**Report of the Portfolio Committee on Transport on a Petition from Residents in Okhahlamba Local Municipality, Kwazulu-Natal Province, Calling on the Assembly to Investigate the State of Roads in their Communities (Mr R A Lees), Dated 31 May 2022**

The Portfolio Committee on Transport (the Committee), having considered the petition from residents of Okhahlamba Local Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal province on 22 March 2022 and having conducted an oversight visit to the municipality on 22 April 2022, reports as follows:

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The prime mandate of the Committee is governed by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (“the Constitution”), in respect of its legislative and oversight responsibilities as public representatives. It is required to consider legislation referred to it and consider all matters referred to it in terms of the Constitution, the Rules of the National Assembly (NA) or resolutions of the House. It is also required to respond to matters referred to it by Government within its mandate.

1. **BACKGROUND TO THE PETITION**

**2.1 The petition**

The petition was referred to the Committee in the Announcements, Tablings and Committee Reports (ATC) of 23 September 2021. It was signed on 10 September 2021 by residents, the Tourism, Hospitality and Associated Industry Sectors, the Taxi, Transport and Associated Industry Sectors and the Agriculture and Associated Industry Sectors of Okhahlamba Municipality. The petition stated the following:

* The condition of the roads in the municipal jurisdiction is alleged to be in a generally shocking state and cause serious damage to motor vehicles as well as the economy of the municipality. The roads affected include, but were not restricted to the following: Roads in the Towns of Bergville and Winterton, D119, D53, R74 (Alternative Road to the N3 Van Reenen Pass), R160, R600, R606, P288, P294, P304 and the P519.
* The deplorable and unsafe conditions of roads in Okhahlamba have been raised with the various spheres of Government on various occasions over the years, including the local municipality, and the Provincial and National Department of Transport.
* That the conditions of the roads in Okhahlamba are generally in a shocking state and cause serious damage to not only motor vehicles, but to the economy of the municipality and that the dilapidated roads are negatively effecting the functioning of the community as a whole.
* The pothole repairs, without proper road maintenance, were inadequate and took months to be repaired. The quality of the repairs done by incompetent contractors was inadequate.
* The roads denigrated to such a condition that normal maintenance will not fix the current state of the roads.
* The poor condition of the roads negatively affects the status of the UNESCO Okhahlamba park as a tourist destination and the local tourism and hospitality industry. The poor condition of the roads exponentially increased the cost of business for the agriculture sector and prohibits further investment and job creation in a region where joblessness is above the national average.
* The road conditions affect the daily transportation of residents to their work places and children to schools.

The petition requested that:

1. The lack of progress in this matter be noted as well as the potential devastating effects it has for the livelihoods and lives in Okhahlamba,
2. The petition mentioned that they are left with no other option but to seek the urgent intervention of National Government on the issue within 21 days,
3. The petition mentioned that a lack of such urgent action will lead to them, as a collective, to seek other forms of relief that may include measures such as: i) Approaching the Courts, ii) Approaching UNESCO, iii) Any other reasonable action,
4. The communities within Okhahlamba therefore: i) Urge the Minister of Transport to act according to this memorandum, ii) To, within 21 days of this petition, provide high level feedback including implementation dates to the Community on a plan of Action to bring the condition of all roads within the Okhahlamba municipality back to a fully usable, and safe condition.

**2.2 Okhahlamba Local Municipality**

The Okhahlamba Local Municipality is a Category B municipality and part of uThukela District Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal. Okhahlamba is mainly a rural region made up of privately owned commercial farmland; smallholder settlements; the urban areas of Bergville, Winterton, Cathkin Park and Geluksberg; and three tribal authority areas. Bergville is a small town and is known as the gateway to the Northern Drakensberg. Approximately half a million tourists are attracted to the Drakensberg annually. Bergville hosts an office of the Drakensberg Publicity Association.

