



Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Parlement Western Cape Provincial Parliament IPalamente yePhondo leNtshona Koloni

Ref Number: WCPP 11/4/6

Report of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure on its oversight visits to the West Coast District to observe:

- Flood disaster infrastructure; and
- Flood damaged road infrastructure.

Flood disaster oversight visits commenced on 10 July 2023 in the in the Cederberg Municipality in the West Coast District:

The delegation consisted of the following members:

Maseko, LM (Chairperson)
Marran, P (ANC)
Sileku, I (DA)

Apologies

De Villiers, P (GOOD)
Murray, C (DA)
Klaas, T (EFF)

The delegation who attended the flood disaster oversight visits on 28-29 August 2023 consisted of the following members:

De Villiers, P
Klaas, T
Marran, P
Maseko, LM (Chairperson)
Murray, C
Sileku, I

The following staff attended the oversight visit:

Cloete, L; Senior Procedural Officer
Jones, S; Procedural Officer
Naidoo, W; Security and Facilities
Barends, A; Driver

1. Introduction

The 2023/24 Strategic Objectives of the WCPP linked to the Speakers' Priorities which impact on committees are as follows:

Priority 1: Building a credible WCPP; and
Priority 3: strengthening the core business.

The Standing Committee on Infrastructure, as part of its oversight mandate, conducted urgent oversight visits on 10 July 2023, 28 and 29 August 2023 to observe the flood damage to infrastructure in the West Coast. The Committee observed the damaged infrastructure in Citrusdal, Clanwilliam, Matzikama and Bergvliet respectively after which a briefing was held on the extent of the disaster and the budgetary requirements to rehabilitate the road infrastructure.

2. West Coast, Cederberg Municipality (Citrusdal, Algeria, Paleishuwel and Clanwilliam) Oversight Visit

The purpose of the oversight visit to Citrusdal was to assess the flood damage to the road infrastructure commencing with the main road in Citrusdal, and then proceeding to Uitkyk Pass, DR2184 in the Cederberg region, Algeria, Paleishuwel and finally concluding the visit with a site visit to the MR310DR1487 in Clanwilliam.

3. Overview

The Committee was met by the Cederberg Municipality's Mayor, Mr R Richards; the Municipal Manager, Mr G Matthyse; the Speaker, Mr J Hayes; Mr J van der Hoven, Portfolio Chair: Support Services, Ms L Venter; Ward Councillors for Citrusdal and Clanwilliam, Mr A Scheepers; Ms L Venter; Mr M Heins and the Ward Councillor for Citrusdal and Clanwilliam Mr F Kamfer. The Committee also met with the West Coast District Municipality Mayor, Mr R Strydom and the Matzikama Municipality Head of Department: Technical Services, Mr E Delpont; the Manager: Electrical, Mr R September; the Manager: Civils, Mr J Kotze; the Chief Financial Officer, Mr N Smit and the Acting Head of Department: Support Services, Mr A Titus. The Department of Infrastructure officials who were present were the Head of Communications Mr J Bakker; the Acting Chief Director: Regional Road Services and the Head of Roads: West Coast District Municipality, Ms D Van der Westhuizen.

This report highlights the challenges, findings, key issues discussed and recommendations stemming from the oversight visits.

4. Findings during the guided oversight visits

Heavy rainfall and flooding caused damages to road infrastructure across the Western Cape province. Disaster crews were deployed to respond to the flood damage caused by excessive rain to the affected disaster areas. The West Coast District was one of the areas that were greatly affected by the flooding. The Cederberg Municipality reported that the sites located downstream from the reservoirs and rivers were inaccessible when the rivers overflowed. The flooding resulted in the displacement of some of the communities. The most affected communities were those who reside in informal settlements.

Landslides in mountainous areas occurred due to soil saturation caused by the heavy rain as was the case in the Algeria Cape Nature Reserve. The flood damage to the road infrastructure in the nature reserve resulted in a negative impact for the tourism season as the area was inaccessible to visitors.

During the walk-about of the flood damaged infrastructure the Committee was able to observe Mr Andrew Brand's vehicle that was trapped at Paleisheuvel Road in Citrusdal due to unstable road conditions. The Committee was informed that the vehicle was one of many that was trapped at Paleisheuvel Road. Communities who resided in Elandsfontein in Cederberg were cut off due to the inaccessibility of Paleisheuvel Road.

Citrus farms next to the Olifants River were negatively affected as flood water washed away a substantial number of citrus trees due to be harvested.

During the oversight visit the Committee was able to observe the reconstruction of the road connecting Citrusdal to the N7, that washed away when the Olifants River Valley flooded. The Committee was informed that the repair for 1km of the road could amount to approximately R10 million.

