



**cogta**

Department:  
Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs  
MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT



●  
**Government addresses water challenges for Ermelo and Bushbuckridge residents.**

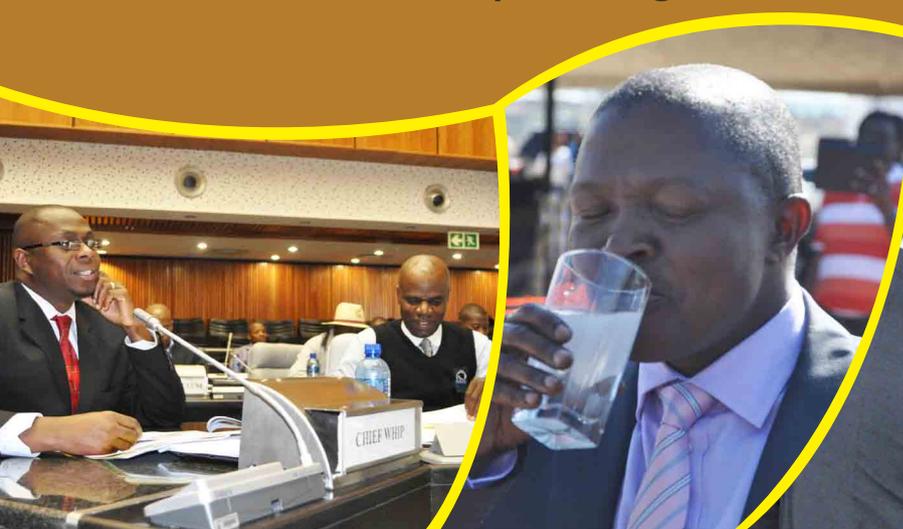
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**New TSC opens its doors for Mashishing community.**

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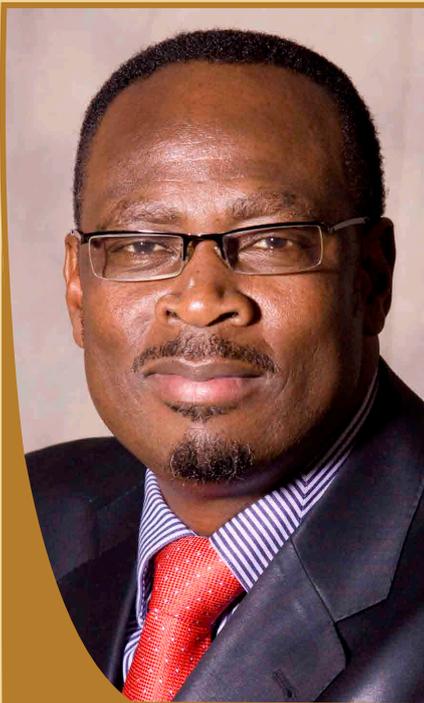
## DISCLAIMER

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# MEC's FOREWORD



**MEC SPD SKHOSANA**

We would like to congratulate both Ehlanzeni District and Steve Tshwete Municipalities for producing clean audits for the 2012/13 financial year. Their success gives us hope that our municipalities have the potential to achieve one of the milestones aimed at improving the public's confidence about government's proper spending of tax payers' money. In our quest to support municipalities towards the attainment of Operation Clean Audit 2014, we cherish the hope that the situation will be turned around. We are working jointly with the Provincial Treasury and District Municipalities to help all municipalities achieve this set milestone.

A number of interventions have been put in place by both COGTA and Provincial Treasury to support the municipalities obtain clean audits. These include the deployment of officials to Municipalities to assist deal with risk assessment, assets management, evaluate IT audit outcomes and many others. We are confident that these interventions will yield positive results.

The slow spending of the Municipal Infrastructure Grants (MIG) by municipalities remains a major concern. However, it gives me a sense of comfort that the situation is about to change, as we start the new 2013/14 financial year for local government. We have identified the causes for the slow spending, and as such, we are working with municipalities to deal with them so as to eliminate excuses in the future. It gives me hope that Executive Mayors, during the recent MIG meeting at Ehlanzeni Council Chambers, undertook to tackle the challenges head on. They have undertaken to abide with the Premier's remedial steps to hold Municipal Managers accountable. Remedial steps include the non-renewal of contracts and non-payment of performance bonuses for Municipal Managers in municipalities with poor performance. We have also agreed that municipalities will now register their MIG projects for the outer years early. We have come to realize that the MIG allocation is one of the pillars to meet the demands of basic services such as water. However, the poor spending undermines efforts to deal with the infrastructure challenge.