The area, with a population of 135 132, is relatively well linked through the network of existing provincial roads that run through the municipality. The main economic sectors are Agriculture and Tourism. The unemployment rate in the area is currently at 43 %.

1. **COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF PETITION: 22 MARCH 2022**

The Committee held a meeting on 22 March 2022 with representatives of the petitioners who gave the Committee a visual presentation of the state of the roads and shared the concerns of the petitioners on the roads. The delegation included the following representatives:

* Mr Alf Lees, MP - Parliament Uthuekela Constituency,
* Mr Thys J van Rensburg, Cllr - Uthukela District
* Mrs Megan Bedingham - Tourism Association Chair
* Mr Kenneth Themba Nkabini - Local Transport Operator
* Mr P Mhlambi - Local Transport Operator
* Mr M Hlonwane — Zwelisha Community Elder.

The representatives briefed the Committee on the content of the petition. The residents of Okhahlamba were concerned that the crumbling road infrastructure will impede their livelihoods and ability to provide for families. The poor condition of the roads reduced the viability of the Drakensberg and affected the Agriculture sector as it is dependent on a proper maintained road infrastructure to access markets.

The presenters gave an overview of the state of the following roads:

**3.1 The R74**

The R74 is the main arterial road that runs from Harrismith in the Free State (FS) through the towns of Bergville and Winterton onto the N3 and Ladysmith. The Oliviershoek Pass is vital to Tourism in the Northern Berg as Visitors from Gauteng Province and the FS access this part of the region via the Oliviershoek Pass. The Free State R74 road section of the pass was in disrepair from 2010 to 2014 after a Contractor was paid in advance and disappeared with the funds. The road was closed for 3 years and lead to the direct closure of at least one large hotel in the Northern Berg, and the reduction in operations of many others. The KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) local spheres of Government have been informed of the state of the road and their solution was danger tape placement on the road.

**3.2 Road to Cayley Lodge and D184**

Visuals were shown of the road to Cayley lodge and the D184 which have been deteriorating for some time.

**3.3 Economic impact of the poor road infrastructure**

The representatives further outlined the economic impact on the area caused by the state of the roads. Agriculture is a main economic driver in Okhahlamba. The fertile valleys in Okhahlamba produce far above average compared to the rest of the Country in terms of staple crops like maize and soya. All these farming operations need working infrastructure to get goods to market. The condition of the district gravel roads is of major concern as they become water logged during the wet summers as maintenance during the dry winter months are just not adequate. This leads to regular disruption when heavy trucks and farming equipment become stuck in mud pits.

**3.4 Intervention requested from Committee**

The Tourism Sector have been engaging with the local Okhahlamba Municipality since 2018 when a marked reduction in road conditions became apparent. Many letters were written to both Okhahlamba in its role as the local Sphere of Government and then also later onto the provincial Department of Transport.

The petitioners requested the Committee’s intervention in the Road Budget Provisions for Okhahlamba to address the perceived backlog on road maintenance and infrastructure and in terms of future road maintenance requirements and roads inspections, and to address the lack of action by the Spheres of Government when they were repeatedly informed of pending doom by residents and how to rectify the situation going forward. The delegation further requested that the Oliviershoek Pass to be awarded special status to both rehabilitate and correct the condition of the Pass seeing its national importance as an alternative to the N3 Van Reenen Pass, and its importance both economically and operationally, for the residents of Okhahlamba, especially those in the Northern Berg.

During this engagement, the Committee resolved to request a comprehensive report from the Department on the budget spent on roads in the municipality and on the reasons for the current state of the roads as per the petition. A further request will be made to the Provincial Department responsible for Roads in KZN as well as the Okhahlamba Municipality for a detailed report on the budget for road maintenance and how it spent the allocation.

The Committee further resolved at the meeting to conduct an oversight visit to Okhahlamba Local Municipality in April 2022 to assess the conditions of the roads.

