

SPEECH

FOR MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS (28 JULY 2005) AS REQUESTED FOR
THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN
AFRICA (DMISA) WESTERN CAPE'S WORKSHOP
SCHEDULED FOR 28 AND 29 JULY 2005**

THEME:

**IMPLEMENTING DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN THE
WESTERN CAPE**

Mr Chair, fellow citizens of the Western Cape and honoured guests who are attending the second Western Cape workshop hosted by (DMISA) Disaster Management Institute of Southern Africa and the Provincial Government Western Cape.

It is an absolute honour and privilege having the opportunity to open this session and to share the Western Cape's viewpoint on Disaster Management.

Die Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Regering verbind hulself tot 'n veilige omgewing vir alle inwoners van die Wes-Kaap en dit weerspieël in die wyse waarop hierdie regering, met die hulp van verskeie rolspelers, suksesvol kan regeer op verskeie ramp-en noodsituasies.

Die Wes-Kaap Provinsie is 'n gebied wat gebuk gaan onder die aanslag van verskeie rampgefare, naamlik brande in die informele gebiede, bos en veldbrande, stadig stygende vloede in die Kaapse vlakke, wydverspreide riviervloede asook droogtes en dit is maar slegs 'n gedeelte van rampgefare wat die Wes-Kaap bedreig.

Sedert 2000 was daar verskeie groot gebeurtenisse wat rampbestuur se aandag en oorhoofse koördinerende regverdig. Voorbeelde hiervan is die:

- Groot bos en veldbrande in 2000.
- "Treasure" seeramp in 2000 en later ook "Sea Land Express" in 2004.
- Stadig stygende vloede 2001 in 2002.
- Vloede te De Doorns en Touwsrivier in 2002 asook in Montagu, Robertson en Swellendam in 2003.
- Treinongelukke naamlik Muldersvlei en Kaapstadstasie albei in 2003.

Gedurende Desember 2004 tot op hede was daar egter ook insidente wat die belangrikheid van rampbestuur beklemtoon.

- Die langdurige droogte toestande in die provinsie sedert 1998, wat 13 munisipale gebiede tans affekteer, is op 3 Maart 2005 tot 'n droogte rampgebied deur die Staatspresident verklaar.
- Die groot oorstroming op 22 Desember 2004 wat altesaam 11 Plaaslike Owerhede geraak het. Die vloede wat hoofsaaklik die Kaapse Wynland, Overberg en Eden Distriksmunisipale gebiede getref het, het grootskaalse skade aangerig aan infrastruktuur, hoofsaaklik paaie, brûe en grootmaatdienste soos water, riolering en elektrisiteitsvoorsiening. 'n Soortgelyke vloed het op 10 en 11 April 2005 die Overberg Distriksmunisipale gebied getref. Die gevolge was net so rampspoedig.
- Die Joe Slovo brand wat op 15 Januarie 2005 plaasgevind het, word nog steeds gekoördineer. Nagenoeg 3500 gesinne is geraak in hierdie geweldige brand en daar word nog steeds nood- tydelike huisvesting asook noodleniging aan sommige van die slagoffers van hierdie ramp verleen.

To ensure that the citizens of the Western Cape are safe, the Premier of the Western Cape, Mr Ebrahim Rasool has announced in his budget speech in 2004/2005 that the Western Cape will have eight development priorities namely:

- Building communities and families

- Developing skills of people
- Building strategic infrastructure
- Developing the Provincial economy
- Integrating economic and social development
- Coordinating and integrating service delivery
- Improving financial governance
- Improving the relationship between provincial and local government.

All this is done with one vision at hand namely: “To make the Western Cape a home for all” with an implementation strategy called “Ikapa Elihlumaya” which means “a growing and sharing Cape”. None of the eight priorities of Ikapa can be successful if we cannot address the disasters and risks our communities have to face on a daily basis.