We are aware that water remains a scarce commodity not only in Mpumalanga but in South Africa as a whole. That is why provision of water is high on the list of priorities of the Provincial Government led by Premier David Mabuza. The recent interventions to provide water to communities in Msukaligwa and Bushbuckridge Local Municipalities is the manifestation of the provincial government's efforts to address the water delivery challenge. We would like to thank Premier Mabuza, the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs, Municipalities and our own officials for their continued endeavour to ensure that our communities are provided with water. We also appeal to our communities still experiencing lack of water to be patient. We are working hard to address the problem. We have made a commitment that by the end of the current financial year, all communities in the province will have access to water.

The historical signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Gert Sibande District Municipality and the Gert Sibande FET College sends a strong signal that municipalities are tackling skills shortage head on. This move will provide students with opportunities for practical training and unqualified employees in the seven local municipalities with the necessary skills. It is a mutual benefit which we hope will leave a lasting legacy in years to come. We hope other institutions will emulate this example. We congratulate the Executive Mayor, Cllr Mishack Nhlabathi, Executive Mayors of the seven local municipalities, officials and the leadership of the Gert Sibande FET college for this step. We look forward to the outcome.

The practice of our cultures does not only enjoy the support of our Constitution, but is also in line with the idea of preserving them for future generations. 'Kusoka' (Circumcision) remains one of the cultural practices, in which young boys are initiated into man hood. Research has also shown that it (circumcision) plays a pivotal role in the fight against the spread of HIV/Aids. However, as government, we are concerned about the loss of human life, as was the case with the death of initiates in initiation schools in May this year. Our heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased. We have realized that the loss of lives will undermine this practice. As a caring government, we are working hard with our Amakhosi and government agencies to investigate the cause of the deaths. Furthermore, we are exploring ways of preventing similar deaths in the future. We call upon communities and authorities of the initiation schools to exercise caution in the execution of this practise.

We convey our heartfelt condolences to the royal families of Kgosi Lefifi of Barolong ba Lefifi Traditional Council and Kgosi Malele of Malele Traditional Council for their death. They both passed away in May 2013. Their untimely death has robbed us leaders whose love for their communities was beyond description. May their souls rest in peace!

# MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE HOD



HOD DAVID MHLOBO

MEC Simon Skhosana has tabled the Policy and Budget speech in the legislature for the 2013/14 financial year which gives direction of what we have achieved and what we intend to do in this financial year. By tabling the speech, he has given us marching orders, to borrow the military lingo, which sketches what we as soldiers have to do in order to win the war. The biggest challenge though is that the budget is inadequate to provide enough support required for local government and traditional leadership in Mpumalanga. Considering the economic dynamics at play, in which countries, including South Africa, are facing, we are mindful of the call by President Zuma to spend prudently.

Guided by MEC Skhosana, we commit ourselves to work towards the delivery of Outcome 9 which seeks to establish a responsive, accountable and effective and efficient local government system based on the 7 outputs, namely:

- Implementation of a differentiated approach to municipal financing, planning and support,
- Improve access to basic services,
- Implement the community work programme and support job creation,
- Deepen democracy through a refined Ward Committee Model,
- Improve municipal financial and administrative capability
- Single window of coordination.

Through the guidance of Premier David Mabuza and MEC Skhosana, we have been working hard with the Minister of Water Affairs and her department to address some of the water challenges in the province. Through this intervention we have been able to address the water problems in Bushbuckridge and Msukaligwa. In Bushbuckridge work is underway to upgrade the Inyaka Water Treatment works from the current agreement of 50 megalitres per day to 100 megalitres per day. This work is expected to be completed in July this year. In Msukaligwa an emergency pipeline has been built to provide water from the Northern Water Treatment Works to the Southern Water Treatment Works in order to address the water shortage in Ermelo area, Wesselson and Thumela settlements. We appreciate the initiative of our leaders.

We are working tirelessly to help municipalities to improve on service delivery. The Executive Council has taken a decision to place both the Emalahleni and Bushbuckridge Municipalities under administration in terms of Section 139 (1) (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Guided by the Provincial Executive Committee, our intervention seeks to help both municipalities to deal with all obstacles which impede service delivery. We call upon all stakeholders to cooperate with the appointed Administrators. With our unconditional support they should be able to return both municipalities to the level where delivery of services can no longer be a problem. We trust that when the Administrators' term ends the institutions would have improved.

