**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**COMMITTEE ON COGTA REMINDS THE DEPARTMENT TO SUBMIT REPORTS NOTWITHSTANDING THE LOCKDOWN PERIOD**

**Parliament, Saturday, 9 May 2020** – The Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs yesterday received briefings from the Department of Cooperative Governance and Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA) on their Annual Performance Plans (APP) for 2020/21, and Strategic Plans for 2020/24.

The committee noted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, National Treasury has requested all government departments to reprioritise, and identify savings to be used towards fighting the pandemic. Based on that, the department will revise and resubmit its annual performance plan later to the committee.

The committee questioned the department about the feasibility of using the District Development Model by the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) programme which is aimed at fast-tracking service delivery, and stopping the tendency of working in silos of the three spheres of government.

This approach is necessary to ensure improved coherence, efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of government programmes. The approach must be used by all government departments for it to be effective at district level.

The committee heard that the establishment of the District Support structure for the provision of support to the district municipalities, has yielded some positive spin-offs in the form of improvement of performance by 41% by the historically poor performing municipalities.

The committee was informed that MISA which provides project management capacity to district municipalities, their support has extended considerably as they initially serviced 55 municipalities, they are now assisting over 100 municipalities.

The committee heard that the current MISA budget can only support the technical staff, and does not cover operational costs, and due to additional responsibilities that is required for MIG projects, an additional budget would be required.

The department was advised to relook at the appointment of Non-Profit Organisations who were contracted to manage, and implement the Community Workers Programme on site as there are some who are still under investigation. The committee said there needs to be systems in place to strengthen this programme.

The Chairperson of the committee, Ms Faith Muthambi, told the department that the communities need water now more than ever before. Furthermore, the committee told the department that it must work in close collaboration with the Department of Water and Sanitation to supply, install and erect water tanks in all the communities that require water.

Ms Muthambi reminded the department that, notwithstanding the lockdown period, the department still needs to submit its third and fourth quarter performance reports for the 2019/2020 financial year to the committee.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COGTA, MS FAITH MUTHAMBI.**