



A major boost for rural road maintenance...

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Yet another feather in the cap of the ``*Intervention Team*'' at Public Works and Roads came in a form of successful procurement and delivery this week of road construction plant valued at more than R16million.

The delivery has raised the bar in the department's quest by Public Works and to turn the tide on the road maintenance backlog recovery plan to be rolled out soonest.

The major boost of the much awaited top-of-the range road construction equipment is the first yellow-fleet purchase in two years, and the first for the department ever since it was placed under administration following the invocation by Cabinet of Section 100 (1) (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa on May 23, 2018.

The department took delivery this past week of five Caterpillar motor graders, specified to do blading and road re-gravelling operations.

Three front-end loader (TLBs) also form part of the consignment ready to rumble specifically on the provincial rural and some of the farm roads in the four districts identified as strategic yet not trafficable.

There are plans to purchase four more motor graders

What also informed the purchase, was in support of the pronouncements by the Premier, Professor Job Mokgoro, in his State of the Province Address on the new initiatives to make rural roads safer and trafficable.

This pronouncement has been further emphasised during a series of engagements with state-holders held in all the four districts between July and September this year.

The focus and new approach of the 6th Administration with regards to roads going forward, is to ensure that the majority of economic, ecotourism, agricultural and access roads are trafficable. It is envisaged that this approach could also facilitate economic growth and development in the province.

On the flip side, the move to purchase, in spite of budget considerations, makes business sense for the department when one considers that only 26 percent of the provincial road network is surfaced as opposed to 74 percent which are gravel roads.

``If the new equipment is used optimally, we believe we can also minimise our reliance on private plant hiring which can be very costly if not managed properly. In fact plant hire

should only supplement what we already have,” said Administrator, Samuel Thobakgale.

He said the Department was continuing to implement its Roads Recovery Plan, which is currently in its fourth phase and ``continues to improve the lives of the people of North West Province”.

The equipment, which was bought through National Treasury Transversal Contract (RT57/2019) will today be distributed to all four districts to start working on the respective roads.

Grader operators from districts have already been trained to acquaint themselves with the new controls on-board the new yellow-fleet equipment.

Meanwhile, the department remains on course with regards planned road implementation and maintenance projects.

Five road projects are expected to be awarded soon, seven are currently on tender, bid due to close this week and 12 more expected to go on tender next week.

Ends

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