We remain committed to government's efforts to the creation of employment opportunities. In line with one of our government's five priorities, we have created 17 000 job opportunities through the Community Works Programme (CWP). Thirteen sites have been established and the projects involve the refurbishment of dilapidated public buildings. We will also continue with the implementation of the Youth Waste Project to create 520 work opportunities for the Youths in 9 municipalities, namely: (Bushbuckridge, Dipaliseng, Pixley ka Isaka Seme, Lekwa, Nkomazi, uMjindi, Thembisile, Mkhondo and Emakhazeni). R2.5 million rand has been set aside for this project. We will also continue to explore other avenues for job creation to address unemployment in Mpumalanga.

Our department and our municipalities have appointed a number of officials into key positions as a measure to improve the capacity. We welcome on board all the new appointees. We hope that they will provide the necessary support that we need to execute our mandate. We urge all stakeholders to cooperate with them in a quest to improve service delivery.

# Clean water for Ermelo and Bushbuckridge communities



**Witness:** Minister Molewa and MEC Simon Skhosana open the 12 km pipeline in Ermelo for the flow of water.

The Mpumalanga Provincial Government is on its way to realize its target of providing water to all households by January 2014. The target was set by Premier David Mabuza during the State of the Province Address. Recently government provided clean water to residents in Ermelo, Msukaligwa and Bushbuckridge communities there by reducing the number of people without clean water in the country and in Mpumalanga.

In Ermelo, a 12 km pipeline project has been completed to provide water to residents in the following areas: Old Ermelo, Extension 1,2, 5, Phumula, Tembisa, Extension 4, 6, Longhomes, Everest Park, Klipbou, New Ermelo, Nederland Park, De-Bruin Park, Cassim Park, Industrial Area and Extension 18, 32, 33, 34. A faulty transformer, aging infrastructure, theft and vandalism of electrical cables as well as fire hydrants affected the supply of water for some time.

The new pipeline is able to pump 9 mega-litres of water daily required to provide residents with adequate water. Minister of Water Affairs and Environmental Affairs, Ms Edna Molewa visited the pipeline construction site to monitor and witness the provision of water and told residents afterwards

that the provision of water will also increase as more efforts are underway to reduce the waste of water. "Our next step is to fix leaking pipes which cause water loss in the local pipes. Once that is completed, we should be able to add two more mega litres to what we are providing," Ms Molewa said.

In Bushbuckridge, several households now have access to clean water. Fifty mega-litres are now pumped from the Inyaka Dam to local reservoirs after the completion of Phase 1 and 2.

Minister Molewa said 100 mega-Litres of water will be provided daily by July this year once Phases 3 and 4 have been completed. "40 villages in the Bushbuckridge municipality are now provided with water. We are expanding the reservoirs so that you do not run out of water. We are also replacing some of the old pipes and are putting new ones. All these should be completed by January 2014. We are working together with the provincial government, Rand Water and the Bushbuckridge Municipality to complete these projects," Molewa, told residents at Violet village in Bushbuckridge Municipality. She said that by connecting them with clean water, government has reduced the number of people without water in the country.

Premier David Mabuza who accompanied Minister Molewa in Bushbuckridge, reassured residents that all households should have access to water by January 2014. "I want you to have water for drinking, cooking, washing and for bathing. For Mpumalanga to grow, we need water", Mabuza said. He further urged residents to use water sparingly. "Make sure that you do not waste it. Stop illegal connections," he urged them.



**WATER FOR ALL:** Minister Molewa and Premier Mabuza taste water from Inyaka Dam.

# MEC Skhosana tables COGTA's 2013/14 budget in the Legislature

MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) Mr Simon Skhosana has tabled the department's Policy and budget speech with a total of **R425 908 million** in the provincial legislature. In his address, Mr Skhosana told legislators that the budget will be allocated as follows:

- Programme 1: Administration: **R 96 183 million**
- Programme 2: Local Governance: **R 135 121 million**
- Programme 3: Development and Planning: **R 108 811 million**
- Programme 4: Traditional Institutional Management: **R 73 540 million**
- Programme 5: House of Traditional Leaders: **R 12 162 million**

In his address, Mr Skhosana noted the progress made in government's efforts to improve access to basic services. He said that by supporting municipalities, more can be done in improving the lives of people. "Our detractors and opposition continue to deny that South Africa is better today than yesterday. Without gloating, this assertion is further collaborated by the recent census 2011 results about the ANC's delivery performance," he said. According to the Census 2011 report, the number of people with access to basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity, has increased. The report states that:

- a) 87,4% or 940 288 households have access to water
- b) 93,7% or 1 007 535 households have access to sanitation
- c) 89,6% or 963 382 households have access to electricity
- d) 50,5% or 542 709 households have access to refuse removal.

