

**BUDGET VOTE SPEECH FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
SAFETY, ROADS AND TRANSPORT**

VOTE 10

**DELIVERED BY THE MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL,
HON. M.J LETSOHA-MATHAE (MPL)**

Mooifontein Primary School

Zastron, Free State

Date: 03 May 2023

Hon. Speaker,

Hon. Premier of the Free State Province

Hon. Minister of Transport

Hon. Members of the Executive Council

Hon. Members of the Free State Provincial Legislature

The Chairpersons and Free State House of Traditional Leaders

Leadership of the ANC

Executive Mayors, Mayor of all councillors

Director General and HOD's

The Provincial Commissioner of SAPS, Lieutenant-General Baile Motswenyane

Brigadier-General Molefi Hlalele from the SANDF

Regional Commissioner of Correctional Services, Ms. S Moodley

Regional Head of State Security Agency

Executive director of the IPID Ms Dikeledi Ntlatseng

The CEO of the RTMC: Adv. Makhosini Msibi

All our Stakeholders present here

Media Houses

All our esteemed guests

Viewers and Listeners

Baahi ba Mohokare Local Municipality le Foreistata kaofela dumelang!!

Molweni! Goeie Dag!

Honourable Speaker,

Two weeks ago, we laid to rest one of the servants of the people Mme Beatrice Marshoff, the former Premier of the Free State. She was a true revolutionary democrat, who championed service delivery and the transformation agenda in the provincial government. Before I commence with my budget speech, I would like to convey my heartfelt condolences to the Marshoff family once again. Indeed, as the African National Congress family we are deeply grieving and mourning the loss of Cde. Beatrice Marshoff. History has shown us that the power of the human spirit can overcome near impossible odds.

Let me also pass my sincere condolences to the family members of three ward committee members from Mantsopa municipality. These three activists met with tragedy a week ago, while on their way to Qwa Qwa to partake in parliamentary public participation program. Two of them were serving in a ward committee in Ladybrand and the other in ward 1, in Tweespruit. Our hearts also go out to the family of a police officer, who was hit by a truck on the N1 while on duty.

Today we are gathered here for the tabling of the budget vote 10 of the Department of Community Safety, Roads, and Transport, to the people of Mohokare Local Municipality in Xhariep District and the Free State Province.

We are in an urgent time when we must roll up our sleeves and accelerate our commitment to building a capable state. To realize such national ideals, our institutions must be staffed with patriotic men and women.

In line with the Public Sector Integrity Management Framework, and the Constitutional Values and Principles, ethical regeneration is one of the key characteristics that will lead to the realisation of a capable state and good governance. We, therefore, are on call towards building morally upright men and women who will honour their pledge to serve the country with absolute integrity. This priority therefore underpins all priorities of the ruling party that obligates us to work towards achieving a competent, ethical, and viable state.

The Department acknowledges and will fast-track the SOPA commitments to conduct lifestyle audits as an active measure to address potential corruption within the Free State Province. While we recognise that, this process carries inherent risks, we are

fully committed to implementing it with the utmost transparency and accountability. Our ultimate goal is to build trust with our stakeholders by demonstrating our commitment to responsible and ethical practices.

My organisation, the African National Congress, has long identified the latter, as a critical factor for the effective implementation of government priorities and, in essence, for the realisation of the National Democratic Revolution, which is a process of struggle aimed at devolving power to the people and transforming society into a non-racist, non-sexist, democratic, and prosperous society.

The ANC government has developed a "Ready to Govern" roadmap that talks about a developmental government that is characterised by an interventionist approach and has an intensive programme for the planning and implementation process, with the expectation that it will face challenges in building a democratic and prosperous South Africa for all.

The Department of Community Safety, Roads, and Transport (DCSRT) still must deal with the unintended consequences that have devastating effects on our Provincial Road network due to maintenance backlog and heavy rains during the summer season. We indeed understand the frustrations that road users in general, and particularly farmers, are going through. As we plan and try to expand our provincial tarred road network with new projects, the heavy rains and subsequent flooding took us two steps back by eroding some of the roads that were supposed to, under normal circumstances, have been still intact.

