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Public Works and Infrastructure
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NDPWI OLD ASSEMBLY DRAFT FIRE REPORT

03 January 2022

Presented by: National Department of Public Works and Infrastructure

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1. Purpose

- The purpose of the presentation is to provide an update on the areas that are potentially linked to the fire incident that occurred on 02 January 2022 as indicated above.



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2. Progress On Restoration Project

Background

- A fire related incident was reported in the “Old Assembly” building in Parliament precinct during the evening of 16 March 2021.
- CoCT fire brigade was notified, and the blaze was contained during the early hours of 17 March 2021.
- Emergency procedures were followed, including the grounding of lifts, termination of electrical power and shutting down of the HVAC system to the affected wing of the building.
- As the incident happened after hours, no occupants were present, and no injuries have been reported.
- The final report was presented on 17 May 2021 indicating that the cause of the fire was ‘an electrical fault’ that no foul play was found by the South African Police Services.



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2. Progress On Restoration Project cont...

- When the South African Police investigations were concluded, the NDPWI technical Teams were then granted permission to conduct thorough assessments of the damages caused by the fire.
- Final reports with costs estimates were submitted on 30 May 2021 for the registration of the project and funding request.
- The approval process was concluded on 14 September 2021 and the Planning Instruction process commenced.
- The Planning Instruction was issued on 08 October 2021.
- To expedite the project implementation, the Regional Office decided to utilise the Departmental Professional team to compile the tender document to save time on the procurement of the consultants. The only consultant that was required is the specialist Heritage Consultant as a condition that was stipulated in the approval granted by SARHA.
- The project then needed to be added to the approved procurement plan before the procurement of the Heritage Consultant and Contractors can commence. The approval to add the project to the procurement plan on 29 November 2021.
- The Department issued a bulletin that all procurement must cease by 29 November 2021 to accommodate the festive period and the builders shut down. The procurement for all services will commence on 15 January 2022. All tender documents are ready for this date and the Department will explore avenues to expedite this process before this date. It was envisaged that the contractor would be on site on March 2022.



3. Fire Equipment Service Report

Sprinkler System

- After incident in March 2021, there was an issue with the water in the fire hydrants and fire hose reels. It was discovered that there was a leak on the on the lift shaft.
- The leaking and corroded pipes were replaced with galvanised pipe on 20 April 2021
- In 14 August 2021, there were leaking pipes in New Assembly. These pipes were replaced by 19 October 2021 (steel shortages in SA). 2 full lines were replaced and tested by 19 October 2021.

Fire Panels

- The system was rewired and tested.
- The gas supressing system was also reinstated
- On 21 December 2021 the fire panels were rest and were functional when the power was restored.



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4. Frequency of Maintenance

- The Department can confirm that all the equipment and all the buildings in the Precinct are regularly maintained and maintenance plans for the equipment can be summarised as follows:
- Electrical Distribution Boards: Annually
- Lighting Replacement as and when required
- Fire Detection Annually
- Fire Extinguishers, Hose Reels and Hydrants Annual service & monthly visual inspection
- Fire Sprinkler Annually
- Remrad Quarterly
- The pre-SONA 2021 inspection showed no irregularities with any of the equipment and the fire Department requirements were addressed adequately.



5. Security Report

- The Security contractor was called out to Parliament on 21-12-2021 due to a power outage in the CBD.
- The team attended to the access control and CCTV system to make sure that the servers were up and running for the DETEC Client PCs to make sure they have visual of all the cameras for monitoring Parliament and surrounds.
- Due to the outage, they found two video capture/graphics cards that were damaged on the video wall pc, this resulted in half of the video wall not displaying in the 100 Plein Street Control Room. However, the team ensured that the CCTV system was in full working order, displaying and alarming on the desktop PC monitors.
- This was reported to Captain Strydom and he acknowledged that the video wall would not be working to its full capacity.
- Unfortunately, when this incident occurred the supplier, who we use for technical and hardware support on the video walls were closed for their yearend shutdown period. The supplier comes out once a year on approval of quotation to ensure that the video walls are calibrated and aligned for SONA.
- From the day of the outage experienced, leading up until the fire incident on the 02-01-2022 the CCTV system was in working order. The Service Provider was/is on standby and on site during this period with no faults reported to us regarding the CCTV System.



6. Power Incident Report 21 December 2021

Tuesday 21 December 2021

- 07h11 Consultants informed that the standby generators were running
- 07h15 Dispatched a Consultant employee to the site to assess
- 07h20 DPWI Term Contractor arranged for a team to be dispatched to refuel the standby generators. ETA was given as 09h00
- 07h26 Advised Parliament IT of the risk to the data centers at National Assembly and 90 Plein Street
- 07h29 Consultant called DPWI FM to advise of the situation and request on site back up
- 07h38 Consultants called Parliament to advise of a possible problem with walk in freezers and fridges and requested they dispatch the catering team to assess
- +-08h00 Consultant employee advised that the diesel day tanks which are not atomically refuelled from the bulk diesel tanks had run dry for National Assembly, 90 Plein Street and Old Assembly (which shares a standby generators with NCOP and 100 Plein Street)
- 09h46 Advised DPWI (including Parliament and Presidency stakeholders) via e-mail of the situation including the fact that Generator Term Contractor had not yet arrived on site due to other work they were undertaking and not having another team on standby to dispatch.



6. Power Incident Report 21 December 2021

- 09h59 Advised DPWI (and others) via e-mail that Consultant were unable to assist further as Generator Term Contractor had not yet arrived. Access for Generator Term Contractor was arranged as they permits had expired and the keys for the standby generators were left on site with Parliament at Old Assembly V12. Consultant left the site. Various other calls were made to provide updates and or obtain information
- 10h24 Generator Term Contractor arrived on site various other calls were made to provide updates and or obtain information
- 11h56 Consultant called Captain Strydom of SAPS and was informed that according to the Belvedere House SAPS staff the municipal had been restored
- +- 12h00 Dispatched Consultant employee to the site to supervise the refuelling and ensure that the process to get the standby generators which had run dry functional was followed correctly
- 12h16 Advised DPWI (and others) via e-mail that the power had been restored and Generator Term Contractor was busy refuelling
- Included was the following update:
 - UPS – Parliament IT will assess them online and advise me of their status.
 - Fire alarms – GSIV are on their way to reset all fire alarms etc.
 - HVAC – James Ref. are on their way to make sure HVAC for NA and 90 Plein Street Data Centers, the walk-in fridges and freezers in all the buildings are all operational.
 - No issues were reported with respect to the fire alarms and HVAC after the reset was done.



6. Power Incident Report 21 December 2021

Wednesday 22 December 2021

- Parliament IT advised that they were still not able to access the UPS at NCOP and 90 Plein Street remotely. They were on route to the site and would advise.
- NCOP UPS was found to have tripped and Parliament IT reset it with telephonic assistance from the term contractors
- 90 Plein Street remained a problem and the term contractor was dispatched to assist.
- The network card on UPS 1 had failed and remote access was swapped to UPS 2. Parliament advised that all was in order.
- No further action was required with respect to the incident as all equipment was functional.



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7. Conclusion

- The Department has dispatched technical teams to provide support to the fire fighters on the facilities management aspect
- The second technical team (Engineers, Project Managers and Architects) will be responsible for the technical assessments and costs estimates
- The site remains inaccessible until the area is declared safe for further investigations and assessments



THE END



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