

State of the Province Address 2012

16 February 2012

The Honourable Acting Speaker,
Honourable Members of the Provincial Cabinet,
The Honourable Leader of the Opposition,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
The Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition in the National Assembly,
Honourable Leaders of the different Political Parties,
Honourable Members of the National Assembly,
Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature,
Director-General of the Western Cape,
Provincial Commissioner of the South African Police Services Western Cape,
Heads of Provincial Departments,
Leaders of Local Government,
Religious Leaders,
Community Leaders,
Colleagues and Friends,
Citizens of the Western Cape,

Welcome to everyone here today. Namkelekile nonke apha namhlanje. 'n Hartlike warm welkom aan almal hier vandag.

I would like to begin this morning by bidding farewell to our former Speaker, Sheikh Shahid Esau, who was sworn in as a member of the National Assembly with effect from 30 January 2012.

I would also like to place on record the House's appreciation for the service he rendered as a committee member and as Speaker. We wish him success in his new role in the National Parliament. Shukran Sheikh. Ons waardeer al u bydraes. Ikamva eliqaqambileyo kuwe.

I extend also a warm welcome to Mr Piet Pretorius and Mr Mzuvukile Figlan who have recently joined us as new members of the legislature. Baie welkom - ek weet u is gereed vir die harde werk wat op u wag. Nilungele eli phulo Lingumngeni.

I would also like to welcome my special guest to the House today, Mrs Colett Muller, whose husband Carl Muller paid the highest price while fighting fires in the Moutonshoek Valley, Piketberg, earlier this month. Hy het sy lewe gegee om ander mense se lewens en besittings te red. Dit is die alle hoogste opoffering. En dis 'n opoffering wat sy hele gesin moes meemaak.

Mrs Muller, on behalf of the Western Cape Government, I extend my sincere condolences to you and your two children Elisca and Dian. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

I would also like to pay tribute to all the firefighters and members of disaster management teams who work tirelessly putting out fires and dealing with numerous other natural disasters. Mrs Janine Joubert of Vredendal also lost her husband Gideon while he was firefighting in October last year. Unfortunately she was not able to accept my invitation to be here today. We salute her and her family as well.

Our province owes everyone in the Directorate of Disaster Management a debt of deep gratitude. Welcome today to Mr Colin Diener, Chief Director of Disaster Management, and Mr Ian Schnetler, Fire Chief of the City of Cape Town. Please convey to all your staff our sincere appreciation for their expert management of over 50 major fires during the past few months and the willingness of our firefighters to put their lives on the line to protect all the residents of the Western Cape.

Mr Speaker, in my first State of the Province Address in 2009 I made clear that our government's primary focus would be on reducing poverty, because above all else, poverty is an affront to human dignity and the primary obstacle to living a full life.

Injongo yethu, kukulwa intlupheko. Armoede is Suid-Afrika se grootste vyand.

That is why our vision for the Western Cape is of an Open, Opportunity Society in which every person has the means, the resources and the power to live a life he or she values.

That vision has guided and sustained our efforts over the past two and a half years. At its core is the understanding that no government can, by itself, guarantee a better life. Progress can only be realised as the product of partnerships - between government, citizens, civil society and business. Each has a role and specific responsibilities. That is why we have adopted the slogan "Better Together" to capture and convey our message to the people of the Western Cape. Kungcono xa sikunye. Dis Beter Saam. Sibambisene. Isandla sihlamba esinye. Een hand kan nie homself alleen was nie.

Mr Speaker, the only sustainable way to beat poverty is by creating opportunities for growth and jobs. This insight informs our strategy, which is this: to shift resources and energy into the creation of growth and job opportunities without compromising our ability to deliver better outcomes in health, education and social development, and while refocusing our efforts to promote social inclusion with a more pragmatic, more measurable and less ideological approach.

My address today, and the budget that Minister Winde will table shortly, give meaningful expression to this strategy.