Despite these setbacks, we as a department, remain committed to ensure we deliver on our mandates on road infrastructure and safety, crime prevention, public transport, and deliver effective services to the people of the Free State Province.

In addition, we consider the tabling of this budget vote to be an opportunity for the Department to reveal how it plans to lead and contribute creatively while also navigating uncharted waters.

ADMINISTRATION

ON Human Resources climate of the department

Speaker,

New beginnings always bring on new challenges and sometimes painful ideological shifts. We find ourselves amid a transitional phase. Sacrifices need to be made and sometimes it hurts while the organisational efficiencies are being addressed. These trying issues are always expected to manifest during the transformation processes and the department is committed through teamwork to embrace the wave of change.

The reconfiguration of the Free State Provincial Government at the level of Executive Authority would inherently bring a domino effect of movement and reallocation of various human resource competencies in the department. This process in its nature will impact on the Human Resources climate.

Honourable members,

Change can be challenging but it can also lead to great rewards if we are willing to embrace it. It requires strong, decisive leadership and clear communication. It requires everyone to work together towards a common goal. I am confident, honourable members, that we, as a department, with the right mind set and approach, will conquer, and turn any challenge into an opportunity for the growth and success of this department.

As noted by the Honourable Premier during the tabling of the State of the Province Address (SOPA) on 28 February 2023, we will continue to rid our Public Service of corrupt elements. I made an undertaking to strengthen resources to maintain zero tolerance towards fraud and anti-corruption and you can watch this space because we are not going to relent on this one! We are also committed to collaborate with Law Enforcement Agencies to thoroughly investigate any cases of fraud and corruption that may arise, and we will take all the necessary measures to ensure that those responsible are held accountable for their actions.

Audit outcomes and governance

Honourable members,

The Department of Community Safety, Roads, and Transport was able to maintain an unqualified audit opinion for 2021/22 financial year from the Auditor General.

Furthermore, the Department continues to put in place mechanisms to strengthen legislative compliance regarding procurement and contract management. The internal controls of the Department are closely monitored, reviewed, and improved upon to ensure that the best value is derived with the limited resources.

Actual steps undertaken

Honourable Speaker, the department is going through the process of identifying the root causes linked to unacceptably high procurement irregularities. This process will create a platform to craft remedial action against underperformance, maladministration, and corruption in the department. Corruption is a multi-dimension problem and rooting it out also takes multiple actions with a common goal. The department has embarked on the following steps to curb irregularities and improve service delivery:

- a. Conduct real-time audits on tenders for the 2023/24 financial year bids,
- b. Conduct a head count for the department; and
- c. Improve current processes in supply chain management.

This department has embarked on a coordinated approach in a form of “Real-time” auditing in order to address significant risks it is facing. The Department has a total staff complement of **2 344 employees**. Due to the size of the department, we will be implementing a headcount to reduce the risk of ghost employees.

Honourable members, the headcount process will immediately commence in the Motheo District and unfold to other districts. The department has adopted a zero tolerance to non-compliance. Non-compliance will lead to consequence management including freezing of salaries. Speaker, this is not just a rhetoric. Work around identifying ghost employees has already started and action is being taken.

Speaker,

the Department's cumulative amount of **irregular expenditure** for the 2021/22 financial year **is R3 billion** and we are currently in the process of terminating some contracts which may further lead to irregular expenditure. This is evident to the imminent changes that are put in place in the department.

In mitigating some of the identified infrastructure procurement risks, the number of Infrastructure Delivery Management Strategy (IDMS) compliance gates in the procurement process have been increased and the real-time audit will also be implemented for all open tenders. The introduction of the 2022 Preferential Procurement Regulations also created an opportunity for the department to review its entire Supply Chain Management policy. The reviewed policy will further assist to improve compliance and curb unwanted expenditures.

Honourable members, to strengthen all Bid Committees, all Bid Committees were also reviewed for the 2023/24 financial year to ensure that they are constituted with suitably qualified members. The department has also established a Project Variation and Expansion Committee, comprising of technical, finance and SCM officials. This measure will ensure that all approvals for variations and expansions of construction contracts are above-board and will prevent irregularities.