1. **OVERSIGHT VISIT TO OKHAHLAMBA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY: 22 APRIL 2022**

The Committee received a short report from the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Department of Transport on the following roads on 22 April 2022 (and did on-site inspections to some of these roads): D119, D53, D184, R74 (alternative road to N3), D160, R600 (P181 and P212), R616, P288, P294, P304 and P519. During the visit the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Department of Transport gave a status update on the affected roads (excluding the D184 as it was not explicitly mentioned in the petition), and the budget for road maintenance under the Okhahlamba Local Municipality over the past 4 financial years.

**4.1 Status Quo Update on the Roads from the Kwazulu-Natal Department of Transport**

**4.1.1 R74 (P11 alternative road to N3)**

This section of Main Road R74 starts from the Frere area and traverses through Winterton towards the Bergville (P11, P30, P288, P340) intersection. It is 45.5 km in length. The road serves as an access road to the Winterton community, tourism sector and the farmers. The section between Winterton and Bergville starting at 10km to 33km is on the plan for rehabilitation in the 2022/2023 Financial Year. However, it is planned to be constructed over a period of 24 months.

Tenders for Blacktop Patching for the section between 33km to 45km closed on 1 March 2022 and they are currently at evaluation phase with the Bid Evaluation Committee (BEC).

**4.1.2 R74 (P340 alternative road to N3)**

Main Road P340 (R74) extends from the intersection with Main Road 30 (P30) in Bergville Town and traverse in a north-westerly direction towards Oliviershoek Pass, Little Switzerland, leading to Sterkfontein Dam and ending at the Free State Border. The area through which the road passes is situated in a wet climatic region with a very rugged steep terrain and traverses’ numerous valleys. This region often experiences abnormal rainfall up in the mountains, which implies high probability of earth saturation leading to scouring, erosions and incidentally slippage failures to occur. As such, an extreme high rainfall was recorded for periods of January and February 2022. These types of damages on such a strategic road impose a negative impact to the tourism sector, hospitality sector, agriculture and other businesses as this section through Okhahlamba region form an integral part of major arterial between KZN and FS provinces.

The route is often utilised as an alternative route if there is an incident or accident on National Route 3 (N3) between Harrismith and Ladysmith. Even during a normal day, the R74 is heavily trafficked by trucks and passenger vehicles since it provides direct vehicular access from the FS to KZN province. The provincial road network is classified as per TRH 26: South African Road Classification and Access Management Manual (RCAM). Thus, Main Road P340 has been classified as a Class R1, high order route, as per RCAM.

* Damaged Armco

There are a few collapsed Armco pipes on Road P340; namely at 13km, 15km, 17km and 33km which will require replacement. Assessments were done and a decision was taken that the internal team will be utilised to replace these existing pipes with precast concrete pipes. Anticipated commencement of construction is in May 2022. However, the existing Armco pipe culvert at 32.5km exhibits irreparable damages, resulting in half of the roadway being washed away. It was proposed that a new in-situ concrete box culvert is designed and constructed as a replacement. Preliminary hydraulic calculations and hydrological considerations suggested a double celled 2.4m x 2.4m major box culvert.

A submission has been approved for a 5.26 Delegation emergency contract. Delays were experienced to source a contractor because of the Order from the Constitutional Court halting all procurement from 16 February 2022. However, the Head of Department sent out a circular on 23 March 2022 advising to continue with procurement. The emergency draft document has been approved by the Bid Adjudication Committee (BAC) and pre-selected service providers to quote will be invited on 26 April 2022.

* Slippage Failure

There is a slippage failure which has developed at 33.5km which starts from shoulder edge and extended longitudinal and subsequently across the roadway up to the road reserve fence. More than 2/3 (two thirds) of the roadway suffered wide cracks of approximately 15 - 30mm and settled for almost 200mm. The affected road length is approximately 50m. As an interim safety measure, the department has implemented the traffic calming speed humps and road signs at 33.5km. A geotechnical engineer performed investigations on 18 March 2022 in order to establish what the cause of the damage is. Coring was done for testing; The geotechnical report is expected by end of May 2022.