But Mr Speaker, this government has just undertaken a mid-term review in order to determine what progress we have made since 2009 and to be honest with ourselves about the challenges that remain. AsiziXokisi.

And so today I will present our progress, but I will also describe some of our challenges and announce a series of new initiatives.

But before I do so, I would like to thank the incredible team that makes it such a pleasure to face each daunting day. They are the embodiment of what we mean when we say "Better Together". I want to thank the DG and his outstanding team of senior managers. I want to thank every person who comes to work every day, who understands their role in the bigger picture and who takes responsibility for it. I would like to thank the dedicated staff in my office, my personal assistant Donnae Strydom, my Head of Office Lorika Elliott and everyone else who supports me with such commitment. In particular, on this occasion, I wish to acknowledge the role played by my Special Adviser, Ryan Coetzee, in conceptualising and structuring this government to achieve our shared vision.

Creating the Conditions Needed for Increased Economic Growth and Job Creation

Mr Speaker, our first priority is to create the conditions needed for inclusive economic growth and job creation. This is by far the most important way in which our economy can create job opportunities for our citizens and, more importantly, redress the legacy of poverty and underdevelopment.

But no government can achieve economic development on its own. That is why we have chosen to establish an Economic Development Partnership (EDP), where all stakeholders in the economy will come together to develop and help implement a shared agenda for economic growth, development and inclusion.

The EDP will focus on facilitating the development of a shared economic vision, strategy and brand for the province. It will work to move us from a "culture of disaggregation and fragmentation" towards one of collaboration. The idea of "Better Together" is thus coded into the very DNA of this administration and also of the EDP. Over time, its work will result in an improved investment climate, a more competitive and resilient economy and, ultimately, higher levels of growth and employment. That is the only sustainable way to fight poverty.

The EDP was registered at the beginning of the year, and a steering committee of prominent leaders from the business community and government has been established. The official launch of the EDP will take place in April.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Cape Town Partnership, and in particular Andrew Boraine and Yumnaa Firfirey, for helping us conceptualise and establish the EDP.

The most powerful economic lever in the hands of a provincial government is the ability to build growth-creating infrastructure. And while I welcome President Zuma's new focus on infrastructure development, it is critical to understand that without private sector investment, neither South Africa nor the Western Cape will be able to build the infrastructure needed for growth.

And so Mr Speaker, I look forward to participating in the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission which has been tasked with identifying and developing projects and infrastructure initiatives across the three spheres of government. In his State of the Nation Address, the President focused specifically on the Industrial Development Zone in Saldanha and the required railway links. We will do everything possible to make this partnership with the national government a success in the interest of all the people of this province.

Meanwhile, in the Western Cape, we have put together a game-changing infrastructure agenda that includes the following:

- Three city regeneration projects, to be implemented in conjunction with the City of Cape Town and the private sector. These are the Founders' Garden/Artscape precinct, the development of a government precinct in the heart of the city and the development of the Somerset Hospital precinct. Minister Winde will provide more details of this in his budget speech.
- The doubling of the capacity of the Cape Town Convention Centre, again implemented together with the City of Cape Town and the private sector.

- The development of new and upgraded roads that offer a demonstrable impact on economic growth, including a divisional road between Gansbaai and Bredasdorp, the Wingfield Interchange bridges and a road network improvement project in support of the Saldanha Industrial Development Zone initiative.
- The creation of a Special Purpose Vehicle or Public Private Partnership to bring broadband access to every school, every provincial and every municipal government facility in the Western Cape, and ultimately to every citizen, while driving down the cost of broadband access for business.

This is a huge new development that will position the Western Cape as a broadband access leader in South Africa and support the existing Information Technology Centres in every school in the province. As I indicated last year during my State of the Province Address, the World Bank estimates that every 10% increase in high-speed internet connections in developing countries results in a 1.3% increase in economic growth.

Broadband is also a platform for local information technology services industries, which create youth employment and promote social inclusion.

The World Bank reports that the number of internet users in developing countries has increased tenfold between 2000 to 2007, with over 4 billion mobile phone subscribers living in developing countries.