**BUDGET SPEECH  
INFORMATION**  
CONTINUES ON PAGE 6



**BUDGET CONSTRAINTS:** MEC Skhosana talks to Mr Jabu Mahlangu (MPL) and a guest at the end of the budget speech.

## BUDGET SPEECH INFORMATION “CONTINUES”

Despite this, the demand for water is still high. With this in mind, Mr Skhosana told legislators that plans are afoot to provide affected communities with water. “We have made progress in addressing the constant water supply and poor quality drinking water problems that have plagued the Emalahleni Local municipality. We are currently busy with the replacement of old asbestos pipes. We have also intervened with the Bulk Water Pipeline constructions in Victor Khanye from Bloemendal and in Bushbuckridge from Inyaka Dam to 7 villages around Acornhoek. Both will be commissioned by (June) this year,” he said.

As Mr Skhosana asserted, additional funding has been provided for to augment financial resources for water provision. “As part of the Executive Council commitment, an amount of R61m has been set aside to augment water uptake and storage in the areas of Nkomazi and Mbombela. The work on identified eight municipalities to be supported through MEGA is well on course,” he added.

Although municipalities are central to the service delivery chain, however, Mr Skhosana expressed concern that challenges facing them are an obstacle to their role. “Our report indicates that many of the problems at municipalities include poor governance and accountability, weak financial management, high vacancies in critical senior management positions, high infrastructure backlog and in some instances an inability to deliver even a core of basic municipal services efficiently and effectively. Despite our attempts to address these problems, they have yielded mixed results with some areas of excellences and in others only limited success,” he said. He pointed out to a number of interventions aimed at dealing with these obstacles such as filling all Municipal Managers’ positions, except in Dr JS Moroka, Emakhazeni, Thaba Chweu Local municipalities and Nkangala District municipality whose Municipal Managers’ positions remain vacant and the process to support municipalities through secondment and head-hunting for CFO and Technical Directors.

Creating a pool of retired financial experts, engineers, project managers and leaders in local government that will be readily available to mentor, coach and support with implementation in the struggling municipalities, said Mr Skhosana, forms part of the support.

With the deadline for attainment of Operation Clean Audit 2014 looming, Mr Skhosana expressed concern about municipalities struggling to produce clean audits. Only Ehlanzeni District and Steve Tshwete Local Municipalities were able to produce clean audits in the 2011/12 financial year. He warned against municipalities failing to produce them. “In implementing the directive by the Hon. Premier DD Mabuza we shall ensure that there are consequences. We cannot continue to have Municipal Managers and Chief Financial Officers sitting comfortably in their positions whilst the institutions that they serve continue to perform badly. We remain unwavering on our commitments in achieving our targets for operation clean audit 2014,” he warned.

The budget is also structured to support the institution of traditional leadership. These include provision of R300 000 for each King to do their work efficiently. The stipend for headmen will be increased from **R1 080.33 to R2 000.00** per month with immediate effect. Once there is a national determination, the salaries of headmen/ women will be aligned to the national standards, Mr Skhosana said.



● **GUEST LIST:** Thaba Chweu’s Acting Municipal Manager, Mr Surprise Maebela attended the budget speech.

# MEC Skhosana urges municipalities to improve on MIG spending

A total amount of R1.4 billion was allocated and transferred to municipalities as Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) in Mpumalanga for the 2012/2013 financial year. The allocation is aimed at supporting infrastructure development for water and roads. However, slow spending of the allocation by municipalities is a matter of concern. The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) has identified several obstacles behind the slow spending. These are:

- **Lack of technical capacity to develop business plans,**
- **Poor planning of projects by municipalities,**
- **Late appointment of service providers due to slow procurement processes in municipalities.**

MEC for COGTA Mr Simon Skhosana met with Executive Mayors, Municipal Managers and Technical Directors of municipalities at Ehlanzeni District Council Chambers in Nelspruit to discuss an acceleration plan. He expressed concern about the slow spending. "We need to do an introspection as municipalities and see what is causing us not to deliver on the projects that we have planned for," Mr Skhosana said.

The meeting came at the time when COGTA had conducted working sessions with municipalities that are struggling with MIG expenditure to provide them with the support

such as developing plans to fast track the implementation of projects and appointment of service providers for planned projects. In addition, an appraisal committee has been coordinated to sit on a bi-weekly basis in order to assist municipalities to register their MIG projects for the outer years, as well as monitoring the Project Management Units (PMU) closely and making sure that they are assessed on a quarterly basis.

During the meeting, Mr Skhosana and Executive Mayors agreed that in future all municipalities will develop acceleration plans and all Technical Managers and Municipal Managers will provide fortnightly progress reports. They further agreed that site visits to projects will be undertaken and that reports will be analysed to link expenditure and value for money. The meeting also set time frames for the submission of detailed procurement plans for the 2013/14 projects (by 15 May 2013), advertising of all bids (by June 2013) and finalization of appointments by July as well as the implementation.

