**EDIA STATEMENT**

**TRANSPORT COMMITTEE TO CONSISTENTLY MONITOR THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT IN THE YEAR AHEAD**

**Parliament, Wednesday, 3 February 2021 –**The Select Committee on Transport, Public Service and Administration and Public Works and Infrastructure today received a briefing from the Department of Transport on its 2019/20 Annual Report.

The committee heard from the Minister of Transport, Mr Fikile Mbalula, that the department received an unqualified outcome with findings for the 2019/20 financial year. The Chairperson of the committee, Mr Kenny Mmoiemang, said that going forward, “the committee will consistently check on progress on issues stemming from the annual report”.

For the year under review, the department received a budget of R64.2 billion and spent R63.9 billion, amounting to 99.5% of its available budget. The Director-General of the Department, Mr Alec Moemi, informed the committee that R10 billion had been allocated for the road to rail restructuring of its current model, which included funding for the taxi industry.

The department underspent a total amount of R324.3 million, translating into an under-expenditure of 0.5%. The largest underexpenditure was in the public transport programme. Of the R13.4 billion that had been allocated to this programme, the department had spent R13.2 billion (or 98.2%) by the end of the reporting period, indicating an underexpenditure of R238.8 million (or 1.8%). The compensation of employees was underspent in all programmes due to posts that could not be filled, something which impacted on the underspending.

The committee questioned the department on the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa) intervention strategy and was assured by the DG that as part of its turnaround, the board of Prasa has released seven senior officials on dismissals. The department also combed through the AG’s report and had handed over a nine-point action plan to the board to “clean up” and rid Prasa of rogue elements.

The committee also raised its concern with the department to look at how the Road Accident Fund (RAF) could be capacitated as it has a R59 billion deficit. The RAF also needs to be reachable by the public.

The committee also heard that the Giyani testing station has been closed since 5 January 2021 till today due to a staff member contracting Covid-19. However, the usual protocol is to close the station, sanitise and isolate those staff members who have been affected.  The department will investigate why the testing station is still closed and will report back to the committee.

One of the concerns that were raised is that going forward the department should look at the implementation of online renewal of car licences nationally.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT, PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE, MR KENNY MMOIEMANG.**