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| **RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS: PROGRESS REPORT ON AGRICULTURAL STATE LAND ALLOCATION PROJECT: PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: 09 FEBRUARY 2021** | | |
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| **No** | **Issue raised** | **Response** |
| 1 | **Is there any kind of training offered to departmental officials who are engaged in the process of agricultural state land allocation project?** | Yes. There was an induction and dedicated meetings to the Department officials on how the process was run including the tools (electronic, templates). |
| 2 | **How does the Department address conflict? - Individuals who are preferred versus those who are eligible to receive the land and those that are capable to utilise the land productively.** | The Department has established a Dispute Resolution sub-committee which deals with disputes. The use of the Land Rights Enquiries has also assisted in terms of identifying areas of potential disputes, and where necessary, refer these to the Dispute Resolution sub-committee. The process is fair, transparent and also taking into consideration inequality, poverty and unemployment. For those who are incapable, training and capacity building will be used to determine their training needs if their incapability is attributable to lack of or insufficient training. In the event that their capability is due to lack of development support such would be provided with start-up packs following the farm development support assessments. |
| 3 | **Under which programme does Mr Ivan Cloete’s eviction fall?** | Pro-active Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS). |
| 4 | **When is the Committee getting the full database to see how much land has been identified?** | Please refer to **Annexure A1** (the excel spreadsheet). |
| 5 | **Does the Department have a database of land for land reform and agricultural purposes registered in the name of Department?** | Yes. |
| 6 | **700000 ha farms: The Committee would like to know the status of these farms – whether they have been leased before, their size etc. Department to provide a breakdown of each farm.** | Please refer to **Annexure A1** (the excel spreadsheet). |
| 7 | **Is Gwatyu CPA recognised; if not why?** | The Gwatyu CPA is not recognized as they are not registered. They are currently recognized as a community. |
| 8 | **Why is Eastern Cape not reflected in the presentation? Can the Committee be given a comprehensive report in this regard?** | Eastern Cape is reflected. The question should be the Western Cape. The identified farms are part of the South African Development Trust (SADT) land. The identified farms are part of the South African Development Trust (SADT) land. Western Cape did not have any homelands or self-governing states. |
| 9 | **Intervention meeting with DM Skwatsha at Gwatyu: were Gwatyu residents’ part of the meeting? When was the invitation sent and are all Gwatyu residents included?** | The intervention meeting was an internal Departmental meeting held on 14 January 2021. The invitations were sent out from 09 February 2021. The invitees were as follows:   1. The Legal Resource Center (LRC) representing the Gwatyu Community/ CPA; 2. The Councilor; 3. Amatshatshu traditional authority; and 4. Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA)   The first meeting was held on 12 February 2021 and a follow up meeting has been scheduled for 19 February 2021. |
| 10 | **Who developed the electronic system for the allocation of state land; what was the cost and what are the Terms of Reference?** | The system was developed by the internal IT team and no costs were involved. |
| 11 | **How is the Department going to deal with people who are currently occupying the farms?** | The Land Rights Enquiry process was meant to address this matter. Out of the Land Rights Enquiry exercise, the Department was able to determine the rights of the people occupying the land. |
| 12 | **How is the Department going to address the issue of provinces that fall behind in respect to the allocation of state land?** | Support teams will be made available, to ensure that they move with required pace. |
| 13 | **The Department takes long to release farms and they end up getting vandalised – How is this going to be addressed?** | Through the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Land Reform and Agriculture (IMC) an Inter-Departmental Multi-Disciplinary structure has been established to deal with these and other issues as part of the Rural Safety Strategy. |
| 14 | **How is the Department going to make sure that the process can be trusted? Taking for an example the case of Mr Cloete as well as the one of Ntate Rakgase.** | The applications have been done electronically. An automated eligibility and scoring system have been developed. The approval committees involve external members, other than the Departmental officials. The mechanism that are in place, for example, the Land Rights Enquiry, Dispute Resolution and Appeals Committees are aimed at addressing issues such as the ones cited. |
| 15 | **Farm capacity in terms of being farmed; what are the conditions of these farms and what are the costs envisaged in order to make these farms viable?** | An Assessment tool was developed that encompasses many aspects of the farm including capacity, farm conditions (soil conditions, climate, general upkeep, etc.), requirements (Infrastructure and production inputs) and cost estimations.  The current costs provided in the presentation (slide 29) are for a comprehensive support per farm per province. However, the figure will escalate given the outstanding work. From these assessments, startup packages will be developed in line with basic needs of a farm. These startup packages cost will be lower than the comprehensive support cost. |
| 16 | **Which audit is the Department relying on in terms of allocating these farms?** | In identifying the farms for allocation, the Department followed the process below:   * Conduct a desktop spatial analysis; * Conduct a physical verification; * Conduct a desktop agricultural potential analysis; * Verification of State Land under claim; and * Verification Identified properties based on local Provincial Shared Services Centre (PSSC). |
| 17 | **Is there a comprehensive plan for land that is currently occupied?** | Yes, the attached presentation outlines the plan **(Annexure A2).** |
| 18 | **How much land is available for new tenants? The Committee needs to know.** | The land that is encumbered and land which is underutilized it will be made available for new tenants and that process is ongoing. |
| 19 | **Slide 22: “SARS compliant and exempted” Is this not making it difficult for people who are not working?** | The purpose of requesting potential farmers to be compliant with SARS is simply to ensure that those who benefit from Government business are also tax compliant.  However, this criterion is by no means meant to exclude those whom the project is targeting since many of those may fall within a category of those who are exempted. |
| 20 | **What is the role of the Steering Committee and what is that one of the District Committees?** | The role of the steering committee is to govern and monitor the delivery of the project. These are detailed in attached presentations on slides 9 and 10. The roles of the district committee is detailed in slide 13. |
| 21 | **What is the total number of applications received? What is the Department going to do with applications that are not successful?** | 43 997 applications received **(please refer to slide: 18 Annexure A2).** The unsuccessful applicants will be encouraged to consider other programmes offered by Government, e.g. PLAS. |
| 22 | **What measures are there to accommodate the Khoi and the San in respect to the allocation of land?** | The Khoi and San people are treated as part of the previously disadvantaged South Africans. |
| 23 | **What policy is used to evict people who are on the PLAS land?** | The State Land Lease and Disposal Policy is used to address the issues relating to non-compliance with lease agreements entered with farmers. In the event that there is a necessity to evict, the Department will follow the correct legal processes of the Country. |