Mr Skhosana set a tone for non-complying municipalities. He told them that managers' contracts must not be extended and that no performance bonuses should be paid if targets are not met or allocations not finalised. This is in line with a call made by Premier David Mabuza earlier this year during an Executive Council meeting in Kruger Park that Municipal Managers in poor performing municipalities should not be paid performance bonuses.



**EXPENDITURE PLANS:** Emakhazeni Executive Mayor, Cllr Hamza Ngwenya and his counterpart, Cllr Lazarus Mashaba of Umjindi Municipality pledge their commitment for MIG acceleration plans.

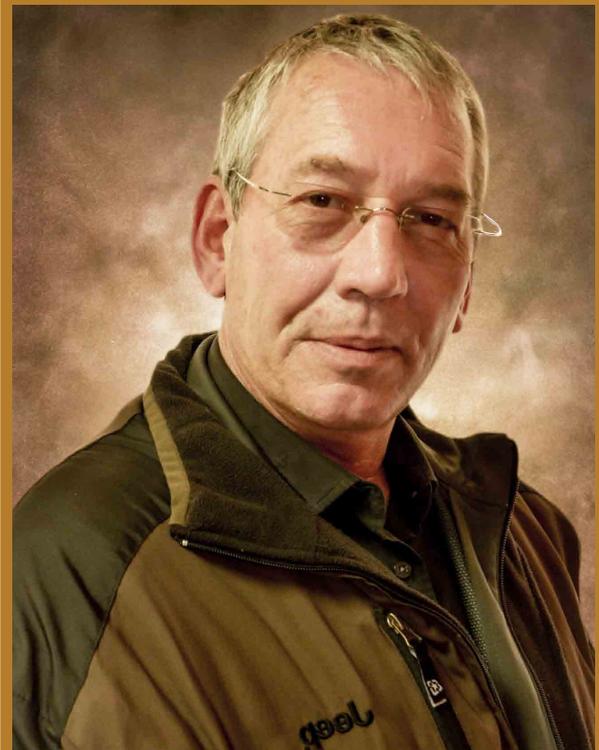
# ADMINISTRATORS HARD AT WORK TO IMPROVE EMALAHLENI AND BUSHBUCK-RIDGE MUNICIPALITIES

The process to improve the status of two local municipalities in Mpumalanga is well under way. The municipalities, Bushbuckridge and Emalahleni were placed under administration following a decision by the Provincial Executive Council in terms of Section 139 (1) (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No.108 of 1996). The administrators have been appointed for a six months period and were introduced by MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Mr Simon Skhosana.

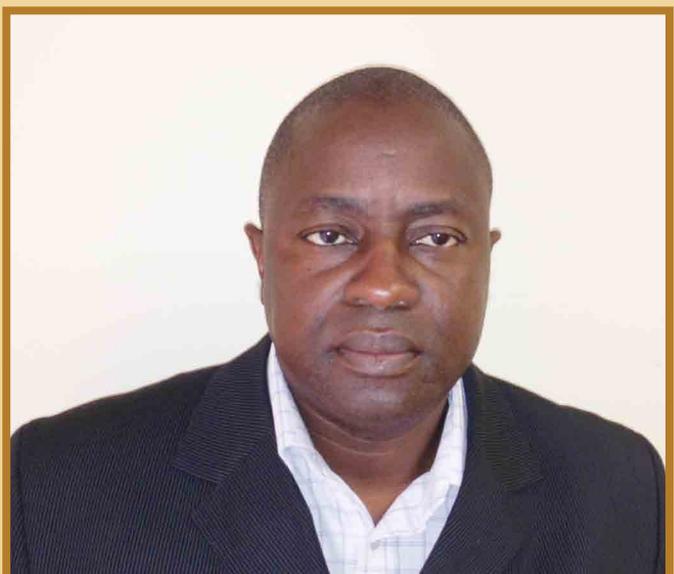
Mr Skhosana says the administrator, Mr Theo Van Vuuren for Emalahleni, has been tasked to develop a recovery plan as an immediate task, aimed at securing the municipality's ability to meet its obligations to provide basic services including its financial commitments. The municipality has experienced challenges which include inter alia, inconsistent water supply, poor state of municipal infrastructure like roads, electricity and waste water treatment plants. He added that allegations of high level of engagement in corrupt activities by some officials and high costs of doing business with the municipality by external service providers will also be dealt with by the Administrator.

