



**MINUTES OF THE TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING
HELD ON 28 APRIL 2020 AT 10:00**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Hon SA Duma: Chairperson
Hon N Ntombela
Hon MC Frazer
Hon BM Zuma
Hon JS Nxumalo
Hon BN Mthethwa
Hon MB Gwala
Hon S Hoosen
Hon GF Mtshali
Hon ME Phakathi

EXECUTIVE AND DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS:

HON MB Ntuli (MEC)
Mr S Gumbi: HOD (Transport)
Mr W Evans: CFO
Mr SS Nkosi: DDG: TIRS
Ms Ngubo: DDG: Corporate Services
Ms F Sithole: DDG: Transportation Services
Ms B Kunene: PLO:
Mr K Ncalane: Director: Communications

SANTACOKZN: Mr S Mthethwa (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr SR Shangase SANTACO KZN: Office Manager

KWANABUCO: Mr S Dlamini (Chairperson)

Mr S Sibisi (Provincial Office Administrator)

LEGISLATURE OFFICIALS:

Ms ZF Mbongwa: Cluster Manager

Mr S Nsele: Senior Legal Advisor

Mr TT Msomi: Senior Researcher

Ms B Xaba: Budget and Content Adviser

Ms NL Dube: Committee Coordinator

1. OPENING AND WELCOME

The Chairperson welcomed all members present. He advised Members that SANTACOKZN and KWANABUCO had been invited to the meeting so that they can be put abreast about what the Department was doing to respond to COVID 19 pandemic.

2. APOLOGIES

An apology was tendered on behalf of Hon Moodley who could not be part of the meeting because of technical challenges therefore not able to connect to Microsoft Teams. Hon Mtshali would join the meeting later. The MEC, Hon MB Ntuli also requested to be released after he has made his remarks as he had a COVID 19 meeting that he was chairing in the Zululand District Command Council on Covid-19

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

With Hon Frazer and Hon Nxumalo proposing and seconding respectively,
It was **resolved**:

That the agenda for the Transport Portfolio Committee virtual meeting held on 28 April March 2020 be adopted with no amendment.

4. MEC'S REMARKS

The MEC, thanked Members for affording him the opportunity to report on what the Department had been doing regarding COVID 19. He also expressed his appreciation on the Committee's sentiments about the Department's visibility on the ground in the fight against the COVID 19 pandemic.

He pointed out that KwaZulu- Natal was one of the Provinces that had a high number of the COVID19 infections. eThekweni Metro was the most affected and infected in the Province. As result, road blocks had been tightened in eThekweni Metro. He stated that the Department of Transport should not live a day without the implementation of service delivery since this would adversely affect its APP. It was for this reason that the Department should start working as it had been pronounced by the President that some services would start to operate under the Level 4 lock down guidelines.

The MEC further mentioned that for the Protective Personal Equipment (PPEs) to be distributed (especially) in deep rural areas; roads had to be in good conditions hence it was important for the Department to resume infrastructure delivery. He assured Members that the Department was preparing to partially begin rendering the critical services and that this had also had been discussed with the Premier. The Department was currently in communication with the National Department of Transport and was awaiting the direction from various Ministers on the guidelines to be followed in each sector as part of the Risk- Adjusted Strategy on re- opening the economy as proclaimed by the President of the Country.

The MEC also highlighted that everyone was working together, regardless of the political parties and the Department of Transport was part of the integrated strategy in the fight against the pandemic.

The MEC, noted concern raised by the Committee on how taxi ranks were operating and that movement should be minimized.

With regard to a question raised regarding the sanitizing of ranks; he advised that it was done in the ranks but the Department did not want to lose track of its core responsibility which is the building the roads.

The MEC also advised the Committee about changes that were to be affected in the Department of Transport and Department of Community Safety and Liaison in May 2020. He stated that details in this regard would be proclaimed at the right time. He said that he had engaged the Premier and the HOD for Transport in this regard. Changes were aimed at improving the performance of both Departments; not to penalize anyone. This will help into seeing clean audit for both Departments at the end of the financial year.

The Committee commended the work that was done by the Department and supported Department's efforts to curb the spread of the infections. Members also pointed out that the Department should intensify the sanitization of public transport. It

was pointed out that focus should also be given to the eThekweni Metro since the COVID 19 cases were increasing.

INPUT ON THE MEC's REMARKS

The Committee commended the MEC for working and being visible on the ground during the lockdown period.

Concern was raised with the perceived lack of effective communication of the ever-changing regulations to law enforcement officers. Law enforcement agencies should be constantly advised and updated on rules and regulations since they keep changing.

The Committee enquired on departmental plans to fumigate or sanitise taxi ranks as well as a plan to ensure social distancing on public transport. The Committee further asked if the Department had a plan to deal with other natural disasters. There was concern with eThekweni which had been identified as an epicentre of the Covid-19 virus

Another issue raised was KwaMashu, Ispingo and Dosenhoek where social gatherings continued and there was notable lack of adherence to lockdown regulations

In response the MEC informed the Committee that the Department had received a minimum number of SANDF for support. The Department lacked adequate resources to sanitise taxi rank. The Department had procured sanitisers and masks. The Department had conducted oversight in taxi ranks but had not invited the Committee to avoid increased numbers. The Department planned to improve performance at SASSA pay points in the upcoming pay days.