The Clanwilliam Municipality advised the Committee that a full damage assessment was still underway, and that the extent of the damage was yet to be determined.

5. Key issues discussed

- 5.1 Mandatory evacuation orders for flood-prone areas were conducted. Residents affected by the floods, were relocated to the Rivier View Sports Hall in Rivier View and the Eendrag Community Hall in Wuppertal for temporary shelter.
- 5.2 Disruptions were experienced to electricity supply, water infrastructure, sewerage systems and telecommunication services. The South African Defence Force (SANDF) was requested to airlift Eskom maintenance teams into the Citrusdal area to restore the power and to assess the damage to the power infrastructure. The Municipality reported that Citrusdal was without electricity for a period of three days, Clanwilliam for a period of two days and Elandskloof was without electricity for a period of eight days. Water tankers were dispatched to provide drinking water to affected areas.
- 5.3 Gift of the Givers, the Municipality, the SANDF, the West Coast Disaster Risk Management unit, the Cederberg Fire Protection Association and Non-Governmental Organisations provided food parcels and blankets to areas that were inaccessible by vehicles.
- 5.4 Humanitarian aid was provided by three helicopters, specialised four-wheel drive vehicles and boats to some areas around Citrusdal that were cut off, as many people who resided close to the river indicated that they had lost their belongings in the flood.
- 5.5 The Citrusdal Non-Governmental Organisations and the Checkers soup kitchen provided soup to the affected communities. Asla, Liners, Malmesbury NGOs, Saldanha Bay municipality, Elandskloof farming communities, Wuppertal outposts, and Lambert's Bay Foods donated food parcels to affected communities.
- 5.6 The damage to the citrus fruit harvest due to the floods, also had a negative impact on the farm workers' income, job creation and fruit exports.
- 5.7 A disaster report was submitted at a Special Council meeting at the Cederberg Municipality. The council resolved to have the area declared as a disaster area by the National Disaster Management Centre and the Provincial Disaster Management Centre.

6. Resolutions/Actions

6.1 The Committee RESOLVED to:

- 6.1.1 Draft correspondence to the National Department of Water and Sanitation requesting that the Department assists the Clanwilliam Municipality with the clearing of rivers beds in the area;
- 6.1.2 Invite the National Department of Water and Sanitation to brief it on the application process for emergency funding by municipalities, the policy prescripts for accessing rolled-over emergency funding and the manner in which monitoring of the rolled-over funds are done; and
- 6.1.3 Conduct an oversight visit to the Matzikama, Cederberg and Aurora regions to observe the flood-damaged infrastructure.

6.2 The Committee REQUESTED that the:

- 6.2.1 Clanwilliam Municipality provide the Committee with a detailed breakdown of the emergency funds applied for by the Municipality to assist the municipality; and
- 6.2.2 Department of Infrastructure provide it with a detailed report on the application process for emergency funding.

7. West Coast Oversight Visit to Matzikama and Bergrivier

The Standing Committee on Infrastructure, as part of its oversight mandate, conducted an oversight visit on Monday 28 August 2023 and Tuesday 29 August 2023 to Matzikama and Bergrivier in the West Coast respectively, to observe flood damaged infrastructure in the areas. The visit was followed by a briefing at the Matzikama and Bergrivier municipalities.

7.1 Overview

The Committee was received by the following persons in Matzikama Mr J van der Hoven, Mayor; Ms A Job, Executive Deputy Mayor; Mr L Phillips, Acting Municipal Manager; Cllr. S Cornelissen, Mayoral Committee Member; Cllr. C Boks, Mayoral Committee Member; Cllr. C White, Mayoral Committee Member; Mr N Jonker, Acting Director: Technical Services; Mr R Saul, Acting Director: Community Services; Mr E Alfred, Director: Financial Services; Ms M Lakay, Secretary; Mr C Le Fleur, Councillor; Mr J Koopman, Councillor; Ms D Witbooi, Councillor; Mr J Muller, Councillor; Mr S Tshabalala, Councillor; Mr A Sindyamba, Speaker; Mr C Van Der Westhuizen, Councillor; Mr R Lakay, Chairperson; Mr R Whites, Manager Technical Services; and Ms D Wessels, Acting Director: Development and Planning. The officials of the District Municipalities, Mr D Joubert, Municipal Manager; and Mr K Louw, the Speaker attended the meeting as well. The officials of the Department of Infrastructure, Mr R Rykklieff, Departmental Communication; Mr W Moolman, Infrastructure Roads Engineer; Mr A November, Acting Director: Roads Programme Services and Ms R Tiry, Director: Regional Human Settlements Support, West Coast also joined the Committee. The members of the public in attendance as follows: Mr R Killian, Mr G Cronje and Mr S Coetzee.