In Bushbuckridge, the Administrator, Mr Eric Ngomane is developing a recovery plan aimed at securing the municipality's ability to meet its obligations to provide basic services including its financial commitments, recommend appropriate changes to the municipality's budget and revenue-raising measures and assess all contractual obligations of the municipality and renegotiate contractual payments, scope and agreed schedule with service providers, in particular resolving the contractual obligation with the Bushbuckridge Water Board.

The administrators are working closely with municipal councils and all stakeholders like employees, organised labour, business and the public at large on the recovery plans, as requested by Mr Skhosana. The intervention into the two municipalities relates to the executive and administrative powers and functions of council and that the legislative powers as vested in terms of section 160(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, are not affected.



● Mr Theo Van Vuuren: Emalahleni's Administrator.



● Mr Eric Ngomane: Bushbuckridge's Administrator.

# COGTA IN ACTION



**DEADLINE:** Lekwa Executive Mayor, Cllr Matshidiso Morajane and Member of the Mayoral Committee, Cllr Maria Ntuli analyze the expenditure for their municipality during COGTA's Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) meeting at Ehlanzeni District Council Chamber.



**DEFINITION:** GCIS Provincial Head in Mpumalanga, Mr Tiisetso Ramotse outlines the role of Community Development Workers (CDWs) in the communities during a workshop organized by the Department of Public Service and Administration in Hazyview.



**SAFE ENVIRONMENT:** Chief Albert Luthuli's member of the Mayoral Committee, Cllr Dan Nkosi and Executive Mayor, Cllr Busisiwe Shiba take part in a meeting to mitigate service delivery protests in Middleburg.



**EMPOWERMENT:** COGTA's Mr John Mogane helps Mr Dalindyabo Sindane to connect his new lap top as part of support for CDWs to do their work efficiently.



**HEROISM:** Inkhosi Bheki Mnisi of Mantjolo Tribal Authority hands over a certificate of excellence to gospel artist, Mr Sipho Makhabane in recognition of his musical prowess, during the annual Mantjolo traditional ceremony in Badplaas.



**EVALUATION:** Head of Department, Mr David Mahlobo leads a delegation of officials from COGTA, Department of Water Affairs and Msukaligwa Municipality to a site visit of a 12 km water pipeline to supply water to Wesselton residents.



**ENGAGEMENT:** Victor Khanye's Executive Mayor, Cllr Ntombizodwa Makhabane and her counterpart from Thembekele Hani Municipality, Cllr Ndaweni Mahlangu pay attention to Minister Richard Baloyi's presentation of the state of Local Government report in Mpumalanga during a forum in White River.



**RECOGNITION:** HOD, Mr David Mahlobo shares a lighter moment with guests during the Policy and Budget speech in the legislature.



**HAND OVER:** Thaba Chweu Executive Mayor, Cllr Michael Ncongwane (left) and MEC Skhosana unveil the Mashishing Thusong Service Centre plaque to mark the official opening of the centre.



**PIONEERING SPIRIT:** MEC Skhosana and Thaba Chweu Executive Mayor, Cllr Ncongwane attended computer classes at the Mashishing Thusong Service Centre as part of a ceremony to mark the official opening of the centre.



**SPELL BOUND:** COGTA's officials pay attention to MEC Skhosana's inaugural address to staff at the Disaster Management Centre.



**HELPING HAND:** MEC Skhosana and Deputy Minister for Social Development, Ms Bongi Ntuli hands over blankets to the aged in Delmas during an awareness campaign on elder abuse.

# New TSC opens its doors for Mashishing community

The Mashishing community in Lydenburg, Thaba Chweu Municipality is the latest to enjoy access to government services in the country. This follows the establishment of a new state of the art Thusong Service Centre (TSC), built under the auspices of mining giant, Glencore Xstrata at a cost of about R8 million. The construction of the centre is more than just the growing public-private partnership. It has become the nerve centre of co-ordination for government's service delivery departments such as Home Affairs, South African Social Services (SASSA), Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) and South African Revenue Services (SARS).

Community members will now be able to obtain birth and death certificates, social grants and tax returns. MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Mr Simon Skhosana described the establishment of the centre as a lifeline for the community. "We welcome the donation by GlencoreXstrata. The community must take ownership of the centre as it will assist to address issues of poverty, poor access to basic services, lack of information and the prevalence of HIV/Aids," Mr Skhosana said in his address.

The centre is the latest government service delivery point amongst the 19 TSCs in Mpumalanga. Their purpose is to bring services closer to communities. This is in line with government's commitment to bring services where people are located. The centre is the pride of the Thaba Chweu Local Municipality. "Today, we are opening a new chapter as a municipality. Our youth will find refuge from life in the streets through the centre. The contribution is due to the love that GlencoreXstrata continues to show for the community," said Cllr Michael Ncongwane, Executive Mayor for the Thaba Chweu Municipality.