The Department made a commitment to provide PPEs to all Committee Members

5. COVID 19 RESPONSE PLAN: DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT REPORT

The HOD advised Members that the Department prepared a report which was circulated to Members. He indicated that the report was about the department's COVID 19 response plan that was developed and signed off on 26th March 2020. He said that the plan was being implemented and was updated when the need arises.

The HOD also apprised the meeting that in response to the epidemic the Department established a Crisis Team that meets twice a week to analyse reports pertaining to the COVID 19. He said that the Crisis Team works closely with the Department's Business Continuity Management (BCM) Steering Committee. The Business Continuity Management Committee was the Department's Committee that deals with any crisis that might exist in the Department.

The HOD advised the meeting that the report comprised of what had been done and was being done by the department during the lock down. It also included the plan to be implemented under lock down level 4 as it had been announced by the President that would fall under Transport as well as the state of readiness of the department in this regard.

He further advised that the report also comprised; the budget cuts that had been indicated by Treasury and were yet to be finalised for implementation as well as the budget that had been spent to acquire the PPEs.

The CFO then took Members through the report. He highlighted the guidelines and practices that had been put in place in response to COVID 19 which among other things included:

- Postponement; Cancellation of all tenders closing dates suspended and all briefing sessions/tender notices suspended were to be published on the Departmental website.
- Recruitment/Interviews postponed until further notice. All advertised posts closed on 17 March 2020, before the lockdown were not affected. Advertising of posts since been halted.
- All Contractors and Consultants were instructed to vacate construction sites as part of the lockdown
- Microsoft Teams Training was also done for staff to work from home.

The CFO advised that a fair number of PPEs was distributed to the Department mainly for the RTI in March 2020. PPE confinement was distributed and mainly distributed for the RTI. He advised the meeting that Procurement of PPEs had been centralised through the National Department of Health and they were following up on the next delivery of PPEs.

The CFO informed Members that additional overtime was allowed for Law Enforcement Officers. He also mentioned that RTI Members had to cancel their leave and had been placed on standby. The RTI training had been put on hold until lock down had been uplifted.

In terms of communication, there had been lot of information in the Department's social media page like the Facebook, to communicate things like the closure of the offices and the extension of the renewal of licenses. He said the Department was planning on additional Media communication on how the Department would be operating from 04th May 2020.

The CFO also advised the meeting that a staff profiling, was done where a questionnaire was sent to the staff to identify those that could have been overseas. 21 of employees were identified and were sent to the doctor. A questionnaire had been prepared when staff return to work.

He also advised that the Department's intervention had been put in place that every person coming to the department including visitors would be tested their temperature. A recovery plan had been identified for PRE- and licensing offices to deal with the backlog because of the lockdown.

The CFO also advised the Committee that an expenditure that had been incurred towards the procurement of PPEs since the inception of the COVID 19 was R1 475 279. He mentioned that there had been budget reprioritization because of the COVID 19.

The HOD assured Members that the Disaster Management Act would be enforced by the Department and was awaiting directions from various Minister on the guidelines to be followed as part of the level 4.

COMMITTEE INPUT ON PRESENTATION

Members commended the plan as presented by the department. It was also pointed out that the department should consider employing qualified unemployed health practitioners to do temperature scanning as opposed to it being done by the Securities.

The Committee pointed out on how regulations were implemented, there was a gap between offices at national level and forces on the ground, there were times where there had been misinterpretation of rules and regulations. This could result in a lot of court challenges. The Department's report should indicate what exactly the people arrested were not complying with.

Clarity was requested on how the Department had arrived at the sum of R1 million, a breakdown of what informed costing. The Committee questioned if SCM processes had been in relation to payment that was made to suppliers. Further concern related to vans that are commonly used for public transportation in rural areas. The Department was requested to monitor compliance with lockdown regulations in these areas

The Department was asked to clarify its expenditure in the 2019/20 financial year. The Committee requested that the Department consider online licence renewal during the lockdown period.

In response to a question raised regarding the violation of COVID 19 regulations; the DDG: Transportation (Ms Sithole) advised that a comprehensive report on many people that had been arrested because of the violation of COVID 19 regulations would be submitted to the Committee.

The CFO said that the Department had not considered the issue of interns and will look at the feasibility thereof.

Following discussion, it was **resolved**:

- (i) That the department should consider employing unemployed health practitioners to do temperature reading of employees/ visitors who come to the department offices.
- (ii) That a comprehensive report on disaster management with number of people that had been arrested because for the violation of COVID 19

regulations and the public transport non-compliance be submitted to the Committee.

6. 2019/20 FOCUS INTERVENTION STUDY (FIS)

The Chairperson tabled the 2019/20 Focus Intervention Study.

Following discussion, it was **resolved**:

That the 2019/20 Focus intervention Study (FIS) be adopted.

9. CLOSURE

The Chairperson thanked everyone for attending the meeting and declared it closed at 13:10

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CHAIRPERSON
SA DUMA

DATE