* Rockfall at 35Km

There are some slope stability issues on the cut faces at 35km. Cut faces comprise of variable soil types where hard layers sandwiching highly erodible material. In terms of previous treatment; soil nails were employed for harder material and isolated guniting (a process used in construction for slope stabilization and various other rehabilitation purposes in the construction of retaining walls, water retaining structures and concrete repairs) for softer material. These old treatments seem intact, except damaged guniting resulting from rocks falling from top of cutting. A geotechnical engineer performed investigations on 18 March 2022 in order to establish what the cause of the damage is. The Department was still waiting for a report in order to continue with a solution for this.

**4.1.3 D119**

District Road D119 is under Private Land Ownership in ward 10 under the Okhahlamba Local Municipality, in the uThukela District Municipal area. D119 is 17km in length. This road serves as an access road for the Cavern Hotel and the Royal Drakensburg Primary School. There are two damaged structures on the road which are located at Chainage 10+200, and Chainage 16+800. The structure at Chainage 10+200 has been repaired using the deviation procurement strategy. Gabions were constructed and pipes were re-inserted. At km 16+800 a temporary measure has been done in the interim to allow access for the residents at The Cavern Hotel by the residence. A contractor has been appointed to do permanent repairs on this structure, however they have failed to commence with construction. The contractor has under quoted to undertake the work; however, he committed to do the work within his price by accepting the appointment offer. The next plan to remedy this situation would be to terminate the contract and re-advertise to source a new contractor. The process is anticipated to start on 1 May 2022.

**4.1.4 D53**

District Road D53 is under Private Land Ownership in ward 14 under the Okhahlamba Local Municipality, in the uThukela District Municipal area. D53 is 8.4km in length. This road serves as an access road for the Bell Park Dam Community. The road patching was done in 2018 under an annual contract, however, the application to Head Office will be done to request road rehabilitation and consider for the 2022/23 financial year. Maintenance will be done using the internal team as an interim measure.

**4.1.5 D160**

District Road D160 is under Private Land Ownership in ward 14 under the Okhahlamba Local Municipality, in the uThukela District Municipal area. D160 is 1.9km in length. This road serves as an access road to Cedarwood Chocolate and Coffee shop. The application to Head Office will be done to request road rehabilitation and consider for the 2022/23 financial year. Maintenance will be done using the internal team as an interim measure.

**4.1.6 R600 (P181)**

This section of Main Road R600 starts from the intersection at National Route 11 (N11) and traverses towards Winterton. It is 36.4km in length. The road serves as an access road to the Winterton community, tourism sector and the farmers. The internal team performed pothole repairs on 14 February 2022 and finished patching the remaining potholes on 4 March 2022. An interim measure to patch using hot mix is anticipated to commence in June 2022 while a plan to rehabilitate the road is being applied for.

**4.1.7 R600 (P212)**

The road is 36km in length and starts from Winterton to Champagne Castle Hotel. It serves the tourism sector, farming and the AmaSwazi community. Area Office Bergville internal team performed pothole patching from 18 October 2021 until 29 October 2021. The team resumed pothole patching as from 7 March 2022 and completed with patching on 31 March 2022. The road also needs urgent attention in the form of rehabilitation. Head Office is currently conducting pavement rehabilitation designs. Construction will commence in the 2023/2024 Financial Year for a budget of R73.4 million each year. 34km will be completed over a period of 36 months. A contractor has been awarded to conduct Blacktop patching on Road P212 and is currently finalising returnable documents in order to access site. Anticipated site handover is on 28 April 2022.