ROADS INFRASTRUCTURE

Honourable Speaker,

On behalf of the Department of Community Safety, Roads, and Transport, I would like to take this opportunity to once more acknowledge the challenges faced by the province in respect of an aging roads infrastructure and the impact of severe flooding during recent months. The flooding resulted in severe potholes forming, slippages on the road surface and pipes and culverts that are being washed away on some of the roads.

The roads most affected are:

- R30: Nyakallong and Allanridge
- R711: Fouriesburg to Clarens

- R74: Harrismith to Oliviershoek Pass
- R26 Clocolan to Ficksburg
- R59: Viljoenskroon Bypass
- S56: Memel – Verkykerskop
- S67: Ficksburg – Harmonia – Senekal
- S344: Fouriesburg to R26
- *(S722 Outside Bothaville, S183 over the Vals River, S1445, S58 between Ascent Silos and Standerton)*
- Drainage Structures and roads leading to farming communities.

Construction has already commenced on the R30 at Nyakallong, and the road is subjected to permanent traffic regulation for motorists and pedestrians to ensure safe passage on this stretch of road. Construction is being fast-tracked and is due for completion by end of quarter 2 in the 2023/24 financial year.

Several gravel roads through the flood damage funds, are prioritised in the 2023/24 with a budget allocation of **R60** million. These funds will specifically be allocated to address challenges with regards to drainage on the gravel road network.

Speaker,

The Department remains committed to fulfilling the condition of the Provincial Roads Maintenance Grant, which includes the continued development and support of emerging contractors. We recognise the significant benefits that this initiative brings not, only in terms of creating opportunities for the previously marginalised, but also in promoting a more inclusive and diversified economy. As such, we will continue to prioritise the growth and empowerment of emerging contractors in a transparent and cost-effective manner. We believe that by providing fair and equal opportunities for emerging contractors, we can help to create a more inclusive and sustainable economy.

Our department is dedicated to ensuring that road maintenance projects are awarded based on merit and that all contractors, regardless of size or experience, have a fair chance to participate. We will continue to prioritize transparency, accountability, and

cost-effectiveness in all of our operations, and we remain committed to build strong partnerships with our contractors to ensure the success of our road maintenance programs.

The following capital projects have commenced in previous years and reached various levels of completion in the 2022/23 financial year. The final payments for these projects in the 2022/23 financial year amount to a combined cost of close to **R100 million**. These projects are currently in their defect's liability period.

- Winburg – Marquard
- Bothaville – Viljoenskroon (Phase 3)
- Heilbron – Sasolburg (Phase 1)
- Ventersburg – Senekal
- Kroonstad – Viljoenskroon
- Villiers – Cornelia (Phase 2)

All these projects of the department will prioritise the inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities and Military Veterans. In this financial year, the Department is planning to create 3 990 jobs opportunities,

The following are some of the minor road infrastructure upgrade projects that will be implemented through the EPWP guidelines aligned to Township Revitalization Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) focussing on funded through the Equitable Share at a cost of **R60 million**. These projects Township Access Roads are going to be implemented in the following towns:

Qwa-qwa, Harrismith, Bethlehem, Paul-Roux, Ficksburg, Ladybrand
Sasolburg, Kroonstad, Bloemfontein, Botshabelo, Thaba-Nchu
Charles Mopeli Stadium Precinct

The following projects total a combined budget of **R182 million** and are ongoing from previous financial years and will be completed during the 2023/24 financial year:

- Tweespruit Access Road
- Kroonstad – Steynsrus (Phase 3)

- Reitz – Tweeling (Phase 2)
- Tweeling – Frankfort (Phase 2)
- Riet River Bridge at Koffiefontein
- Bloemfontein – Dewetsdorp – Wepener
- Schonkenville – Koppies (Phase 2)

The Bloemhof - Hoopstad (Phase 2) project will commence during the first quarter of 2023/24.