However, it is also true that since 2009, South Africa has lagged behind many other African countries when it comes to increasing internet penetration. For example, while Nigeria and Egypt had increased their internet users by 33 million and 8 million respectively over the last two years, South Africa has only increased its users by 2.3 million.

To compound the problem in the Western Cape, only 20 provincial government buildings, around 50 City of Cape Town buildings and 50 municipal sites are connected at speeds of 100 megabytes per second or more.

It is clear that if we aim to create an internationally competitive knowledge economy, improve productivity and enjoy access to new markets, we need to invest far more in fast and affordable broadband infrastructure. We need to link over 4 000 government facilities in the province to one another and to business, civil society and citizens.

By 2014, we aim to have connected 70% of government facilities and every school in the province to the broadband network and also ensure that there is at least one public ICT access facility in every ward.

Within the next two years, as part of a pilot project, we aim to create the largest mesh network in the world that will have connected all households in Khayelitsha, Mitchell's Plain and Saldanha Bay, including the Industrial Development Zone footprint.

By 2020, we aim to have connected every citizen in the metropolitan area to affordable broadband infrastructure at network speeds in excess of 100 megabytes per second and all citizens in towns and villages to a broadband network.

Our broadband strategy will involve partnerships with a number of potential stakeholders, including licensed telecom service providers, commercial banks, the IDC and the DBSA, local

businesses as well as local and national government. In other words, the roll-out of this broadband network exemplifies our "Better Together" approach.

All of this constitutes a huge investment in growth-creating infrastructure, most of which will be used as a powerful magnet for further investment from other spheres of government and from the private sector.

The overall impact on the economy of the Western Cape will only be fully appreciated, however, when the City of Cape Town and other municipalities reveal their own infrastructure plans in their 2012/2013 budgets, to be tabled later in the year. We will really have achieved a catalytic aggregation of effort when all of the governments in the Western Cape coordinate their infrastructure investments against an agreed umbrella strategy and, in so doing, unlock significant private sector investment. Of course our aim is to achieve optimal co-operative governance with the national government too, with the Saldanha IDZ as the pilot.

Mr Speaker, in addition to our focus on economic infrastructure, we are also implementing growth and jobs initiatives in a number of other areas, including agriculture, trade and investment promotion, the reduction of red tape and skills development.

This year, Wesgro will receive increased support to open African and other developing world markets to Western Cape business, while ensuring we take full advantage of our existing trade links with the United States and Europe.

Market access is also one of the key priorities of our focus on creating opportunities for growth and jobs in rural areas. That is why Minister van Rensburg led a delegation of 22 wine companies to the Yantai International Wine Festival last year, most of which won business from new clients in China. We also supported six BEE wine companies to access the Nigerian market and helped BEE fruit farmers access the Netherlands and German markets.

Another key focus area is to ensure that agricultural land reform projects in the province offer emerging farmers the help they need to succeed. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, together with different commodity groups, have invested R91.7 million into 85 projects to support emerging farmers in the 2011/2012 financial year. The "Boompie" Project is a prime example of this approach and has resulted in hundreds of hectares of fruit trees being planted over the past two years.

These and other interventions have resulted in a 70% success rate amongst the 202 land reform projects in the province, an achievement unmatched in any other province in South Africa. It is no wonder that, on the basis of their performance, our department of Agriculture and Rural Development was recognised by the National Government as the very best performing government department in South Africa.

We are also using a "Better Together" approach to cutting red tape and making it easier to do business in the Western Cape.

Last year, I announced that we were in the process of establishing a unit in the Department of Economic Development and Tourism dedicated to identifying opportunities for cutting red tape. The unit is tracking small- and medium-sized companies in various stages of start-

up. This is providing invaluable insight into the red tape challenges they face. We are committed to eradicating as much red tape as possible.

We have also established an inter-governmental working group to identify and tackle key regulatory bottlenecks at both a provincial and municipal level.

