



treasury

Department of
Treasury
FREE STATE PROVINCE

2008 TREASURY MEDIA ADVISORIES AND STATEMENTS

DECEMBER 2008

17 December 2008

STATEMENT ON RECENT MEDIA REPORTS

Let me first and foremost express our gratitude to every media organizations that have heeded our invitation to this press briefing. I am elated indeed that this platform offer an opportunity to convey our message on the recent bad press we have received as the department.

This media conference is a clear demonstration that we have an open-door policy, that we value our diverse stakeholders, including our officials, that we act with integrity in everything we do. We remain committed to creating a sense of belonging amongst our staffers – a culture of collaboration and encourage team work amongst Treasury officials

In line with our open door policy – through our internal Izimbizo forum and other platforms, we listen to the problems of our staff. This, irrespective of their gender; race, or religious beliefs.

From next year we will be introducing an electronic suggestions box – called *Tips for Tate* where both our internal and external stakeholders can raise their concerns with the MEC.

We call on our staff and members of the public, including journalists to use this platform to raise their suggestions, concerns and grievances when we seem to be straying from the principle of good governance. We will ensure that every grievance no matter how petty – is taken seriously.

Through *Tips for Tate* we will find ways of letting stakeholders into our space, taking their pulse and letting them take ours.

We always encourage our staff to go beyond the call of duty in their mission of delivering services to our people.

I was therefore surprised and dismayed when I read an article published at the Volksblad of December 09 2008 – casting aspersions on the integrity of this department.

The article which was based on faceless sources' accounts, sought to tarnish the image of the department. The allegations reported in this article are factually incorrect and baseless.

This after I have personally, in my capacity as the political head of the department hosted a Media Networking session where we shared with journalists our vision and mission of fighting poverty, underdevelopment and inequality which continue to be the salient feature of our society.

As government our core functions is to push back the encroaching tide of poverty, unemployment and the pestilential threat of Aids. We are not in the business of corruption, and racial discrimination against any individual or institutions.

The ethos and vision of the Freedom Charter informed our policies of national reconciliation and nation building. We strongly believe in principle enshrined in the Charter that 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it'.

For the record we are not aware of any corrupt senior officials within the department and we will duly advice anyone who has evidence alleged corruption to contact my office, or law enforcement agencies including the Public Protector.

Corruption, ladies and gentlemen, undermines democratic governance and our efforts to build a prosperous and just society.

Fighting corruption is therefore everyone's responsibility. Together let us build a province free of corruption.

As indicated earlier the department has various forums, such as staff izimbizo, and extended management meetings where disenchanted employees can raise their concerns without any fear of victimization.

As you may be aware the Protected Disclosures Act of 2000 protects employees who blow the whistle. Employees are therefore free to contact my office if they suspect any wrong doing within the department.

To suggest that working environment is unbearable within the department is untrue and spurious.

On cost containment measures (CCM), we can confirm that we have put in place these measures to reprioritize the spending of not only Treasury but all provincial government departments.

As public service our core function is to ensure that we roll-out the much-needed service delivery and improve the living standard of the Free State populace. This is exactly what we want to achieve.

Regarding the provision of the Anti- Retroviral Treatment we are supporting the provincial Department of Health in its endeavors to find a lasting and positive solution to this challenge. We are upbeat that in the spirit of inter-governmental relations, together we will eventually surmount this obstacle in our war against the scourge of HIV and Aids.

HIV and Aids is among us. It is real and presents huge challenge for the people of our country. We can only defeat Aids if we join hands to save our people.

Furthermore, the staff turn-over and resignation of officials is not unique to Treasury Department. In fact this is a national phenomenon. The in-house exist interviews we conducted with the staffers leaving department are not suggesting that they are disgruntled as was reported in the newspaper.

On the alleged MEC's birthday party- we want to put on record that there was no birthday day party for the MEC. The birthday of the MEC coincided with the launch of the provincial socio-economic review. At the launch's networking dinner session, the MEC's birthday was acknowledged. Indeed the limit for this activity was exceeded due to the increased number of guests who attended. Correct procedure and approval was granted for increasing budget for this function.

There was nothing irregular in the purchasing of the Plasma TV set. This is part of the standard furniture within the office of the Senior Managers. This was procured long before the cost containment measures were in place - in the previous financial year. There was nothing untoward about the purchasing of this TV.

On the issue of an alleged Lesotho national employed by the department we don't have such an employee in our staff establishment.

The former Matjhabeng Municipality official who is now employed as the Chief of Staff in my office is a South African citizen. To suggest that he is not without even verifying his nationality is absurd. This allegation smacks of poor journalism by Volksblad. In addition this employee did not reside in a guesthouse for more than three month.

Finally, the official from Masilonyana Local Municipality was unemployed when he applied for and finally joined the department as Media Liaison Officer (MLO) in the office of the MEC.

We are not aware of any corruption charges which were pending against him.
Lastly let me take this opportunity to wish you prosperous and happy holidays.
Let's be safe and enjoy festive season safely.
May God bless you.
I thank you.

