**African Christian Democratic Party**

**23 May 2023

ACDP Parliament
Debate on Budget Vote 13: Public Works and Infrastructure
Speech by ACDP Deputy President, Wayne Thring MP**

 **ACDP wants R3bn EPWP programme to translate into meaningful and permanent employment for unemployed South Africans**

“Honourable House Chairperson,

The ACDP asserts that much can be said about this department regarding challenges at the Telkom Towers procurement process and the SIU investigation into corruption at the R85.7 million Jersey barrier wall tender, in Jozini. Time does not permit.

The ACDP has repeatedly said that DPWI is the largest property owner in the country, yet it produces some of the poorest outcomes in this area, particularly when compared to the private sector. If properly managed and run, this department could be less financially dependent on the taxpayer as it leverages on its property base.

As set out in the Government Immovable Asset Management Act (GIAMA) (2007), the DPWI is mandated to be the custodian and portfolio manager of government’s immovable assets. From 2012 to date, PMTE has been unable to fully implement Archibus, which is the development of a comprehensive asset register, a requirement from the Auditor-General. It is incomprehensible how this department, or any organisation, can function effectively, without knowing exactly what it owns, opening the door for corruption and the hijacking of government buildings.

While the ACDP acknowledges the work done by EPWP, in creating work opportunities, with its budget of some R3 billion in Programme 3, we have consistently said that this needs to translate into meaningful, permanent jobs for the millions of unemployed South Africans. Let’s look at plumbing for example. There are about 120 thousand untrained people in South Africa calling themselves plumbers, but only around 20 000 are qualified. The DPWI is mandated to address the lack of technical skills and management capacity, and properly skilled and qualified plumbers are desperately needed.

The ACDP has become aware of the lack of co-ordination of different departments to work together and implement some simple but crucial actions. Today the housing projects intended for the three under-utilised military airports in Cape Town which would provide homes for 67 000 households is mired in the apparent lack of policy coordination between DPWI, Human Settlements, Defence and the Housing Development Agency.

It is apparent that the Red Tape Reduction Program of the President, is moving at a snail’s pace because of policy red tape.

An alternate and caring government that provides solutions to the problems faced by its citizens is what is needed, and the ACDP is that alternative.”

**-ENDS-**