**4.1.8 R616 (P30)**

The road starts from the N3 off ramp at the uThukela Plaza towards Bergville. It is 35km in length and services Hambrook, Acton Homes and the farming community. The Area office internal team performed pothole patching on P30 from 2 December 2021 until 30 December 2021. The team commenced with pothole patching and finished on 2 March 2022. At the P340/P30 intersection a quotation has closed. Delays were acquired because of a directive from Treasury to halt procurement processes as of 16 February 2022. However, the BEC has finalised the evaluation and anticipated award is on 5 May 2022. Procurement for blacktop patching is anticipated to commence mid May 2022.

**4.1.9 P288**

This road starts from Bergville town, through Dukuza and ends at Maphophomaneni Location. It is 45km in length and services both Amangwane and AmaZizi tribal authorities. The road has a blacktop surface which requires urgent attention. The internal team conducted pothole patching on the P288 between 0km to 36km as from2 August 2021. The team resumed patching on 24 February 2022 and anticipates completing on 3 March 2022. Tenders for Blacktop Patching for the section between 0km to 45.5km closed on the 1 March 2022 and they are currently at evaluation phase with the BEC.

**4.1.10 P294**

This road starts from Winterton towards Colenso whereby the first 7.5km is blacktop which requires patching. The length of the road is 23km in length. It serves the Winterton farming community. The road has surface failures on a couple of sections. The internal team performed patch regravelling on the P294 from 7.5km to 15km from 7 March 2022 and finished patching by 31 March 2022.

**4.1.11 P304**

This road starts from Road P340 and traverses towards Royal Natal Hotel. The length of the road is 15km in length. It serves the Obonjaneni community. The road has surface failures on a couple of sections. A contractor is currently on site to conduct blacktop patching. Construction commenced in April 2022. Planned completion is on 30 June 2022. Delays were experienced due to heavy rain in Bergville. The river changed course and caused severe damage to the approach at the structure headed towards the Hotel. Repairs to the approach are ongoing and are being conducted by the internal team.

**4.1.12 P519**

This road starts from Road P212 and traverses towards the Drakensburg Sun hotel. The length of the road is 3.5km in length. It serves the tourism and farming community. The road has a few surface failures. Blacktop patching was conducted in 2019. Maintenance will be conducted using the internal team as an interim measure.

**4.2 Budget for Road Maintenance**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Local Municipality** | **Objective** | **Total Budget** | | | |
|  | |  |  |  |  |
| **2018-2019 FY** | **2019-20 FY** | **2020-21 FY** | **2021-22 FY** |
| Okhahlamba | Special Maintenance | R359 745 | R239 213 | R3 100 000 | R2 030 000 |
| Supervision and Management | R10 408 526 | R14 229 763 | R680 576 | R16 770 576 |
| Zibambele | R13 500 000 | R13 500 000 | R13 500 000 | R13 500 000 |
| **TOTAL** | **R 121 603 482** | **R 146 134 601.84** | **R 253 280 576** | **R 101 750 576** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Local Municipality** | **Objective** | **Total Budget** | | | |
|  | |  |  |  |  |
| **2018-2019 FY** | **2019-20 FY** | **2020-21 FY** | **2021-22 FY** |
| Okhahlamba | New Infrastructure | R9 999380 | R50 142 147.84 | R169 300 000 | R1 450 000 |
| Preventative Maintenance | R18 368 138 | R5 301 809 | R27 600 000 | R24 000 000 |
| Routine Maintenance | R12 998 610 | R702 544 | R16 200 000 | R15 500 000 |
| Safety Maintenance | R55 969 083 | R48 519 125 | R22 900 000 | R28 500 000 |

1. **COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS**

Members made the following observations on the road site inspections:

* 1. **R74**

5.1.1 On route to the first petition site, members stopped at a fall-away section of road on the R74 in the Free-State Province side of the road next to the Sterkfontein Dam Nature Reserve on the side of the road going north (the dam side). This is a 2 lane road which is effectively reduced to a single lane at this point. The yellow barriers in place are very close to the fall away portion and there is a 10m crack heading north past the one barrier, which indicates that the road is deteriorating further and could fall away even more. The safety and warning signs to alert to this are inadequate. There were also a number of potholes along the R74 before going from the FS to the KZN portion of the road.