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NOVEMBER 2008

COST CONTAINMENT MEASURES

09 November 2008

Free State Treasury does not foresee that the province will be placed under section 100 (Administration) of the Constitution for the current financial year.

The cost containment circular number 2 of 2008 issued on 15th October 2008 was retracted on 15th October 2008.

No cost containment measures were introduced in terms of Performance Development Management System (cash bonuses).

A new cost containment circular was issued on 3 November 2008 (circular number 3). This circular will be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

All departments including the Department of Education are allowed to fill critical posts within current compensation budget.

The cost containment measures introduced in terms of upgrading of posts, job evaluations and benchmarking will only apply to departments that have budget pressure on compensation budget.

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Issued by Free State Treasury Department

OCTOBER 2008

SOCIO-ECONOMIC REVIEW WORKSHOP FOR MUNICIPALITIES

13 October 2008

'Understanding local government socio-economic status'

The Free State Treasury Department will embark on a whirlwind roadshow to assist municipalities to understand the provincial 1996-2006 socio-economic review.

The review was launched by Free State Premier, Beatrice Marshoff on May 15 2008.

"We want to take this review to local government and engage with policy-makers at that level to establish whether our policies are making tangible and positive impact in improving the living standards our people", said Makgoe.

"We will start at Motheo District this month and move to other districts in the Province before the end of the financial year," he added.

The review which consists of 113 indicators ranging from poverty, demographics, health, labour and economy serve as a valuable planning, monitoring and evaluation tool for provincial and local government service delivery mandate.

At each districts about 90 delegates are expected to attend. They include inter alia, Mayors, councillors, Municipal Managers, local business people, NGOs, Community Development Workers (CDWs) and representative from religious community.

Media are invited to attend:

Details of the Motheo Socio-economic Review Workshop as follows:

Date: 16 October 2008

Time: 10h00

Venue: Dewetsdorp Town Hall, Dewetsdorp

Inquiries: Howard Ndaba@ 083 291 6622

MAKGOE DONATES UNIFORMS AND HEATERS TO NEEDY SCHOOLS

08 October 2008

Free State Finance MEC Tate Makgoe will on Friday 10 October 2008 donate school uniforms and heaters to Relebeletse and Tshebelopele Primary schools respectively.

Situated in Bloemfontein Phase 5 and 6 informal settlements the schools were identified by the department's social workers as in dire of uniforms and heaters during the chilly winter.

"This is part of our social responsibility programme", Makgoe said, adding that "we are lending the helping hand."

The Relebeletse Primary schools has 234 orphans out of 1 720 learners, whilst Tshebelopele has 218 out 1 567 pupils.

Free State Education MEC Caska Mokitlane is expected to accompany Makgoe to the donation event.

Media is invited to attend.

The event will be held as follows:

Date: 10 October 2008

Venue: Relebeletse & Tjhebelopele Primary schools, Phase 6, Bloemfontein

Time: 9h00 – 11h30

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SEPTEMBER 2008

Local Government Asset Management Workshop

26 September 2008

In a bid to assist municipalities to manage their asset prudently, the Free State Treasury Department will host a three-day workshop that will *inter alia* educate them about capital asset management, asset life cycles, and creation of asset register.

The workshop also seeks to heighten awareness about the value of Generally Recognized Accounting Practice (Grap) which should be implemented by municipalities from July 01 2009.

Free State Finance MEC; Tate Makgoe will deliver a keynote address on the first day of the workshop, which will be attended by Municipality Managers, Chief Financial Officers and local government asset management practitioners.

“The asset management is central to providing required services in a cost-effective, efficient and transparent manner, said G de Wee, Free State Treasury Department, Senior Manager: Norms and Standards.

Media is invited to attend.

The event will be held as follows:

Date: 29 September – 01 October 2008

Venue: President Hotel, Bloemfontein

Time: 08:30 – 16:30

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AUGUST 2008

FREE STATE TO HOST RISK MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

26 August 2008

‘Naganela Pele: Think Ahead’

The National and Free State Treasury will host the 2008 Public Sector Risk Management Symposium on the 3rd and 4th September in Bloemfontein.

Under the theme *‘Naganela Pele: Think Ahead’* the main purpose of the symposium is to capture the skills and expertise of professionals in order to elevate the profile of risk management as a value adding service that supports the achievement of institutional objectives. It also aims to share best practices and to look into current challenges as well as emerging developments and possible interventions.

Topics to be discussed at the symposium include:

- Managing Risk, Establishing Good Governance and Enhancing Compliance
- Impact of Fraud on Public Sector: The Auditor General Perspective
- DBSA’s Approach to Risk Management for Municipalities
- Service delivery and Making a difference
- Risk Mitigation through Insurance
- Risk Management in the Public Sector
- Enterprise Risk Management in Local Government
- Business intelligence and knowledge Management in the context of Risk Management.

In addition to the National Treasury Director General, Lesetja Kganyago, will deliver a paper entitled Thinking Ahead via Video Broadcast.

Details of the event are as follows:

Date: 3th and 4th September 2008

Time: (Day one: 8:30-10:00)

00), (Day two: 8:30 – 4:30)
Venue: Fair View Conference – Bloemfontein

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