The following capital projects will also be implemented in the 2023/24 financial year for the upgrade and special maintenance programme at a combined budget of **R150 million**:

Tweespruit – Excelsior, Zastron – Sterkspruit, Petrus Steyn – Lindley
Senekal – Lindley, Viljoenskroon – Orkney, Harrismith SEZ Route

Jwalo ha ha kese ke bololetse hore re tlo lokisa le marokgo, toropong tse ,latelang:

Thaba-Phatchoa, Clocolan; Ficksburg; Fouriesburg,
Jacobsdal, Heilbron,

We continue to value the significance of the upkeep and maintenance of our gravel roads across the board and we have allocated **R150 million** in the 2023/24 Financial Year for the **re-gravelling** and **blading per District**:

Motheo: regravelling 42 roads and blading 120 roads,

Xhariep: gravelling 4 roads, **Lejweleputswa:** gravelling 3 roads,

Fezile Dabi: regravelling 3 and blading 28 roads,

Thabo Mofutsanyane: gravelling 3 roads.

As part of our proactive planning cycle, we have allocated **R100 million** for **Road Asset Management Systems**.

TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

Honourable Speaker,

In the plight to provide improved public transport services with easy and convenient access and mobility for commuters residing in previously secluded areas, the Department continues to oversee the contractual obligations of subsidised bus services funded through the Public **Transport Operations Grant (PTOG)**. The grant is meant to alleviate the financial burden on commuters that spend more than 10% of their income on public transport. The grant has been increased by **4,4%** to an amount of **R326 million** in the **2023/24** Financial Year in comparison to the allocation of **R312 million** in the **2022/23** Financial Year.

Ke yona Service Delivery e re buwang ka yona, ena!

Through the *Shova-Kalula* project, the Department in partnership with National Department of Transport (NDOT) will be issuing 600 bicycles to learners and labourers to reduce pedestrian walking time as part of the non-motorised transport awareness campaign that aims to promote a healthier and more environmentally friendly means of travel for commuters.

The Department, through the establishment of various transport forums, continues to support municipalities to assist in developing transport plans that are sustainable and promote the development of Integrated Transport Systems and Infrastructure.

Due to high levels of criminal activity, the Department had to close a few Registering Authorities across the Province due to among other reasons; vandalism, theft, and burglaries. The Department is in the process of developing inter-departmental strategy to restore offices back to functionality and to ensure compliance with Occupational Health and Safety Act.

To minimise the risks of handling cash, the Department has already implemented a cashless system environment and the **Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC)** is in the process of introducing biometric system to also

safeguard the E-natis system that has been prone to fraud and corruption by various criminal syndicates that are under investigation.

TRANSPORT REGULATION (TRAFFIC)

Honourable Speaker,

Law and order on our roads is our priority and we will continue providing quality traffic policing services. The province will deploy traffic officials in a manner which seeks to maintain and promote a culture of road traffic law compliance by all road users.

As we all know, the Free State Province connects six provinces which are Gauteng; Northern Cape; Eastern Cape; Kwazulu-Natal; North-West; and Mpumalanga. This inter-connectivity causes high traffic volumes on our roads during seasonal times like year-end festivities and Easter time.

The Free State Province had 15 fatalities from the period of Easter Holiday, 06 to 10 April 2023. This is an increase of 8 fatalities as compared to the previous year (2022) same period. We therefore urge road users in the province to exercise caution and follow traffic rules and regulations to ensure their safety and safety of others on the road.

In the 2022/2023 Financial Year, 13 Testing Stations in the Province were upgraded. This is informed by our commitment of ensuring that we improve conditions and services rendered to the public at testing stations. The stations are:

| | | | |
|-------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| Villiers | Paul Roux | Hennenman | Boshof |
| Dewetsdorp | Hoopstad | Clocolan | Rouxville |
| Reddersburg | Koffiefontein | Smithfield | Hertzogville |
| Vrede | | | |

The Department is planning to continue with the upgrading of identified testing stations during the 2023/2024 financial year in order to improve on service delivery to our communities. Baahi ba Thabo Mofutsanyani re utlwile selo sa lona sa di testing station rea tshepisa re ya tla Qwa Qwa mono.