* + 1. Further along the R74 and just past the turn off for Little Switzerland, was the first stop along the petition road inspections. Here members saw a 20-30m section of road sinking in an almost triangle shape. The only warning signs or traffic calming measures are speed bumps 5m before the road slippage on either side. The road appears to be slipping downhill and this may be due to poor construction as well as tectonic plate and sedimentary basin movement of the earth underneath the road. There appears to be earth cracking and movement down-hill towards the nature reserve. The storm water drainage on the hill side is overgrown with grass. Heavy trucks have been barred from using the road with the use of road signage at the Bergville side, however, there is no law enforcement to enforce this. From the community members, the Committee was informed that the road was constructed in 2011 and that the current road damage already started and was reported in 2019/2020. There is no storm water pipe running underneath the road to direct water away from the road. The storm drainage in place appears to be insufficient for the slope of the hill next to the road. On the face of it, it appears that the road construction layers or components of the road structure may not be adequate for the vehicle loads using the road. This road is used by the tourism industry, farmers (grain and piggery), local communities and as an alternative to the N3 toll route, but the ban on heavy trucks means the farmers must use the roads via Bergville and the R616 to reach the N3, which is quite a long detour to reach Gauteng.
    2. Further along the R74 and just past the turn-off to Berghouse & Cottages, there is a massive fall away (sinkhole) on the left side of the road heading to Bergville. There was a stop/go system in place with no shelter or bathroom facilities for the 2 officials placed there to manage traffic flow. The concrete barriers near the hole were allegedly only placed at the site in March 2022. There is no storm drainage infrastructure next to the road visible, however, further down the road (away from the fall away) there is infrastructure but it has been overgrown with grass. The storm water pipe running underneath the road to allow for the natural water movement from the waterfall and stream near the road down into the valley was clearly not of a suitable material to handle the volume of water – this caused the pipe to split and water pooling under the road thereby causing erosion of the ground under the road leading to or possibly causing the fall-away. Looking at the natural hills near the road, one can see that the area is prone to erosion and greater care should have been taken in the construction of this road and water drainage used under and along the road. On the face of it, it appears that the road construction layers or components of the road structure may not be adequate for the vehicle loads using the road. This road is used by the tourism industry, farmers (grain and piggery), local communities and as an alternative to the N3 toll route, but the ban on heavy trucks means the farmers must use the roads via Bergville and the R616 to reach the N3, which is quite a long detour to reach Gauteng. There is also a further crack in the road for 5m from the fall away past the one concrete barricade and this indicates that the road may fall-way further. This road damage also allegedly started 3 years ago, has been reported but not repaired. (In the 2015 Google Street view images of the section of road, you can see pothole patching in progress.)
  1. **Road from Kwayima to Bonjaneni**

5.2.1 The road from Kwamiya to Bonjaneni is very poor and full of potholes. There are road side cracks and temporary dug out storm drainage. The road before Obonjaneni Primary School shows some cut away work to repair potholes, but due to the poor state of the road and further damage the cars practically drive on a gravel road. There is a contractor on site under a R4mil PRMG contract to only focus on storm drainage.

* 1. **R304 (bridge crossing Tugela River)**

5.3.1 On the R304 at the bridge crossing the Tugela River on your way to Rugged Glen Nature Reserve, there is another fall away portion of the road due to the bridge retaining wall falling away or having collapsed. This makes the bridge inaccessible for vehicles and prone to further water damage until it is repaired. This damage is alleged to have occurred following the February 2022 floods in the region. There are railings missing from the bridge and the road surface has sings of past pothole repairs. The road is closed with a warning sign erected by the Royal Natal Management. Vehicles wanting to access the reserve must use Hlalanathi Road.

