



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

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The Standing Committee on Finance Reports on its oversight visit to the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board office, dated 18 August 2015, as follows:

DELEGATION

Members of the Standing Committee on Finance

Joseph, D (DA) (Chairperson and leader of delegation)
Beerwinkel, CF (ANC)
Mnqasela, M (DA)
Max, LH (DA)
Uys, P (ANC)
Dyantyi, R (ANC)

1. Introduction

The Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board (hereinafter "the Board") office is located at Seafare House, 68 Orange Street, Gardens, Cape Town. The Board has been occupying the office since 2004. Previously the Board rented space in the old Reserve Bank Buildings in Adderley Street, Cape Town. The rental paid for the use of this building was in excess of R2 million a year, whereas the Board does not pay rental for the current accommodation at Seafare House. In 2004 there were 44 persons employed at the Board but this total has grown to 74 in 2015 as the Board has had to adapt to a growing industry. The matter of alternative office accommodation was first raised in 2010 and has been on the agenda with the Minister of Finance as part of the quarterly engagement between the Minister and the Board Chairperson. During the Standing Committee on Finance's consideration of the 2013/2014 Annual Report of the Board, it reported that the current office accommodation inhibits the growth of the organisation and the employment of disabled persons. For this reason the Committee undertook an oversight visit to the Board's office on 23 June 2015.

2. Overview of the visit

The oversight visit commenced with Mr Bennet, Head of Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board Licensing Department, leading the delegation on a tour of the multi-story office. Following the tour of the office, Mr Bennet briefed the Committee on the progress of discussions with the Minister of Finance regarding securing alternative office accommodation. Ms Lapoorta, Chairperson of the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board, briefed the Committee on the way forward in this regard. (See enclosed list of Board officials and members and Departmental officials who were in attendance).

3. Findings and Observations

- 3.1. The Chairperson holds a non-executive position and is therefore not provided with office space.

- 3.2. The Department of Transport and Public Works conducted an assessment of the office and determined that the office space is below the required norm, given the staff compliment. The Department advised the Board that there is dead space that could be optimised if an open plan office lay-out was used. The Minister of Finance subsequently facilitated a walk-about at the office accommodation in Dorp Street to provide the Board with an example of what an open plan office space would look like. The age of the building and the fact that it had been declared a heritage site however made it impractical to replicate this layout.
- 3.3. There is insufficient parking space for staff and visitors. The Board has until recently utilised the University of Cape Town Rosedale parking area but this is no longer available.
- 3.4. There is insufficient storage space at the office and documents older than five years are stored off-site.
- 3.5. One of the alternatives that is being explored is to extend a part of the building that has not been declared a heritage site. The Board will be engaging with the Department of Transport and Public Works in this regard again in a few months.
- 3.6. The building is exempt from certain building regulations because it is a heritage site. One example of such an exemption is with regards to accessibility to disabled persons. A person in a wheel chair is only able to access the building from the back entrance and the doorways are not wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair.
- 3.7. The Board has requested that their office remain within the Central Business District, so as to remain close to the key sites such as the Legislature.
- 3.8. Despite the age of the building it is still able to meet the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) requirements of the Board.
- 3.9. The Board office is not a walk-in centre and people visit the office only to submit applications or for scheduled meetings.
- 3.10. The Board has a server that stores data off-site. Daily and weekly back-ups are also conducted that are stored off-site on disks.
- 3.11. Over the past five years the Fire Department has conducted two walk-in assessments, where they determined that the office meets the minimum requirements for a heritage site. The last of these inspections was in 2013.
- 3.12. Because Seafare House is a heritage building, the Board is not allowed to utilise private contractors and all renovations has to be done by the Department of Transport and Public Works.
- 3.13. **During the tour of the office the delegation observed the following:**
 - 3.13.1. The location of the safe in which monies obtained during the closure of illegal establishments are kept;

- 3.13.2. The cramped space underneath a stairway in which the cleaning staff take their work breaks;
- 3.13.3. The location of the office space for the various divisions, such as ICT;
- 3.13.4. That the previous Chief Executive Officer's office was partitioned to make space for an additional meeting room;
- 3.13.5. That the Information and Technology (IT) server room is restricted to IT personnel;
- 3.13.6. That there are filing systems located within the different divisions, as the industry is largely paperwork driven; and
- 3.13.7. That there is damage to the walls in various office.

4. Recommendations

The Committee recommended that:

- 4.1. The Board undertakes a survey amongst staff to enquire about their opinion with regards to suitability of the office accommodation;
- 4.2. The Board request the Department of Labour, the Department of Transport and Public Works and the Fire Department to undertake an investigation and compile comprehensive reports with regards to the occupational health and safety of staff working on the premises, and the suitability of the office accommodation;
- 4.3. The Board request the Department of Intelligence to do an assessment of the risks associated with the premises given the sensitive nature of the documents that are kept and the work that is done on the premises;
- 4.4. The cleaners be provided with appropriate office space as a matter of urgency; and
- 4.5. Provincial Treasury fast tracks the process of ensuring that the Department of Transport and Public Works undertakes an accommodation cost effectiveness and efficiency option analysis.

5. Documents Requested

- 5.1. The Committee requested that the Board provide the Committee with the resolutions taken by the Board with regards to securing suitable office accommodation and progress on action taken to implement such resolutions.

6. Persons in Attendance

Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board

Mr T Arendse, Board Member
Mr H Malila, Board Member
Ms M Basson, HOD : Licensing
Mr R Bennett, HOD : Compliance

Provincial Treasury

Ms M Korsten, Chief Director : Public Policy Services

Ms C Horton, Deputy Director : Public Policy Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Joseph', is written over a horizontal line.

D JOSEPH (MPP)

Chairperson : Standing Committee on Finance

18 August 2015