In an effort to enhance traffic management services and visibility in the province; the department is currently fast-tracking the provision of tools of trade and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). We are also considering strategies to mitigate the security risks among traffic officers, especially females, such as fitting vehicles with panic buttons.

SAFER COMMUNITIES

Honourable Speaker,

A crime-riddled environment is an impediment to any form of development. During the State of the Nation Address, the President indicated that “*Violent crime takes a heavy toll on every South African. Communities across our country live in fear for the safety of their families. This situation cannot continue.*”

The Department of Community Safety, Roads and Transport is duty bound to ensure that the President’s commitment to end violent crime is carried through. However, the fight against crime can only be won if all of us make it our responsibility. It is appropriate at this juncture to pause and use the opportunity to appreciate the role played by our communities in this endeavour to eradicate crime. We continue to make a clarion call to everyone in our communities to take part in all initiatives that are aimed at ensuring a safe and secure environment for all.

Our campaigns this financial year will address the following crimes: Theft of Motor Vehicles, Illicit Drug Trafficking, Illicit Trafficking of Firearms, Human Trafficking, Smuggling of Minerals, Undocumented Persons, Wildlife Crimes, Stock Theft, and the smuggling of Endangered Species. This operation is, in a way, also part of implementing the Integrated Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy (ICVPS) which is going to be our Provincial blueprint for tackling crime. This is in line with the National Integrated Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy (ICVPC), which was further endorsed by the Executive Council in the form of the Provincial Crime Prevention Strategy. The Strategy is going to strengthen a multi-disciplinary collaboration in the fight against crime and ensure that Municipalities play their equitable role in the fight against crime. We therefore call for a rapid establishment of Community Safety forums (CSF’s) by municipal authorities and assist them with the working essential tools

Honourable Speaker,

A brief look into the **crime statistics, as at the end of the third quarter of 2022/23** the Free State Province unfortunately shows an increase in several crime categories. This charges us with a huge task of intensifying our efforts against crime. We are going to need everyone's commitment to turn this ship around.

In terms of total contact crimes reported for the quarter, it is only Northern Cape and Mpumalanga that have reported less contact crimes than the Free State Province, while all other Provinces reported much higher counts. What is encouraging is that none of the stations in the Free State appear on the list of top-30 stations for this crime category for the 3rd quarter 2022/2023.

Honourable Speaker

The following crime categories remain most disturbing not only in the province but country-wide as per statistics issued by the Minister of Police for the third quarter: Murder, Attempted Murder, Sexual Offences, Rape, Assault GBH, Common Assault, Common Robbery, Cash-in-transit, Kidnapping and Theft.

SEXUAL ASSAULT has decreased with **15.9% (from 170 to 143 cases)**. Welkom SAPS occupies position number 9 on the list of top-30 stations in the country in terms of sexual assault. Sexual assault has increased with five cases in the Welkom precinct from seven to 12 for the period under consideration.

THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES has decreased with 8.5% (from 213 to 195 cases).

STOCK-THEFT has decreased with 4.9% (from 899 to 855 cases). Selosesha SAPS occupies position 11 on the list of top 30 stations countrywide.

COMMERCIAL CRIME has decreased with 17.7% (from 1 300 to 1 070 cases). Welkom SAPS is occupying position number 25 on the top 30-list of stations countrywide in terms of commercial crimes and it has shown an increase of 20.1% (from 134 to 161 reported cases) for the period stipulated above.

Offences in the rural areas that includes murder and robberies has shown an increase of 20% when compared to the same period the previous year.

In collaboration with other sister departments and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), we continue to implement programmes such **School Safety Programmes**, **Rural Safety Awareness Campaigns** in vulnerable communities to address issues such as stock theft, farm killings, branding, illegal grazing, employment of undocumented foreign Nationals, etc. The campaigns were conducted in hotspot-areas such as Phuthaditjhaba, Senekal, Thaba-Nchu and Botshabelo. Other programmes implemented to deal with social ills are prevention of human trafficking, Gender-based and domestic violence initiatives.

