures to protect the environment while delivering on essential public infrastructure.

2. FIGHTING THE SCOURGE OF CORRUPTION FROM WITHIN: The Department through various initiatives and policies is at the helm of the battle against fraud and corruption in all forms. Hence employees are encouraged to report any form of corruption which seeks to undermine the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and derail service delivery. The departmental Whistle Blowing Policy states that the Department shall not tolerate harassment or victimization and shall take necessary actions to protect employees who expose corruption and raise concerns in good faith. The policy also states that the Department shall do its best to protect the employee's identity when a concern is raised and the employee does not want their identity to be disclosed. Members of the public are equally encouraged to expose acts of corruption through applicable channels such as the Anti-corruption hotline: 0800 701 701 or the Presidential hotline: 17737.

3. CIDB REGISTRATION PROMOTES QUALITY WORKMANSHIP: Registration of contractors within the built environment is one of the most significant areas that still needs improvement in ensuring the provision of quality public infrastructure. Hence the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) was established to regulate the registration and grading of contractors accordingly in line with their expertise, experience and capacity among others. It is therefore imperative that aspiring contractors register with CIDB in order to be recognised and compete favourably with other role players in the industry.

According to the Construction Industry Development Regulations, 2004 (as amended) as at 14 November 2008, only the following contractors are exempted from registering with the CIDB:

- Any contractor who is registered as a homebuilder in terms of section 10 of the Housing Consumer Protection Measures Act, 95 of 1998, read with the General Regulations Regarding Housing Consumer Protection Measures, R.1406, published by Gazette No. 20658 of 1 December 1999, is exempt from registration in terms of these Regulations for the purpose of construction works in relation to the provision of a home as contemplated in those Regulations.
- A contractor who undertakes a construction works contract substantially consisting of the provision of labour is exempt from registration in terms of these Regulations.
- A contractor who undertakes a construction works contract substantially consisting of the provision of supplies, is exempt from registration in terms of these Regulations.

ALCOHOL ABUSE IN THE WORKPLACE UNDERMINES PUBLIC CONFIDENCE



SAY NO TO DRUGS: Ehlanzeni staff tackling alcohol issues.

The Employee Health and Wellness (EHW) Directorate beat the drum and sounded a call to all employees to fight against alcohol and substance abuse in the workplace during a workshop which was held in Barberton on the 10th of March 2015. Experts on the subject from various faculties and entities rendered a handful of presentations focusing on the catastrophic impact of alcohol and substance abuse which not only destroys affected individuals but equally undermines service delivery.

During the workshop it was overwhelmingly noted that the effects of alcohol and substance abuse often compromise and paralyse the service delivery machinery. Habitual absenteeism, late coming, declined productivity, missing of deadlines and unethical behaviour may at times be attributed to underlying alcohol problems. Ms Phumzile Nxumalo, Manager: EHW defined alcohol abuse as the habitual and excessive use of alcohol beverages which often leads to behavioural changes amongst other marked by poor performance especially at work.

“The workshop encompassed a variety of issues under the subject hence we also

invited a number of speakers including presenters from Swartfontein Treatment Centre who are professionals in the field. We invited these experts to impart knowledge and skills in a bid to educate our staff members about this silent monster. Statistics bear testimony that alcohol abuse is a problem that affects everyone either professionally, socially or personally. Sometimes it might not be you as an individual but your colleague, a friend or a family member, either way we are all affected,” stated Ms Nxumalo.

One of the mandates of the EHW within the Department is to render necessary support to employees faced with similar challenges including a range of social impediments that may hamper one’s ability to perform required duties optimally. Where necessary, external intervention from other professional bodies may be sought with the consent of an affected party in order to address one’s issue taking into consideration various applicable policies.



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