

**BUDGET DEBATE ON PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND
TRANSPORT
VOTE 11
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Hon Chairperson, I was quite scared when I saw people dressed in orange overalls fearing that the inmates of Rooigrond Prison have invaded the legislature.

The effectiveness of the department we are discussing can make or break the province when one takes into account the vehicles and equipment that have to be bought to ensure delivery of services.

Notwithstanding that government vehicles have been marked to indicate the departments they belong to misuse thereof is still rampant. The speed at which these cars are driven is clear proof that those driving them are not owners.

We need to sit back and take stock that most of the people who operate the costly big machine such as graders and heavy duty trucks hardly have Std 6 qualifications. What happens if they are found to have damaged or lost the equipment out of recklessness?

The department has reported that they experience loss of staff with rare skills to the private sector or other provinces. There are always reasons for that. What has come to our attention is that some over zealous managers are so arrogant that they would throw the manifesto of the ANC to their subordinates and say that is the book they will operate on. There is nothing wrong in saying the dreams of the party that won the elections should be pursued but that should be worked out into a government policy. We take note that even last weekend the president of the country was warning against triumphalism. After all modesty is the best policy.

While government sold bus depots of the former BTH that they inherited from the erstwhile Bophuthatswana the proceeds from such sales seem not to have benefited the people in the province as public transport leaves much to be desired. Areas that had regular and efficient transport no such as your

Supingstat, Lekgophung, Moshana and Swartkopfontein find it difficult to go to the nearest town, Zeerust.

Poor public transport is not confined to that area only. The route from Bloemhof to Christiana is another example of people who experience difficulty in even going to where their local municipal offices are. It is also an ordeal for them to go to the district municipal offices in Vryburg just as it is for those in Klipgat and Moretele to find their way to The Brits Municipal offices and Rustenburg District Municipal offices under which they fall.

Common sense would have dictated that after six years of the reconfiguration of municipalities access through public transport for the indigent should have been contrived but that is not the case.

The propensity to demarcate the provinces has left the North West government with a headache as to how to control the NTI offices in Mabopane where Gauteng is laying claim arguing that the transfer should have been lock stock and barrel while the North West has other ideas.

The situation is further complicated by the unending winding of business by the judicial administration that had to see to it that NTI books are closed.

The department will find it very difficult to cope with the paltry R2 billion budget allocated to them with the roads in such a bad state of repair. Gravel roads to the country side such as Kopela and Gannalaagte are inaccessible unless you drive in a four wheel drive vehicle; the tarred road from Swartdam to Makapanstat could as well be converted into a gravel road because of the dungeons on it.

We in the UCDP welcome the “Re na le rona” spirit demonstrated by the Bafokeng and Bakgatla Tribal Administrations in meeting the government half way in respect of service delivery. It is a good example that most communities should emulate and not sit back and complain of service delivery failures by government when they do not even when they have resources.

We do of course appreciate the road works on the Lichtenburg – Koster road but all this after lives were lost.

The hop step and jump policies of the national department of Transport are not assisting provincial ones in any way. The incomplete taxi recapitalisation is the case in point. The in-thing of late is the so-called Bus Rapid Transport. Some taxi owners who had bought into the government plan of replacing their taxis are left in the lurch.

All places should e made habitable for all residents. For some of us who have sought refuge at the Lowe complex, the place is not very conducive to children as there are no facilities for them such as swings and some such like things. We hope the Depart of Works as owners of the facility will look into that.