7.2 Key issues discussed

During the oversight visit of the Troe-Troe Bridge, the Committee was able to observe the repairs made to the bridge and engage with members of the public regarding their input into the restoration of the bridge. The Committee was also able to observe the single pipeline that was temporarily installed on the sidewalk of the Troe-Troe bridge. The temporarily installed

pipeline was fitted to fill the reservoir and supply the distribution network with water. The guided tour concluded with a visit to the Mangaung informal settlement.

7.3 Troe-Troe Bridge in Vanrhynsdorp

The Troe-Troe Bridge is one of the main entry points to Vanrhynsdorp where residents gain access to their place of businesses and homes. Due to the recent flooding in the area the Troe Troe river burst its banks, this resulted in major structural damage to the Troe-Troe Bridge and the pipeline in the watercourse.

Farmers were cut off from the market due to the damaged bridge and tourists were deterred from staying in the area due to the water shortage and road conditions. Businesses that relied on tourism were negatively affected as tourism is their main source of income. The alternate dirt road leading into Vanrhynsdorp was also affected by the flood and was not favourable to be used by any type of vehicle. Locals continued to utilise the bridge, not observing the dangers of its hazardous condition.

Several businesses, organisations and members of the public collaborated with the municipality to repair the damaged infrastructure. Mr Deon Williams, the Technical Manager of Vanrhynsdorp and his team, the Vredendal Irrigation, PR Civils and the Vanrhynsdorp Community Forum collaborated to supply construction equipment and other resources to repair the damage to the bridge and part of the road infrastructure.

The Committee was informed that systems must be implemented to clear the riverbeds from the invasive plant species. It was encouraged that indigenous plants should be planted on the riverbank to ensure that the river does not veer from its course.

7.4 Damage to the main pump line and reticulation pipeline in Vanrhynsdorp

Damage was caused to both the main pump line and the main reticulation pipeline in Vanrhynsdorp, due to the flooding in the area. It was not possible to repair the pipeline in the watercourse as the flood water had not subsided. Businesses in the area and the Matzikama Municipality constructed a single temporary pipeline with a dual function to pump water into the reservoir, as there was a dire need for water in the area. An emergency pipe was temporarily placed on the sidewalk of the Troe-Troe Bridge as a temporary measure to repair the pipeline. The Committee was informed that the pipe would be connected to the bottom of the bridge to circumvent vandalism and future flood damage.

7.5 Water Services Infrastructure in Vanrhynsdorp

Vanrhynsdorp was without water for approximately a week due to the flood that washed away parts of the town's main water supply line. Aging infrastructure and a damaged water pipe aggravated the water shortage supply. The Matzikama Municipality was forced to ration water supplies to residents and approximately 33,000 residents and 17 towns were affected by the water shortage. The Vredendal and Vanrhynsdorp schools, clinics, hospitals, Early Childhood Development centres and the general community were all affected by the water shortages. Bottles of drinking water were delivered to schools, clinics, and residents in the area. The Committee was informed that two 30 000 liter tanker trucks filled the Vanrhynsdorp reservoir, and an additional truck was used to distribute water to the members of the community.

The project was projected to be completed over the next three years and would upgrade the town's water network. The funds formed part of the Water Services Infrastructure Grant to upgrade the water network services. The Municipality reported that the first phase of the project had already commenced and would be finalised by December 2023.

7.6 Mangaung Informal Settlement in Vredendal

During the oversight visit to the Mangaung Informal Settlement, it became apparent that environmental and infrastructural issues existed. The area was waterlogged with stagnant putrid water which resulted in a foul odour permeating the air. Members were concerned that the putrid water would pose health problems for the community should the situation be left unattended. Further concern was raised regarding an electrical box that was situated in the putrid water which could be hazardous for the area.

7.7 Pothole fixing in the West Coast

The municipality reported that all the town's road infrastructure had potholes. Funding is required to continue with the upgrading of the main roads. Businesses in the area collaborated with the municipality to fix the road infrastructure.

8. West Coast District Bergrivier and Matzikama Oversight Visits

The Standing Committee on Infrastructure conducted oversight visits to Bergrivier and Matzikama in the West Coast on 28 August 2023 and 29 August 2023, to observe the flood damage to infrastructure in the area. The Committee received briefings that informed of the damages to the infrastructure and the associated cost for the repairs.

8.1 Overview

The Committee was received by the Mr M Wessels, Deputy Mayor; Mr R Swarts, Speaker; Mr J Pedro, Traffic Services; Mr R Stander, Manager: Project Management and Building Control; Mr A Du Plooy, Councillor; Mr A De Vries, Councillor; Mr J Daniels, Councillor of the Bergrivier Municipality. An official of the Department of Infrastructure, Mr R Rykklieff, of the Communications department also attended the meeting as well.

