

**SPEECH BY MEC FOR PUBLIC HONOURABLE HOWARD YAWA AT  
THE 2005/06 INAGURAL MEC'S EXCELLENCE AWARDS  
CEREMONY HELD AT BAROLONG BOO- RATSHIDI COMMUNITY  
HALL ON THE 20 JANUARY 2006**

Programme Director

Pastor Steven Van Rooyen

Head of the Department-Dr Lydia Sebego

Senior Managers of the Department

Sponsors

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

One American writer and preacher, Charles R. Swindoll once said; "If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude."

We are assembled here to give recognition and highest honour to those of our public servants in this department who have gone beyond the call of duty in the quest to serve the people better. This is in the interest of Batho Pele principles.

We are here to honour and glorify our public servants for their exceptional talent and innovation and their total commitment to service delivery. The individuals and teams that we are honouring tonight have surpassed the service delivery standards. They are performing at a higher level than the expected standards.

These ladies and gentlemen, have aligned themselves with Charles R. Swindoll's school of thought, that excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude.

Increasingly, our public servants are finding better ways of providing quality services to the people. High levels of efficiency have been reached across the department.

While the early stages of the democratic government were characterised by many challenges related to the transformation of the public service, our department now boasts a truly committed and transformed public service that comprises men and women who understand that the primary purpose of the public servants is to serve the public.

These can be attributed to the fact that the ANC government has managed to come-up with labour policies that are worker friendly. These policies together with our constitution recognise the rights of the workers. They compel us not only to focus on the production without taking care of the needs of the workers. We are gathered here at Barolong Boo-Ratshidi to honour the teams and individuals as evidence of government that is workers and people centred.

The government is now better able to plan in an integrated manner, implement and monitor the impact of its plans, policies and programmes.

Recognising and honouring service excellence and innovation within the public service does not mask some of the challenges that continue to face the public service. While we have made significant progress over the past decade in transforming the public service; there is still some work to be done. A very small minority among the public servants are still not doing enough to improve the quality of service to the people.

The positive impact of these improvements is felt by the public at the very point where they interact with public servants and receive government services.

Whereas these awards will definitely result in improved morale and enhance performance benchmarking for most of you, they are, nonetheless, one method of influencing service delivery and help identify strengths and areas of improvement at both regional and head office levels.

More importantly, these awards must deeply nurture the relationship between the department, local communities, business and other stakeholders.

To us as a department, you are our heroes and heroines who have brought glory upon us, who have performed great deeds for all of us, who will continue to take us to even greater heights of fulfilment.

Your commitment to excellence in your respective codes and the

maintenance of high standards must serve as a reminder to all South Africans to work hard, to persevere and to strive to excel in all spheres of our national life.

One of the challenges we face is moving from pockets of excellence in each sub-directorate, directorate and chief directorate to excellence in the entire department. We need to avoid a situation where the existence of excellence in a section of a department masks inefficiency and competence in other parts of the department. We must work towards a situation where it is possible to have the entire department honoured for excellence. That is a sure way to moving towards total excellence in the entire department.

These awards are used to recognise individuals that have demonstrably excelled in implementing innovative solutions to meet strategic business objectives of this department through their various sub-directorates, directorates and Chief directorates.

It clearly shows that we abide by the resolutions we as the department have taken at our Strategic Retreat where we said, "We denounce business as usual". Without your help, support and excellent performance we could not have gathered here to give these awards out. You have given the word excellence a completely new meaning by changing the direction that the department was taking before. If you remember well, this

department was taken as the most corrupt and less delivering department. I can tonight say with pride and dignity that we are changing for the better through your concerted efforts without which we could have failed. Let me indicate some of the achievements that we have made:

The Board of the Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa (COHSASA) has awarded us as a department full accreditation for the excellent maintenance service run by the Department at the Klerksdorp/Tshepong Hospital Complex for the period 2005-2008.

As a department, we have received second year in a row an unqualified audit report from the Auditor General in the province.

It is true, let me say, that you are judged by what you have done and not what you intend doing.

We have divided these wards into six categories, namely:

- Best Overall Performing Employee of the Department
- Best performing Employees within Units, Directorates and Regions
- Best Performing Directorates
- Best Performing Region
- Best Performing Chief Directorates
- Best Performing Sporting Code

Programme Director, allow me also to inform these gathering that we will also issue long serving awards/certificates. According to our records, we have more than 400 hundred employees who have been with public service for more than twenty years and because of the numbers we decided that for this occasion, certificates will only be issued to employees from Head Office, Central and Southern region.

We will make time to issue certificates to employees in the Bojanala and Bophirima regions in due course. Functions of a similar nature will be held to honour these employees at regional levels.

This reminds me of one French writer, Françoise Bertaut de Motteville who once said; “The true way to render ourselves happy is to love our work and find in it our pleasure”.

I believe our long serving employees indeed found pleasure in their work. However, I would appeal to all of us to add the angle of Batho Pele in our pleasure and that will surely lead to excellence.

I also hope that you, the recipients of these awards will through your hard work and motivation encourage many of your colleagues to work even harder so as to improve on the excellent example that you have set for all of us.

Those of you, who could not make it to any of the categories, let me say to you that your time will come still. You still have the

chance of showing us what you are made of. We have an adage in Setswana, which goes Letlhogonolo ga se lebelo loosely translates that luck is not a race to run.

Congratulations to all the nominated individuals, directorates, regions and chief directorates. The adjudication panel selected the winners. Those teams that did not win are not losers. It is only that in the opinion of the panel, other teams have performed way above the normal standards. All of you are winners. You make the department proud.

Let me also take the opportunity to wish our staff members who are nominated for the Premier's Awards good luck for representing the department.

Lastly, we would like to thank all the sponsors Africon, ABSA, Entourage Event and Travel, Mr T- Group of Companies Rustenburg Travel and Phenyo Distributors, who made it possible that these awards and ceremony to materialise.

On a different note, let me announce with great pleasure to this gathering the financial assistance for the badly injured and impoverished Setlagole girl Mosetsana Setai. A financial sponsorship to the value of R 24 000.00 per annum is hereby availed.

The sponsorship will provide for her basic necessities including food, clothing, and her medical expenses. In addition, Trust will

be established in her name to raise funds for reconstructive surgery to her face. This will enable her to attend school and socialise with other children and eventually be integrated into society. This was made possible by one of our private partners; Maxima Global. I would also like to urge other private partners to follow suit and pledge in order to make this endeavour a success.

In conclusion, I wish to thank staff members who participated in organising this function. Your efforts are not in vain and a big hand to all of you for being here with us.

Ke a leboga.