**Budget Vote 9: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
Hon. SA Buthelezi, MP (on behalf of Inkosi R Cebekhulu, MP)**

Hon. Speaker,

According to a 2018 Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) Report, “In 2009, Ministers for National Planning and for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation were introduced into the Presidency, followed by a consolidation of the two Ministries into the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in 2014.”

This means that this Department has been in operation in some form or the other for 13 years.

Let me remind the House of the vision of the DPME, which is to “Coordinate government, planning, monitoring, and evaluation to address poverty, unemployment and inequality”. This dovetails with the Department’s mission of “mobilis[ing] stakeholders and harness[ing] resources towards the implementation of the NDP”.

As this Department is located within the Presidency, one would assume that it should lead from the front, and be exemplary when it comes to its own planning, monitoring and evaluation efforts.

This is not the case.

#### For example, the Department’s own website – its point of contact for the general public – is horribly outdated. The section titled “Evaluations” mentions “A total of 38 evaluations are currently in the system, either completed, underway or starting and will be going to Cabinet during the 2014/15 financial year.”

According to the Portfolio Committee Report, **“**in each year over the medium term, the Department expects to produce 47 assessment reports”.

Which information is accurate? If it is the latter, why has the website not been updated for seven years?

#### According to its website, the Department is also responsible for citizen-based monitoring (CBM), which is listed first among the “Key Focus Areas”. The website states “The experiences of citizens – the intended beneficiaries of government services – are a critical component of measuring the performance of government and for the delivery of appropriate and quality services”. However, it seems that this critical feedback was only gathered up to 2016, which is the most recent report available.

#### Again, is this work actually being done? Either way, as the IFP, we have serious concerns about the way this Department operates.

#### There are many, many other examples of outdated information across the website – truth be told, one struggles to find anything current.

#### Yet, it seems that consequence management is non-existent. And this laissez-faire attitude towards achieving targets and goals means the DPME does not have a foot to stand on when it comes to monitoring outcomes set for other departments and entities.

#### Another prime example is the Outcomes Delivery Agreements. There are 12, with each linked to a “key focus of work between now and 2014”. Again, this is the most recent document available.

#### The Agreement for Outcome 6 is listed as “An Efficient, Competitive and Responsive Economic Infrastructure Network”, and was signed by the various Ministers on 29 October 2010.

The Agreement lists a Workstream on Energy, and in reference to “Governance and Reporting Arrangements”, it states, and I quote: “Ensure reliable generation, distribution and transmission of electricity.”

This Agreement was signed 12 years ago, with a deadline for 2014 – which was eight years ago.

As we sit here today, chances are very good that Eskom will plunge the country into darkness later today, bring the total hours of loadshedding for 2022 to 594 hours, which equates to 25 days without electricity.

#### One is forced to question the efficacy of the DPME, as this is but one of many deadlines that have been allowed to lapse, with no consequences.

According to the Portfolio Committee Report, **“**The main aim of the department is to address the country’s development priorities through the coordination and institutionalisation of an integrated government planning system.”

#### On paper, this does not appear to be happening. How is South Africa expected to meet the NDP’s 2030 goals, when over the medium term, it appears goals set for 2014 are yet to be achieved.

#### This Department needs to get its house in order, and consequence management needs to become the order of the day.

#### With deep reservations, the IFP accepts the Budget.