To make sure that the Western Cape is in all aspects “A Home for All” it is absolutely essential that the safety of the citizens and visitors to the Western Cape is ensured. This is mainly achieved with the effective implementation of the new Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act 57 of 2002) which provides for the necessary solutions to ensure that human beings and their belongings do not reside in high risk areas, which makes them vulnerable to disasters. This Act became operational on 1 April 2004 for National and Provincial Government and 1 July 2004 for municipalities. There is a two year implementation period which follows the proclamation date, placing a huge responsibility on all three spheres of government.

Since 2000, the provincial approach towards disaster management has been re-engineered in line with the then Disaster Management Bill. The following basic disaster management principles are being pursued:

- The establishment of a Directorate for Disaster Management which will ensure that able and component Disaster Manager practitioners are employed to execute the function of disaster management in the Province. As from 1 April 2005 the Directorate is functioning under a newly established Chief Directorate which is now responsible for Municipal Infrastructure through the MIG programme and Disaster Management. The Chief Director is still to be appointed as the Head of the Disaster Management Centre, as prescribed in the Act.
- The development of an integrated disaster management information management system has received attention since 2001. The province has developed a Disaster Management Information Management System (DMIMS). The software programme is distributed to all 30 municipalities, all provincial departments and the security forces in the province. This programme is the first of its kind in South Africa and will be utilized as the information management and discussion-making mechanism to be established disaster management centres.
- During 2002, a macro risk and vulnerability assessment study was conducted in accordance with best practices in the field of disaster management in the world. This study was conducted by two universities namely Cape Town and the Free State. The outcome of this study has indicated the high-risk areas in the Province and will now lead the way for the execution of comprehensive risk and vulnerability studies in the municipal sphere.
- The establishment of the Provincial Disaster Management Centre in collaboration with the compulsory district and metropolitan centres. This project is to be launched later this year when the province will officially introduce its concept of an Emergency Management Centres. This is a concept where the traditional Emergency Services i.e.

ambulance, traffic and fire brigade will work closely together with disaster management in the establishment of emergency services call centres in the same facility where the disaster management centre is to be housed. This is a multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach and is based on the disaster management information management system already mentioned.

- Also a new approach is the Disaster Management Training, Education and Awareness Marketing (TEAM) programme, which is developed for the upliftment of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable communities in the Western Cape. This programme focusses mainly on capacity building in basic skills such as first aid, fire safety and prevention, home care and disaster management. This project will be launched with an initial roll-out in 10 pilot projects in the most vulnerable communities in this province.
- Lastly the Provincial Disaster Management Framework, that is legal requirement in Disaster Management Act, is already being drafted in collaboration with the University of Cape Town. This document is, however in the process of alignment with the National Disaster Management Framework which was only published on 29 April 2005.

As al die bovermelde inisiatiewe van die rampbestuurskomponent in ag geneem word, is dit duidelik dat “Rampbestuur” as ‘n baie belangrike funksie beskou word in die Wes-Kaap.

Die onlangse oorstromings en verwoesting soos veroorsaak deur die Tsunami in die Ooste en in Somalia, asook die terreur-aanvalle in Londen, is ‘n stille getuie van wat werklik verkeerd kan gaan as groot rampe ons tref en waarvoor ons ons self gereed moet maak.

Die Wes-Kaap het ‘n fondasie geskep vir die uitvoering van die wetlike vereistes soos gestel in die nuwe Rampbestuurswet. Ons het nou eers begin om die fokus te plaas op ramprisiko’s

faktore wat in die verlede nie effektief aangespreek is nie. Die groot uitdaging sal nou wees om alle vlakke van regering in te bind om deel te vorm van die nuwe benadering van rampvoorkoming, rampversagting en rampgereedheid eerder as om net te reageer op die gevolge wat rampe mag meebring.

Good luck with your deliberations over the next two days. Make use of this opportunity to make the Western Cape a safer home for all.

Thank you