**NEW DEVELOPMENTS:** Local residents in Mashishing attended the function for the launch of the new Thusong Service Centre.



**PROTOCOL:** Thaba Chweu's Speaker, Cllr Susan Magagula welcomes guests to mark the start of proceedings at the centre.

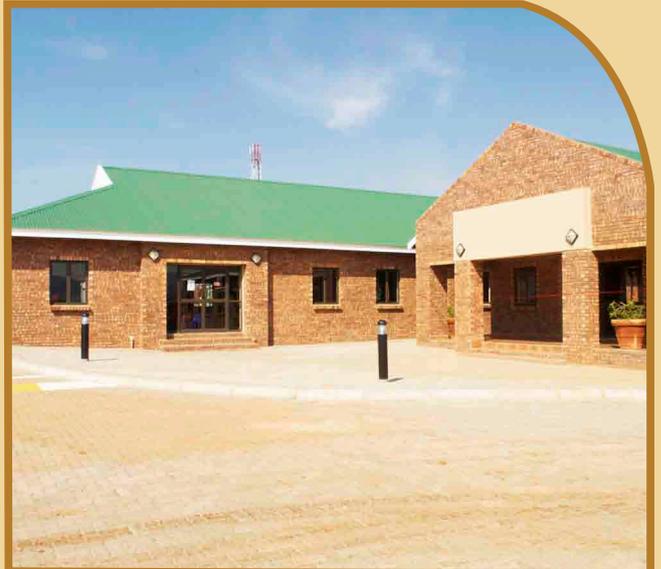


**OBSERVE:** MEC Skhosana leads an entourage of local leaders and officials of the Thaba Chweu Municipality and Glencore Xstrata during a visit to the local Carlyville Primary School.

Apart from the construction of the TSC, the mining company has also contributed six million rand to the local Marafane Primary School, Two million rand to the Carlyville Primary School and Four-point six million rand to the Health Care Centre. As GlecoreXstrata's General Manager, Conroy van der Westhuizen explained, these contributions will provide for growth and job opportunities for the unemployed. MEC Skhosana appealed to the community to look after and protect this centre. He reminded the community of the huge losses suffered by the community during the unrests in 2009. "The people of Mashishing must take ownership of this building. Look after it very carefully and if you notice any acts of criminality or vandalism conducted on it, report these to the police. Protect this building like you would on your own house," said Skhosana.



**IN HOUSE:** Rear view of the TSC in Mashishing



**HOPE:** The new Mashishing TSC is a catalyst of development for the local community.



**NEW ERA:** GlecoreXstrata's Mr Conroy van der Westhuizen and Thaba Chweu's Executive Mayor, Cllr Michael Ncongwane (left) help MEC Skhosana (right) to unveil the plaque during the official opening of the Mashishing TSC.

# Umjindi Municipality signs energy saving deal with ESKOM



**DETERMINATION:** Umjindi Executive Mayor, Cllr Lazarus Mashaba signed the pledge in the Municipality's Council Chambers.

Umjindi Local Municipality has become the first municipality in Mpumalanga to sign the national pledge aimed at reducing electricity consumption. The 49m pledge, as the campaign is known, is South Africa's energy efficiency campaign aimed at reducing electricity consumption in the country. By signing the pledge, Umjindi Municipality has joined government entities such as the South African Cabinet, State owned Enterprises within the Department of Public Enterprises, The Office of the Deputy President and GCIS. It is the second municipality in the country, after Umhlathuze Municipality (with its seat in Richards Bay) to sign the pledge.

Executive Mayor, Cllr Lazarus Mashaba described the signing of the pledge as the right move by the municipality, in view of the winter season. "The signing is timely as we approach the cold winter months where energy usage increases significantly. As local government we are committed to taking the lead in the national sustainability drive," said Cllr Mashaba during the signing ceremony.

The commitment by Umjindi Municipality has been hailed as a major step towards the country's energy saving initiative. "The support shown across all government levels is very encouraging and signals a strong willingness from our leadership towards energy saving at a time where electricity supply is under enormous strain," said Sibusiso Duma, Public Relations Manager of 49M.

The signing of the pledge paves the way for the development and implementation of energy efficient programmes, cultivating focus on renewable energies, the conducting of basic energy audits, continuous identifying of opportunities to reduce consumption, and the implementation of energy efficient technologies and process solutions.

So far 49M campaign has made significant inroads in changing attitudes and encouraging users to save at least 10% of the electricity they consume.

