

PRESS CONFERENCE HELD AT THE NEW MENTAL HOSPITAL ON FRIDAY, 7 APRIL 2017

HOD of the Department of Roads and Public Works

Acting HOD of the Department of Health

Senior Managers present

Members of the media

Ndyanibulisa nonke

Good morning, Goeie môre, Molweni, Dumelang

Ladies and gentleman, it is the objective of this press conference to clearly communicate the current status of the construction of the New Mental Health Facility and to outline the way forward.

BACKGROUND

During 2004 a decision was taken to build a fully functional Mental Health facility catering for the needs of the mentally ill patients within the Northern Cape Province. The decision was also taken in response to the burgeoning capacity of the current West End Hospital for the mentally ill that could not and still cannot cope with the growing influx of mental health patients

Vista Park / Joh Arch JV was appointed as the main building contractor for the construction of the Hospital during September 2005. The contractor experienced many challenges and was not able to stick to the planned construction program. As a result of

this, during December 2009 it became clear that Vista Park/Joh Arch JV was not in a position to complete the project successfully and their contract was terminated.

This led to a protracted court challenge by Vista Park/Joh Arch which prevented the procurement of the new contractor to complete project. This went on until late 2011 when the Department enforced the termination of Vista Park/Joh Arch JV and appointed a new contractor, namely Inyatsi Construction Pty Ltd, a company based in Gauteng to complete the incomplete work - consequently the project commenced during January 2012. A few challenges arose right from the beginning as the contractor discovered serious quality issues on the work performed by Vista Park/Joh Arch JV. In some instances the partially completed facility had no foundations, crooked walls, manholes dug in the middle of the building etc. An audit was conducted on the semi-complete structure in order to quantify these defects and to perform remedial work.

During 2014 Mota-Engil bought out the controlling stake of Inyatsi Construction Pty Ltd and renamed the company Mota Engil Construction South Africa (MECSA).

CHALLENGES

Ladies and Gentlemen, the construction of this facility brought about several challenges. For quite some time the incomplete building was subjected to rain and other negative weather conditions for prolonged periods. As a result the contractor was required to do the audit on the building before commencing with the actual construction. This was to determine the quantity of damages (many of which proved to be hidden and not easily identifiable) as well as the quality of works of the previous contractor, which later led to the demolishing of substandard work.

Since the appointment of the first contractor till 2012 the Pharmacy Act and the prescribed norms and standards for Mental Facilities changed, giving rise to changes in the initial design. The National Department of Health (NDOH) via the Department of Roads and Public Works (DRPW) had to place 17 of the 35 blocks on hold pending redesigning of these blocks. The spate of wage strikes which took place on site and in

the steel industry also caused frustrations pertaining to the regarding a lack of material. The dire lack of trained and qualified artisans in the province means that we are competing against other contractors and ongoing construction projects.

PROGRESS TO DATE

The Department of Roads and Public Works has signed an addendum with Mota-Engil Construction South Africa (Pty) Ltd, the main contractor, extending the date for practical completion to the end of 2017. The financial completion in terms of expenditure amounts to 85% with a current average number of 300 persons employed on site. The contractor has completed 97 % of all the wet work trades with the final 3 % set to be completed. The Mota-Engil Construction South Africa (Pty) Ltd management has expressed their confidence in completing the project by the end of 2017.

COMMITMENT

We acknowledge that this is one of the most challenging projects that we have ever implemented in the province; but the Department of Roads and Public Works in partnership with the Department of Health remain committed to complete the construction of this facility. All previous outstanding payments have been made by the Department of Health. The Department of Roads and Public Works is closely monitoring the contractor on their progress on a weekly basis to ensure completion by end of 2017. Over the last number of months a Joint Management Committee Team (JMC) has been established to ensure that there is adequate senior oversight on the project. In addition physical verification is done prior to the payment approval and confirmed by the respective consultants and Quantity Surveyors.

We comprehend the need and the high demand for specialized mental health care in the province. In alignment with the South African Constitution and Human Rights Commission we firmly believe that each and every patient needs to have access to health amenities including mental health care; hence the successful completion of this

project will enable government to deliver these services to the people. As government we remain focus to circumvent any future challenges which might arise.

SINKHOLE

Members of the Media, allow me to utilise this platform to provide a status update regarding the sinkhole just outside Danielskuil. Nature, through the phenomenon of a sinkhole once again illustrated how the combination of dolomite and stormwater can cause extensive damage. The closure of the road between Danielskuil and Kuruman was essential; as this ensured that we had no fatalities or any injuries. We would like to acknowledge the cooperation of all our road-users in making use of the detour road via Postmasburg.

The contractor which was appointed by the Department of Roads and Public Works has completed the temporary gravel bypass road which is approximately 1 kilometer long. Today we officially open the bypass road to divert traffic around the affected area.

The findings of the geologist report included the identification of a safe temporary bypass route and further stipulated the work required to rehabilitate the sinkhole. Road users will be able to use the bypass while the rehabilitation of the sinkhole continues. It is anticipated that the bypass will be operational for an eight months construction period. We believe that the temporary bypass road would be an economic relieve for especially small businesses reducing their traveling time taking into account the increasing fuel price.

I thank you
