

19 May 2019

From: Kwena Mokwena (curator - Creative Team) and  
Coco Merckel (producer – Creative Team)

Att: Bafo Nguqu, Dede Ntsoelengoe, Siphon Msomi, Itumeleng  
Makwela, Ntozelizwe Talakumeni, Jama Mbatyoti, Ntando  
Mbatha, Thulani Mabaso, Grant Shezi, Dumisani Mwandla.

CC: Dr Moleboheng Mohapi, Pascall Taruvinga and Mava Dada

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you once again for meeting with the Creative Team to  
discuss the  
envisaged exhibitions Master plan for the Maximum Security  
Prison (MSP).

The following people were present in the meeting: Thulani Mabaso,  
Itumeleng  
Makwela, Ntozelizwe Talakumeni, Dumisani Mwandla and Dede  
Ntsoelengoe.

The Master plan was copied and exhibited in the informal meeting  
room used by  
the Prison Guides. The meeting of the 15<sup>th</sup> of May was held to  
discuss feedback

and suggestions to the Master plan and to discuss their consent to SAHRA granting a permit for the proposed work to take place in the MSP.

The Prison guides present raised different issues. There was view that the EPP's working in the MSP were not recognised formally as Ex Political Prisoners, their status is that of an 'ordinary worker' and therefore, they had no authority, or status to endorse any plan that have to do with SAHRA.

There was a also a view that EPP's do not agree on all things and they are not represented similarly by the different bodies. It was stressed that RIM should actively inform the broader EPP community about its plans to improve the MSP on an on-going basis. This is particularly important for the diverse voices needed to cover the different periods. The work of the Creative Team on the Memorialisation Project should be shared with across the country. The Prison Guides represent a small group and they do not speak for everyone, but their voice and perspective is important. They are the living link with the past and should inform how the story of the Prison is told and experienced by visitors.

In addition, the following issues were raised:

- Although the group cannot give the permission for SAHRA to grant the permission or not. They urged the Creative Team to refer to the reference group materials and use them as the base of information that should guide the exhibitions.
- The prison guides should be consulted when changes (big or small) are being made. The variable paint of section D was raised as an example. The *blues* do not correspond. RIM should consider using EPP's when executing restoration work.
- There was general agreement that the work of the Prison guides would be made easier and more interesting if the different spaces were interpreted properly with objects. "I am tired of speaking to an empty prison. "
- There was a deep concern about the disintegration of objects and buildings. The group emphasised the importance of making sure that objects and buildings do not deteriorate any further.
- The Heritage department should augment their interpretive capacity so that the work currently being done by Kwena and Coco, be built into the skills sets of the department.
- There was a shared sense of urgency in the group about the need to 'fix' the prison.
- The possibility of a meeting between the Prison Guides, the Creative Team and SAHRA was welcomed as this will create an open communication

The Creative Team, thanked the EPP's for their time and promised to prepare this memorandum as a record of the discussions held. It was also proposed that the Creative Team be given a slot in the monthly meeting of the prison guides to give regular updates.

Over and above the discussions held with the EPPs, one on one interactions with different EPPs raised concerns like:

- The placing of interpretive text signage at Murrays Harbor showing separation of toilets for blacks and whites during prison times.
- The dereliction of heritage property strewn around the island
- It was also proposed that “Die Merrie” be exhibited to show the punishment suffered by prisoners which is currently absent.