* 1. **Road from Mazizini to Zwelisha**

5.4.1 On the road to and from Mazizini to Zwelisha, the entire road is extremely poor, with potholes and strips of road degraded.

* + 1. During a meeting with community members of Mazizini (Ward 9), members described how the degradation of roads prevent tourists visiting, leads to job losses and leads to them being unable to support communities. Roads are poorly constructed and never repaired. The roads have been poor since 1990 and communities struggle to get access to the clinic services, in some cases ambulance services refuse to use the roads. The community questioned how much funds were budgeted for road repairs as they do not see any road repairs in the area.
  1. **R600 from Winterton to Cayley Mountain resort**

5.5.1 The R600 from Winterton to Cayley Mountain Resort is also in a poor condition. This includes the D277 to the D184 which are full of potholes and strips of pushed up tar. Sections of the road have seemingly turned back into gravel roads and the delegation had to drive on the side of the road. It must be noted that these roads (D277 and D184) were not listed specifically in the petition.

* + 1. During interactions with community members, farmers and resort management, the Committee was briefed that there are 100 staff members and 300 possible persons in occupancy at the resort affected by the poor road conditions. The meeting was attended by staff, community members, farmers and resort management that use these roads daily. It is difficult to get to hospital or clinic services and burial sites via these roads. Ambulances cannot respond to emergencies due to the poor road conditions. Travel at night is very dangerous for guests and staff. As a major farming area, the Committee was informed that they cannot get deliveries to or from the farm to deliver produce. 34ton milk trucks are needed each day for the milk farmers in the area and these trucks cannot use these roads safely. The municipality did not respond to complaints regarding the road.
    2. D53 and D277 were dirt roads and were upgraded after residents gave cash to do sand sealing of many roads. The bridge gets cleared away after flooding with debris and the farmers must remove the logs themselves. With recent rains the area was blocked for 3 days. The area is the second most visited destination in-land and tourism is suffering. If guest hit potholes they simply refuse to return.
  1. **Non-attendance of visit by the Okhahlamba Local Municipality and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport**

Members noted the non-attendance of the Okhahlamba Local Municipality and senior officials of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport at the site visits as well as community briefings. It was disappointing that the Provincial Department did not send senior officials to attend the meetings with the Committee and more disrespectful that the Municipality did not send any officials at all.

1. **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee recommends that the Minister, through the Department, should ensure the following:

* 1. That the Department and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport report to the Committee monthly, from the date of adoption of this report by the House, on progress to fix the roads indicated in the petition;
  2. The Department report to the Committee when and which provincial roads are handed over to SANRAL, including, but not limited to, the date of the transfer, the length of road transferred and when projects will start to repair the roads;
  3. The Department and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport supply the Committee with information requested during engagements on when the listed roads were constructed, listing the names of the contractors that worked on the roads, if a road had two or more contracts issued – why this was needed and why the first appointed contractor(s) could not finish the project, the budget spent to construct and repair these roads during the past 10 years and the estimated budget to repair these roads;
  4. The Department and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport report on all petitions and/or complaints received from communities in the area on these roads for the past 5 years;
  5. The Department must be unapologetic in the manner in which it deals with PRMG grant recipients who clearly do not spend grant funds properly and must provide quarterly reports to the Committee on PRMG oversight specific to the KZN region;
  6. The Department must engage with the relevant authorities to ensure that law enforcement is stationed on the R74 to prevent heavy trucks from using the road in contravention of the road signage currently in place;
  7. The Department must improve the Inter-Governmental Relations with the KZN Department of Transport and the Okhahlamba Local Municipality to improve the road conditions of the roads listed in the petition, as well as improve the quality of road construction in the province;
  8. The Department and all other parties called/invited to attend meetings with the Committee must send the relevant senior officials responsible for the project under discussion to the meeting with the Committee.

Report to be considered.