8.2 Observations and concerns

The Bergrivier Municipality informed the Committee that they were experiencing flooding in all three of its major towns. The annual rainfall of 30-40mm of rain would cause major flooding in the area. This is due to the aged historical storm water infrastructure that requires upgrading. The cost to upgrade the storm water system would amount to R80 million. Storm water pipes were installed which channeled the storm water to the bottom of the town, but this resulted in flooding of the lower lying areas.

Challenges were reported regarding the management of the roads in the Bergrivier area with the limited budget.

8.3 Goedverwacht and Wittewater Moravian Mission villages in Bergrivier

The Goedverwacht Moravian Mission village is located on private land within a predominantly agricultural area. The village was established in 1889 as a Moravian Mission station. The farm is owned by the Moravian Church of South Africa and is held in trust by the Minister of Land Affairs for the benefit of the residents under the Rural Areas Act (Act 9 of 1987). The community has not been bound by any spatial planning act or land use ordinance in the past and, as a result, had limited government assistance with planned development. These circumstances have resulted in the village growing and developing informally in the Bergrivier Municipality. The village currently has six original thatched roof houses of which one was destroyed. The cost to repair the thatched roof is too expensive for the residents and therefore, the houses were left in disrepair.

Currently there is no legal system for registering individuals right to land that is based on shared use in a community. To establish individual rights, the land must be proclaimed as a township. The land should be formally surveyed and subdivided into individual land parcels before being registered at the deed's office. South African legislation has, in accordance with the Constitution, attempted to promulgate laws that facilitate social cohesion within communities by connecting them legally to their land.

There was no drinkable water for the community of Goedverwacht, this is due to the aging water and bulk infrastructure. The municipality in accordance with the Water Services Act (Act 108 of 1997) provides drinking water to the private Moravian towns Goedverwacht and Wittewater, at cost on request. All the households in the area have access to minimum water. All indigent households receive the first 6kl of water at no cost, thereafter a minimum tariff is charged.

The road infrastructure in Goedverwacht and Wittewater is severely damaged. The communities must walk to clinics and schools due to the damaged roads being impassable for vehicles to travel on. The municipality is not able to address the road infrastructure issues as the Municipal Finance Management Act (Act 56 of 2003) does not allow the municipality to work on private roads.

8.4 Porterville Voortrekker road and potholes on the road between Piketberg and Velddrif

The Bergrivier municipality informed the Committee regarding the deteriorating conditions of roads in the area. Voortrekker Road in Porterville is a provincial road that requires urgent upgrading. The municipality advised that no funds are available to upgrade the road infrastructure, and requests for assistance by the Department were futile.

Concern was raised, regarding damage to the bridge and road infrastructure caused by heavy-duty trucks that access the road between Piketberg and Velddrif. The trucks are from the Kathu mines in the Northern Cape. Truck drivers in the area utilise the detour via Piketberg and the Velddrif road to avoid the weighbridge. The increased volume on the road infrastructure has placed extra pressure on the road surface. The increased traffic has resulted in damage to the road surface. The design of the road does not accommodate for the increased weight and volume of the trucks. The municipality advised that the cost to upgrade 60 km of the road would amount to R36 million, and the cost to upgrade the bridge would amount to R150 million.

The Committee was informed that the high volume of heavy-duty trucks could increase as the mines in Kathu would increase their production. Residents in Bergrivier complained about the

noise pollution and the damage to their property caused by the increase of trucks that accesses the area 24 hours of the day.

The Committee advised the municipality to approach the companies whose trucks are utilising the B-roads between Piketberg and Velddrif and request that they provide funding as well for the upgrading of the road. It was recommended that upgrades to the weighbridge, should be done to regulate the traffic on the B-roads. A recommendation for the use of the rails system was recommended to use as an alternative means of transportation for the mining industry to transport the mine's cargo.

9. Resolutions/Actions

9.1 The Committee REQUESTED that:

9.1.1 The Bergrivier Municipality provides it with a full impact report of the damage in the area caused by the flooding; and

9.1.2 The Department assists the Municipality with finding alternative solutions to fix the roads in Goedverwacht and Witte Water.

9.2 The Committee RESOLVED to conduct an oversight visit to Witte Water and Goedverwacht Moravian towns and invite the West Coast District Municipality to assist with the challenges in the area.

10. Acknowledgements

The Committee expressed its appreciation to the Members, the Clanwilliam Municipality, a the Matzikama Municipality, the Bergrivier Municipality, ward councilors, officials from the Department of Infrastructure and members of the public for their participation in the meeting and oversight visit.

M. Maseko

MS LM MASEKO (MPP)
CHAIRPERSON: STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE

DATE: 9 February 2024