Anti-Human Trafficking campaigns were conducted in towns such as Rouxville, Paul Roux, Dewetsdorp, Dealesville, Bothaville and Vierfontein and we are targeting communities and learners. The safety of the communities in the province, specifically in rural areas remains a priority and the deployment of resources that includes the placement of personnel and vehicles at the police stations declared as rural stations.

Community Policing Forums (CPFs) are recognised structures which continue to play a critical role in crime prevention. The department will therefore engage with relevant stakeholders to find ways of supporting them.

SAPS will continue to lead major **Operations** in the next financial year to address the following crimes: Theft of Motor Vehicles, Illicit Drug Trafficking, Illicit Trafficking of Firearms, Human Trafficking, Smuggling of Minerals, Undocumented Persons, Wildlife Crimes, Stock-theft and Endangered Species.

Anti-Gang Operations will also continue with the tracing of wanted suspects (Gangsters, drug related crimes and dangerous Weapons). The arrests made by the SAPS for drug-related crimes across the province, shows an increase of 41.8% when compared with the same period the previous year.

To prevent all Trio Crimes and Theft of Motor Vehicles on the Routes, **Operation Road Runner** will continue with specific focus on Hijackings of Trucks, Hijackings of Vehicles, Transportation of Stolen Goods and Cash in Transit (CIT) Robberies.

The department remains deliberate in contribution to the National Strategic Plan on GBVF, **Priority 3** which is about **Protection, Safety and Justice**. The Department 's main contribution in the fight against GBVF is through ensuring police strict adherence

to Domestic Violence Act (DVA) and to ensure that there are functional Victim Friendly Rooms (VFRs) at all 110 Police Stations, in order to avoid secondary victimization.

ILLICIT MINING AND DAMAGE TO ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Honourable members,

His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa, in his SONA identified illicit mining and damage to essential infrastructure as one of the priorities in the fight against crime for the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster. In the Free State, during the month of February 2023, heavily armed criminals who were digging out copper cables near Parys' industrial area, were arrested.

5 260 arrests were made for illicit mining in the Gold-Fields area and Vierfontein.

Of the 5260, 1 310 are South Africans, and the rest were foreign nationals.

During December 2022, this team came face to face with a group during which a shoot-out occurred. Sadly, one member, Sgt. Mapane, was fatally wounded.

Motsamaisa wa dipoisano, selemong se fetileng sa ditjhelete, lefapha le ile la etsa phatlalatso ya ho bona hore ditshebelletso tsa Seponesa diba maamong a ntlafetseng. Kajeno remotlotlo haholo, ho tsebisa baahi ba Foreistata le Afrika Borwa, hore Maponesa a sekete le leshome (1010) a se atswa thupellong, mme ba se bale di police station tse fapaneng. Motsamaisa wa dipoisano, mokgahlo wa heso wa African National Congress, o eme ka maoto ho lwantsha ditlokotsebe le ho hlaola botlokotsebe ka hara metse le metsana ya rona. Bomme le Bontate ba batjha ba Maponesa ba eketsa lenane la Seponesa ka hara Foreistata ho etsa bonnete ba hore Setjhaba se fumana ditshebelletso.

We wish to use the opportunity to appreciate the role played by our communities in this endeavor to eradicate crime, but will continue to involve the community in our crime prevention initiatives in order to ensure a safe and secure environment for all.

SAPS ACHIEVEMENTS

Honorable Speaker, ke batla ho theoletsa le ho rotlohetsa mosebetsi o motle o etswang ke Seponesa sa Foreistata. Ha se hore retlameha re tshwaye diphoso fela ho Maponesa a rona. Bomme le Bontate bana ba sebelletsa setjhaba ka botshepehi

le boitelo ho lwantsha botlokotsebe. Ke ema ke phahamisitse mahetla a ka hodimo ke mosebetsi oo ba o etsa, hobane Seponesa sa Foreistata se hapile kgau e bitswang ka hore ke (Lauraeate Winner) ka hara Afrika Borwa, hona hobolela hore ba hlotse diprofense tse ding. Bomme le Bontate ba mmala o blue le dikopono tsa kgauta tswelang pele ho etsa mosebetsi wa lona ka makgethe.