# GSDM signs a historical MOU with local FET College ●●●

Thursday 30 May 2013 will go down as a historic day in Gert Sibande District Municipality (GSDM). This follows the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between GSDM and Gert Sibande College (GSC) in Ermelo. The function was attended by GSDM Executive Mayor, Councillor Mishack Nhlabathi, Municipal Manager, Cijimpi Habile, Executive Mayors, councillors and the Chief Executive Officer of Gert Sibande College, Nick Balkrishen.

In his address Cllr Nhlabathi said the MOU is the result of hard work between the college and the municipalities. "Today is the culmination of almost 12 months of discussions surrounding cooperation and collaboration between Gert Sibande District Municipality and Gert Sibande College. It is a proud day for GSDM and its seven local municipalities as we finally sign an MOU that will be beneficial to all the people of Gert Sibande District. We are fortunate to have the best performing college in South Africa housed in our municipality," he told the audience.

The college has five campuses and 15 sites across the entire Gert Sibande region. It is expected to provide training to officials in the local municipalities to address the skills gaps. Mr Habile outlined the areas of co-operation and collaboration which included placement of students for practical training, facilitation of artisan production with on-the-job practical training in critical skills, as well as helping under-qualified and unqualified GSDM staff. He said this will help them obtain appropriate qualifications.

Training will be provided in areas such as electrical and civil engineering, office administration, finance, accounting, hospitality, tourism, agriculture, roads and paving and water purification. These have been identified as critical skills needed in the local municipalities.

Mr Balkrishen, described the MOU as a wonderful example for the rest of the country in terms of using collaboration to benefit the communities it serves. "The MOU was the first step towards cementing a long and prosperous partnership where the college will play an important role in helping the municipalities fill their skills gaps. GSC is an organ of the State and has a significant role to play in addressing the skills shortages in the country. "We serve the same communities and have a joint responsibility in addressing poverty, unemployment and inequality. Of pinnacle importance for the college is that students will receive practical training through internships in GSDM and its seven municipalities. This will supplement their skills levels and greatly enhance their opportunities to find employment," Bulkrishen said.

His sentiments were echoed by Msukaligwa Executive Mayor, Cllr Sipho Bongwe. "The supply of skills by the college must be congruent with the demands of the region. This MOU will also help in aligning the skills required and the skills produced," he said.



● **LAND MARK:** GSDM Executive Mayor, Cllr Mishack Nhlabathi and Gert Sibande FET College's CEO, Mr Mike Balkrishem shake hands at the end of the MoU signing agreement. They are flanked by Executive Mayors, Councillors and Municipal Managers.

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## DISASTER TOLL FREE

080 020 2507

## VISION

Integrated sustainable people  
centred development

## MISSION

Facilitate and co-ordinate Intergovernmental  
Structures and Developmental Agencies for

Sustainable Integrated Service Delivery  
through Public Participation and  
Traditional system of governance

## Disaster Management Centres

Disaster Management Centre	Contact Details
Provincial Disaster Management Centre	0800 202 507
<b>Ehlanzeni District</b>	
Ehlanzeni Disaster Management Centre	013 762 4000
Mbombela Disaster Management Centre	013 759 9141/ 013 753 3331
Umjindi Disaster Management Centre	013 712 2222
Thaba Chweu Disaster Management Centre	013 235 7304
Bushbuckridge Disaster Management Centre	013 797 1367
Nkomazi Disaster Management Centre	082 806 1611
<b>Gert Sibande District</b>	
Gert sibande Disaster Management Centre	017 801 7000
Govan Mbeki Disaster Management Centre	017 620 6143
Lekwa Disaster Management Centre	017 712 9661
Musukaligwa Disaster Management Centre	017 801 3412
Pixley ka Isaka Seme Disaster Management Centre	017 734 6100
Chief Albert Luthuli Disaster Management Centre	017 843 4011
Dipaliseng Disaster Management Centre	017 773 0055
Mkhondo Disaster Management Centre	017 826 2211
<b>Nkangala District</b>	
Nkangala Disaster Management Centre	013 249 2024/ 013 249 2004
Dr JS Moroka Disaster Management Centre	013 973 1101
Victor Khanye Disaster Management Centre	013 665 6005/ 013 665 2913
Steve Tshwete Disaster Management Centre	013 249 7000/ 013 249 7263
Emakhazeni Disaster Management Centre	013 253 1121/ 013 253 7628
Thembisile Hani Disaster Management Centre	013 986 9100/ 013 986 9115
Emalaheni Disaster Management Centre	013 690 6911/ 013 690 6208