

# Ambulance vandalism hurts all

LUCAS LEDWABA

**H**OSPITAL workers at the George Masebe hospital in Limpopo discovered one morning that one of the ambulances at the facility had gone missing during the night.

A frantic call was made to police who immediately launched a spirited search for the Emergency Medical Services [EMS] vehicle which had been stolen by thugs who appeared to have cut through a fence at the Waterberg hospital.

It may never be known just how many lives were lost or patients inconvenienced by the theft of the EMS vehicle in this remote area where many of the citizens are poor and rely solely on public health and emergency care for services.

But the theft, vandalism and hijacking of emergency health care service vehicles is a reality that continues to haunt the department of health and in turn, communities.

In her budget vote speech this week, Limpopo health MEC Dr Phophi Ramathuba said to date, the department has procured a total of 250 EMS vehicles.

"Our concern is that only 227 are on the road as a result of theft, hijack,

vandalism, motor vehicle accidents and damages by communities during protests," Ramathuba told the Limpopo provincial legislature during the delivery of her budget vote speech.

She said in response to the challenge, the department has successfully introduced systems for fleet management.

Ramathuba said these would include the Push-to-Talk communication system in all control centres and ambulances.

"We are currently installing active vehicle tracking in all EMS vehicles. This should improve our ability to render emergency services efficiently. But equally we are calling upon communities to protect these properties since they are theirs and are meant to save their lives," she said.

She said one of the focus areas for the 2018/19 financial year would be to equip EMS vehicles with skilled personnel and equipment.

In relation to HIV/AIDS, Ramathuba said by the third quarter the department reduced mother to child HIV transmission from the annual target of 1.1% to 0.7%.

"This means that 99.3 percent of babies born to HIV positive mothers are HIV negative. These children



Dr Phophi Ramathuba. Picture: Lebogang Makwela / Visual Buzz SA

would not be subjected to anti-retroviral for life," said Ramathuba.

Ramathuba said Limpopo continues to contribute to the country's successful ART program with 319 174 people remaining on the initiative. She said this was against a target of 317 551 in the third quarter.

In a progressive move that could boost government's fight against HIV/AIDS, two of the province's economic giants have partnered with the department to help fight the scourge.

Mining giants Exxaro and tomato farming conglomerate ZZ2 have been formally licensed by the department to provide ARVs. This is

despite them not being medical sites. However both companies are major employers in the province whose economy relies heavily on mining and agriculture.

Ramathuba also revealed that the universities of Limpopo and Venda have also been formally licensed to provide ARVs.

She said they have also established 11 clinics at all the TVET sites focusing not just on HIV/AIDS but also on reproductive health for the girl child in line with the SHE CONQUERS Campaign. "All these partnerships are proving successful in increasing accessibility to ARTs. We call upon other companies to join in this campaign. Without a healthy work force we will never grow our economy, create new jobs and attract new investments," said Ramathuba.

Still on the fight against HIV/AIDS, Ramathuba said the department has distributed more than 73 million male condoms and 2 million female condoms by the third quarter.

Added to that, a total number of 48 959 men underwent the snip against the annual target of 36 910 in the third quarter. She called on more men to take the plunge and get the snip, a service that is provided free of charge at public health centres.

Ramathuba said the 2018/19 overall budget for health vote has increased by 8.1% from the 2017/18 main appropriation and by 4.9% from the adjusted appropriation.

She said equitable share will grow by 3.8%, and 12.3% on conditional grants from the 2017/18 adjusted allocation.

Basically, this that the total budget indicates a growth from R18.6 billion this financial year to R19.5 billion in 2018/19. She said the allocation grows by an average of 5.5% over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework.

## Budget at a glance:

- **Strengthening District Health Services (Primary Healthcare) and district hospital delivery systems: R10.5 billion. This is 54% of the total budget of the department. The budget of this priority grows by an average of 5.3% over the next years.**
- **R2.5 billion has been allocated for Regional and Psychiatric hospitals.**
- **An amount of R68 million has been allocated towards the support of our home-based Carers.**

## Limpopo transport department outlines R2 billion budget

RUSSEL MOLEFE

THE Limpopo Department of Transport has outlined plans for its R2,106 billion budget for the year, with the taxi industry getting special attention.

MEC Makoma Makhurupetje said her department would speed up the process of issuing operating licenses to the taxi industry.

"Apart from servicing other transport services, the department is servicing 127 taxi associations with 7 789 registered members operating 10 690 taxi vehicles operating licenses," she said.

In an effort to assist the taxi industry, the department has put aside R5 Million for the Limpopo Taxi Council in an effort to assist the industry with the administration and transformation."

She said the department remained committed to working with the industry and following consultation with SANTACO and other stakeholders, the issue of high impound fees was raised.

"I'm busy finalising a plan of consultations with the aim of reviewing the impound fees. We also hope to convene a taxi indaba during October transport month as part of the measures to strengthen this sector but also for the purpose of looking into a variety of challenges," she said.

Some of the identified challenges are over route disputes, taxi violence, the issue of hitchhiking, operating permits and accessibility of departmental service points.

Makhurupetje also spoke about plans to improve taxi rank infrastructure across the province. She said the Thohoyandou Intermodal Facility which was built at R260 million will be completed in the first quarter of the 2018/19 financial year.

She further unveiled plans to stabilise the Gateway Airport Authority Limited.

"GAAL over the past few years



MEC Makoma Makhurupetje. Picture: Lebogang Makwela / Visual Buzz SA

had four boards of directors and four different CEOs at different times. The department with the assistance of Provincial Treasury has now taken charge of the situation and is well on the way of stabilising GAAL. A new board of directors has been appointed for three years," Makhurupetje said.

She said the aim was to develop GAAL into a self-sustaining entity that contributes to economic development of the province. Government will inject R53 Million into the entity.

"During the financial year, we will be transferring an amount of R43.4 Million to the entity in order for it to fulfil its mandate. In the main, these funds are allocated to manage and maintain the operations of Polokwane International Airport. R3 Million is budgeted for maintenance of runways, taxiways, landing lights and flood lights," she said.

The department will also embark on skills development with 250 unemployed youth expected to be absorbed into Traffic Law Enforcement. The automotive repairs and maintenance will absorb 12 young people.

Makhurupetje announced that the budget would increase over the next three years. For 2019/20, the budget will be R2,199 billion going up to R2,327 in 2020/21. The bulk of the funds will go to transport operations.

### NOTICE OF BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SIYATHEMBA 20MVA 88/22KV SUBSTATION AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF DIPALESENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY IN MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

04 APRIL - 04 MAY 2018

Notice is hereby given in terms of Regulation 41 (2) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations of December 2014 (as amended), published in terms of Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) for the purpose of applying for Environmental Authorization (EA) for the aforementioned project.

#### NATURE OF ACTIVITY

Dipaleseng Local Municipality proposes the development of 88kV Siyathemba substation and associated infrastructure in order to meet electricity demand in the area. The proposed development triggers listed activities of listing notice 1, activity 11 (i) of the EIA Regulations.

#### LOCATION

The proposed development will be located on Farm Vlakfontein 566 IR Portion 5 within the jurisdiction of Dipaleseng Local Municipality in Mpumalanga Province

#### NAME OF APPLICANT

Dipaleseng Local Municipality

#### NAME OF CONSULTANT AND CONTACT

In order to register as an Interested and Affected Party or to submit your comments relating to this project, contact us through any of the details below within the time frame indicated above.

NSOVO ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING	
Contact:	Rejoice Aphane
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Please quote Reference Number (F001-18) in all correspondence.



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