



the dpw

Department of Public Works
North West Provincial Government
Republic of South Africa

Modiri Molema Road
DPW Provincial Head Office
Mmabatho, 2735
Private Bag X 2037, Mmabatho, 2735
Tel.: +27 (18) 387 2002
Fax.: +27 (18) 387 2868

Six (6) Cuban technical advisors are here

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North West Public Works department will for the next three years host six (6) Cuban technical advisors whose expertise in the construction industry is expected to bolster capacity and top it up with mentoring and skills transfer in the built-environment.

The team reported at the department's Head Office in Mmabatho today to shoulder the wheel to help fast-track building projects spear-headed by the department in order to expedite service delivery.

Among the six, are two women: Ana Isabel Pardo Jimenez (Civil Engineer) and Lisbet Leonard Alvarez (Civil Engineer).

Their male counterparts are: Joan Javier Albo Alonso (Chief Architect); Rudolf Alberto Cuevas Gandaria (Architect); Jose Alfredo Ibanez Mestre (Architect) and Lorenzo Cuellar (Electrical Engineer).

Welcoming the team this morning, the department's Director for Buildings Johannes Tselane said he hoped that the expertise brought-in by the Cubans would help address the challenges faced by his directorate.

"As we all know, there is a skills shortage within the construction sector and as a result, we can't recruit experienced people like you on a permanent basis. They choose to go to the private sector because it pays better than government," Tselane told the team.

Team leader, Jose Alfredo Ibanez Mestre, said they were looking forward to a fruitful stay in the province.

"High on our expectation list is to learn, share our experiences and contribute to the development of this country," he said.

The group is part of 57 professionals who arrived and were welcomed in the country by Public Works Minister, Thoko Didiza[[Click here to read Minister's speech](#)]. This was during a function which was also attended by provincial Public Works MEC, Jerry Thibedi, in Centurion, Pretoria, last Friday (January 25).

Their coming to South Africa followed earlier engagements which ultimately culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement in Havana between Minister Didiza and the Minister of Construction in Cuba, Fidel Segeroa de la Paz, in July last year.

“Service delivery, poverty alleviation and job creation are paramount objectives of our government. The recruitment of these experts is one way of dealing with the legacy that we have inherited: lack of skilled artisans to carry out all the massive infrastructure projects we are planning for,” Minister Didiza said.

Thibedi said the arrival of the Cubans in the province was viewed with “great optimism”.

“We are confident that they will help us meet our acute needs for skilled artisans in most of our projects. Their contribution will add more value as we march one to achieve our mandate and carry the flag high as an award winning department in the province,” he said.

As a custodian of physical public infrastructure in the province, the Public Works is responsible for among other things the construction of hospitals, clinics and schools buildings projects on behalf of client departments of health and education.

Issued by Communication Directorate
Contact Person: **Matshube Mfoloe**
Contact Number: (018) 387 2447 / 0823054594
E-mail: mmfoloe@nwpg.gov.za

