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## **Speaking notes for the media conference by NW Public Works, Roads and Transport on Wednesday, September 20 held in Mahikeng, Lowe Board Room, Old Parliament Building**

**Date:** Tuesday, September 20, 2011

- Greetings and welcome

### **Deadline looms large for contractors to finish and hand-over the Mahikeng Revitalisation road projects by Friday this week.**

- Roads construction companies appointed to rehabilitate five road projects identified by the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport for purposes of assisting in the revitalisation effort of Mahikeng and Mmabatho, have until Friday this week to complete the works and hand over the projects to the department.
- This was an understanding and a commitment by all parties, following an urgent meeting convened by the MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Mahlakeng Mahlakeng on Friday, September 02.
- The meeting was attended by contractors and representatives of a firm of consultants appointed to oversee and monitor the work on our behalf:
- A directive was issued to all contractors that the remaining work on all the five road projects ought to complete and handed over to the department by Friday, September 23.
- We are pleased that at least one of the projects, which was the rehabilitation of a portion of the N18- from Mahikeng to Magogoe Bridge- by the company, M Civil (Pty) Ltd, was completed even before an ultimatum was issued.
- It is also important to emphasise the point that this project was two months ahead of schedule and a decision was taken to open road for traffic, even though it yet to be open officially.
- In view of the ultimatum, and the understanding from the urgent meeting referred to earlier, we expect Ultrasonic Express; to hand over a completed 2.1km which includes sections of on Ngaka Modiri Molema, James Moroka and Sekame roads.

- The same applies to companies IBD Civils JV Phenno Business Enterprise and Black Hawk with regards to Onkgopotse Tiro (2.8km); Joe Slovo and Dorothy streets (2.4km) as well as the 2.1km on Moshoeshoe and Sekame roads.

### **Status with regards to the Pilanesberg Airport near Sun City, Rustenburg.**

- The Department has lodged an application with the South African Civil Aviation Authority for the operating license of the Pilanesberg Airport to continue operations at the Pilanesberg Airport from the 01st October 2011
- The application is subject to a compliance inspection by the SACAA which is expected to be conducted during October 2011.
- This we did because of our unhappiness with the Airports Company of South Africa (ACSA) in the manner they communicated their intention to pull out of Pilanesberg airport.
- In March 2011, Airports Company of South Africa (ACSA), the current operator at Pilanesberg International Airport, informed us of their intention to withdraw from the Pilanesberg Airport from 01 April 2011, citing the fact that they were operating the facility at a loss.
- We had a meeting with ACSA, following their intention to withdraw, to discuss a number of issues, which included:

The strategy and the plan to withdraw; the request to remain for a period of six (06) months so that the Department could prepare itself.

- We also wrote to ACSA requesting them to stay for six months until the department is ready to take over the facility, and this proposal was agreed to by ACSA.
- The rationale for the above was also based on the fact that the withdrawal by ACSA as from April 01 this year, was at short notice, as it was already the last week of March.
- The two legal teams were the first to meet. The outcome of the legal teams in terms of investigating/material conditions for the withdrawal with respect to the contract revealed confirmed that a twelve (12) months notice should be given in writing by the tenant and that the contract was in 1998 for 25 years and it is left with 13 years to expire
- ACSA refused to accept the outcome mentioned above, since they were already a month into the extension.
- They further requested the department to pay them R500, 000.00 per month for their stay at Pilanesburg Airport.

- We informed ACSA that they needed to give twelve months written notice to the department of their intention to withdraw from Pilanesburg Airport.
- ACSA however wanted the department to enter into a contract with them for the six months they were requested to stay, with a financial implication of more than half a million.
- This was not possible, as their current contract is still valid. ACSA then applied to the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA), to suspend the Operating Licence of Pilanesburg Airport as at the end of July 2011. This would mean that the airport would be closed for operations as it would have no operating license.

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Concern over the poor response to renew lease agreements by NW public servants occupying state houses and flats.

- We have noted with concern the poor response by public servants occupying state houses and flats in Mahikeng and Mmabatho, to our plea to come forward and renew lease agreements before end of August.
- Only 77 of the 224 occupants of state houses and flats in Mahikeng and Mmabatho have renewed lease agreements to date, and 147 are still outstanding according to our records.
- The demand for state residential accommodation in Mahikeng and Mmabatho is very high, with 38 applicants- all senior officials in government- who are yet to be allocated state residential accommodation.
- There are 220 from levels of deputy director downwards, also on the waiting list to date.
- Surely we have a duty as a department to find accommodation for them, in as much as we have a responsibility to also evict from state properties; those who continue defy orders and or refuse to be compliant.

**END**