



We deliver a R26.7 million centre for awaiting trial juveniles in Bojanala

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Public Works North West has just completed a R26.7million centre for young offenders in efforts to help alleviate the challenge of juvenile overcrowding in prisons.

The Rustenburg Secure Care Centre in Boitekong is the third delivered by the department in the last two years. The other two, which are already operational, are in Matlosana and Mafikeng.

Young people between the ages of 13 and 17, who are in conflict with the law and awaiting trial, are held and rehabilitated at such centres. This is done in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977.

Before the introduction of such facilities, young people awaiting trial used to be detained either in police cells or prisons with adults. This exposed them to “abuse” and “negative influence” by hardened criminals.

According to the Acting Chief Director for Infrastructure, Johannes Tselane, the project was handed over to the contractor in September 2006 and the final completion was recorded in January 2009.

A “one stop” youth justice centre, the facility in Rustenburg can accommodate up to 60 offenders.

It has an administration block, mini police station, in-house clinic, conference centre, courtyard, security block, social work department, kitchen area, and a recreational area.

The facility also boasts woodwork, steelwork, electrical and art workshops for the empowerment and rehabilitation of offenders.

In 2002, cabinet urged the Departments of Correctional Services and Social Development to expedite the process of ensuring that juveniles were kept in separate prisons or places of safety.

This was after an SABC TV news exposé of corruption that was allegedly taking place at the Grootvlei Prison in Bloemfontein, Free State.

The video footage showed among others, prison warders allegedly selling juveniles to older prisoners for sex.

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