The crime against women and children remains a priority in the province. The following cases have been successfully finalised: in **18** Cases perpetrators received life sentence, in **13** Cases perpetrators received **20** years and above, in **52** Cases perpetrators received **10** to **18** years and 1 serial rapist received **30** years and **2** serial rapists received **20** years for each case.

FLEET MANAGEMENT TRADING ENTITY

Honourable Speaker,

The Department is proud to announce that the Fleet Management Trading Entity achieved a clean audit for the 2021/22 financial year.

The Department is fully committed to undertaking a comprehensive re-engineering process aimed at enhancing and optimising the services rendered by the Government Garage. Our goal is to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of these services, while also ensuring that they are delivered in a timely and cost-effective manner. Through this initiative, we aim to modernise and streamline the operations of the Government Garage, making it a model for excellence and innovation in public sector.

To reduce municipal debt at the entity, Honourable speaker, the Department will in the new financial year only rent out vehicles to municipalities and will no longer issue petrol cards to all our clients.

Our government recognises the importance of responsible debt management and its impact on the financial stability of our province. As such, we are implementing a new policy under Fleet Management renting to Municipalities to ensure that municipalities do not exceed the 2-month rental arrangement.

By enforcing this policy, we aim to prevent municipalities from accumulating excessive debt that could burden them and potentially contribute to financial instability. This will

also ensure that municipal fleets are being utilized efficiently and effectively, reducing unnecessary costs, and promoting sustainable practices.

We believe that responsible debt management is essential for the long-term health and prosperity of our province. We will continue to work towards creating policies that promote fiscal responsibility and accountability, and we encourage all municipalities to do their part in achieving a financially stable future for all.

BUDGET ALLOCATION 2023/24

Honourable Members,

The total budget allocated to the Department for 2023/24 Financial Year is **R3.339 billion** and it is broken down as follows:

- Equitable share allocation including own revenue is **R1.194 billion**, which will be utilised towards the operational costs of the Department and **R345 million** of it will be directed to Infrastructure Enhancement Allocation.
- Provincial Road Maintenance Grant is allocated **R1.813 billion** which is an increase of **35.5%** as compared to the 2022/23 financial year's allocation.
- The Public Transport Operations Grant has increased from **R312 million** to **R326 million** and that is an increase of **4.4%**.

Then, the revenue target set for the Department amounts to **R838 million** for the 2023/24 financial year which is an increase of **R8.8 million** as compared to the previous financial year's target allocation of **R830 million**.

We have managed to collect **R845 million** of the set target for the 2022/23 financial year and that is equivalent to **102%**. The Department of Community Safety, Roads and Transport has recorded an over - collection of **R15 million**.

Speaker,

We are resolute in strengthening the collaborations, as we build local economy of the Free State with our stakeholders. Today I am dressed by young learners from Motheo Artisan Academy. In building local production and support, we must work together to develop a strategy to source all local manufactured products from local institutions as part of youth employment.

CONCLUSION

Let me express my word of appreciation to the leadership collective of the ANC and its Alliance for giving full support and guidance to the work I am deployed to execute.

Honourable Premier Mxolisi Dukwana and my colleagues in the Executive Council, your support is always appreciated.

My gratitude also goes to my ANCWL NTT leadership with whom I'm leading with collectively for their continued support.

The Acting Head of Department, Ms. Masego Tshabalala and all departmental employees, your dedication towards carrying out departmental work cannot go unnoticed, especially under these difficult circumstances.

I wish to further extend my appreciation and support to Lieutenant-General Baile Motswenyane and the collective for their hard work and dedication in this province.

Also let me appreciate the support from royal houses, transport stakeholders, contractors, Community Policing Forum's, ANC members and members of the community at large across the length and the breadth of the province.

Lastly, I wish to also express my appreciation to my family for the support and love they continue to show me.

Honourable Speaker, I hereby table the 2023/24 Budget Vote of the Department of Community Safety, Roads and Transport for consideration and adoption before this House.

Thank You.

END