**National Assembly**

**Question No 1298**

**Mr T Mogale (EFF) to ask the Minister of Transport:**

By what date does she envisage will the (a) road connecting Verkeerdevlei with Thaba Nchu be tarred as this provides the shortest access to Thaba Nchu from the N1 and (b) R703 road linking the N8 with the N1 be fixed, particularly the pothole riddled section between Verkeerdevlei and Excelsior? NW1462E

**REPLY**

The matter was referred to Free State Department of Community Safety, Roads and Transport, since this road falls under their area of jurisdiction and have indicated that roads in the Province are prioritized based on the outcome of optimal resource allocation. For that purpose, procurement processes have already commenced for parts of this request.

1. The province would like to address the concerns regarding the maintenance backlog on the Verkeerdevlei to Thaba Nchu (N8-N1) road. We understand the importance of maintaining our roads to ensure safe and efficient travel for all citizens.

The province acknowledges the potholes on this section of the road, as it forms part of the provincial departmental Potholes Repair Programme under Provincial Road Maintenance Grant (PRMG) funds. The Motheo region has a weekly target of pothole patching in line with the Departmental Annual Performance Plans (APPs). This is aimed at ensuring the road is safe for road users at all time, while the Department is planning to perform rehabilitation for the entire road later in the year because it has reached its life span.

1. The advert for the section between Excelsior and Tweespruit closed in 31 January 2023 and is currently undergoing evaluation with an allocated budget of R25 million for the 2023/24 financial year and a provisional R45 million for the 2024/25 financial year. The budget will be adjusted based on bids received and approved. The anticipation date appointment of a contractor is expected by end of June 2023.

The province assures that the Verkeerdevlei to Thaba Nchu road is not forgotten, and it will be prioritized in the next financial year. The province is aware of the urgency of the situation will work diligently to address the maintenance backlog on this road.