

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY TASNEEM MOTARA, THE GAUTENG MEC FOR  
INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AT THE MEDIA BRIEFING HELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2019  
HELD IN JOHANNESBURG**

Good morning ladies and gentlemen and thank you for honoring our invitation. This media briefing takes place exactly 100 days since I was appointed as the MEC of Infrastructure Development and Property Management, as part of the 6<sup>th</sup> Administration. It happens just 24 hours after our meeting with the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure in Cape Town where we deliberated on critical issues affecting the sector.

Since my appointment into the Department I have made it my mission to not only understand the sector intimately, but to immerse myself in the work that my predecessors had already embarked upon.

I did this mindful of the fact that I, with my capable team, must achieve the goals set out for us by the 6<sup>th</sup> Administration, and most importantly to deliver to the people of Gauteng, infrastructure that will meet their needs.

The Department of Infrastructure Development is the custodian of Gauteng Provincial Government's fixed assets under the Government Immovable Assets Act 19 of 2007.

During 2017 DID, as the custodian of GPG fixed assets, initiated a project to do condition assessments on all occupied GPG buildings. The assessment was completed at the end of August 2018, a couple of weeks before the unfortunate Bank of Lisbon fire incident and tragedy happened during September 2018.

Stemming from the report, affected buildings were voluntarily evacuated. We undertook emergency OHS compliance activities such as clearing fire escape routes, ensuring that signage was put up and visible, air and water quality assessments, as well as training of staff from various Departments on OHS.

Finally we developed an implementation plan to address the major work to be undertaken. We have to date completed the emergency intervention work, and all departments have returned to their buildings. We are currently implementing all major works in line with the

assessment report in order to bring our buildings up to full compliance. Our long term plan is to implement the Kopanong Precinct Project, which will see the full refurbishment of all, 18 GPG owned buildings in the Jhb CBD.

OHS compliance also relies on the conduct of occupants. This includes being conscious of their working environments, understanding hazards and how to prevent incidents. The objective is to ensure workplace safety, and prevent illnesses and injuries.

We have finalised the procurement of office accommodation for the Departments of Health and Human Settlements respectively. The Department of Health has already moved and the Department of Human Settlements will be settled by the end of November.

### **On leased buildings**

We have issued landlords who own the 13 buildings we are leasing on behalf of GPG with the necessary compliance notices in order to improve on the Occupation Health and Safety of all employees that are currently in those buildings. The work done continues and my Department receives regular updates on progress.

The Department of Roads & Transport has requested to be accommodated in one premises, they are currently occupying two. We are processing that request. Human Settlements will move to 17 Diagonal and CoGTA will move to 30 Simmonds. This move will complete by the end of November. The remaining tenants which is DID will be returned to Corner House.

Understanding that OHS is a continuous process, we are developing a maintenance plan. GPG will continue that their staff are trained and up to date with safety measures required in occupied buildings. We are committed to house our tenants in fully compliant, safe and reliable facilities so that service delivery provided by GPG will not be adversely affected at any point.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT ON HEALTH FACILITIES**

Allow me to use this opportunity to share with you our plans as a Department in relation to OHS on Health facilities.

Building compliance is regulated by National Building Regulation and standards Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Constitution of the Republic, Government Immovable Asset Management Act and various other legislation.

The project is therefore aligned with the NDOH's mission "To improve health status through the prevention of illnesses and the promotion of healthy lifestyles and to consistently improve the healthcare delivery system by focusing on access, equity, efficiency, quality and sustainability."

The focus of Gauteng Provincial Government is to shift away from developing new infrastructure to ensuring that existing infrastructure is sufficiently provisioned for regarding maintenance and upkeep.

As announced by the Premier in the SOPA and my budget speech, work is underway to ensure the following hospitals are refurbished and maintained in line with the norms and standards. These hospitals are Mamelodi, Tembisa, Sebokeng, Tambo, Bheki Mlangeni and Jubilee.

Following discussions between myself and the MEC of Health, a decision was taken to include all 26 facilities in the project of upgrading, refurbishing and maintenance. The OHS project on Health facilities will therefore see 32 hospitals being fully refurbished in line with the condition assessment report that we conducted.

The department will be going to the market/tender from September 2019 as part of competitive bidding, to source for contractors that will be responsible for the maintenance and refurbishment of the hospitals.

We will do all we can to ensure that the events of September 2018 as we observed at the Bank of Lisbon don't happen again. We want to re-assure all our employees who work in the buildings that are under our care that we are committed to creating a conducive environment for work. We will work hard to make sure that all our people look forward to coming to work daily and that they perform their tasks without fear that the building they are in can cause harm to them. I have sensitized the HoD and his team to pay more

attention to the needs of the people, all the people of Gauteng who work in our buildings and indeed those who come to our buildings whether it's a hospital, schools, clinics, offices or even multi-purpose centres.

We have visited many of these structures and we will continue to monitor the maintenance of old buildings and progress of new structures that are currently under construction.

As part of this continuous assessment, I now dedicate Mondays to visit sites where the Department is doing work. I have chosen Mondays for various reasons. One being the nature of the construction industry and the slow pace of work which creeps in on Mondays and Fridays!! This has assisted the department to keep our finger on the pulse of activities we are conducting and unblock issues where they arise, whether from Municipalities, communities, service providers or client departments. Since the inception of #SiteVisitMondays I, together with my team, have visited a total of 23 sites. We have unblocked many challenges, taken decisions to address delays and will continue to put pressure on all concerned to deliver our projects on time, within budget and according to the expectation of our citizens.

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