In addition, we have established a Red Tape Call Centre that began operating in July last year.

The call centre is linked to a task team of officials working in and outside of government, and includes representatives from six provincial departments, the City of Cape Town, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), Business Western Cape and the Cape Chamber of Commerce.

Since the call centre's launch, 140 cases have been logged, of which two-thirds have already been resolved, while others have required high-level interventions. Based on the nature of complaints received we are also conducting investigations into red tape in four key areas: fine foods processing, immigration, the solar water geysers replacement policy and property development issues.

The Western Cape has been the top performing province with regard to call resolution rates on the Presidential Hotline since its inception. While the average resolution rate for provinces, as calculated by the Presidency itself, is 25.5%, the Western Cape achieved an average resolution rate in excess of 80%.

However, while we can do whatever possible to tackle red tape at a provincial and local level, often these challenges lie at a national level, particularly within state owned enterprises. We came perilously close to losing the interest of a major investor in the Saldanha IDZ after he became entangled in red tape while negotiating with Transnet. No infrastructure development programme on its own can grow our economy, unless this infrastructure is expertly and efficiently managed to build partnerships with the private sector and to deliver a quality service. This applies particularly to state owned enterprises responsible for maintaining the running of South Africa's rail and energy sectors.

Climate change and building a Green Economy is also one of our government's priorities.

At the end of last year, South Africa hosted the United Nations Climate Change conference, at which it was decided by the parties to adopt a legal agreement on climate change as soon as possible but no later than 2015. This 17th Conference of the Parties left us with some clear messages. First, there will be no escape from obligations to reduce our carbon emissions. Second, we - as a country, province and citizens of South Africa - need to start now to prepare ourselves for a very different future. To achieve that, we need leadership, courage and commitment. In the Western Cape, we intend to build a dynamic green economy - one that offsets the costs and consequences of climate change with growth, and jobs.

Therefore, it is our firm intention to position this province as the green economic hub of South Africa. As a start, we will create a new and exciting platform, 110% GREEN, to stimulate new ideas, provide opportunity for everyone to participate and, most importantly, promote practical action. This initiative will be launched shortly.

Already, the Atlantis Green Manufacturing Hub has been established, with renewable energy companies in discussions with us as we prepare for the roll-out of wind and solar energy farms. Our green economy partnership, GreenCape, is fully established and played a key role in securing the increased local content requirements for renewable energy projects announced recently by the National Department of Energy.

Our government is finalising the draft Green Procurement White Paper, which will provide general principles and guidelines for integrating environmental criteria into supply chain management - a first in the country. Among our strategic objectives is a 100% commitment to 10% energy and water savings in provincially owned offices and other selected buildings including hospitals.

Mr Speaker, we are keen to stretch the envelope. Recent amendments to the National Building Regulations require solar water heaters and other energy-saving devices in new buildings and certain types of renovations. We want to investigate the potential of further electricity savings through placing the same conditions on property transfers.

Our government also remains committed to increasing the number of skilled people in our province. One of the biggest challenges we face is to align skills development programmes to meet the demands of our growing economy. The scale of the problem is highlighted by the fact that there are over 600 000 unemployed graduates in South Africa despite the fact that there are around 850 000 vacancies for skilled professionals. This is mismatch on a grand scale and we need to work together with education and training institutions to align supply with demand.

During 2010/2011, our Work and Skills programme resulted in 569 jobs being facilitated and sustained. Our strategic partnership with the wholesale and retail SETA resulted in our government leveraging R7.2 million for the programme and securing hosting opportunities with employers in this sector. Forty learners also received the opportunity to work in the boiler making, welding and fitting environment through the South African Oil and Gas Alliance.

I will also be making an exciting announcement early next month on the launch of a significant skills development and work experience programme we are implementing in the provincial government.

However, if we hope to alleviate the current skills shortage in our province we need to ensure that every child learns to read, write and calculate, and that we increase the number of maths and science matric pass rates and university entrance passes in the province.

Providing Access to Quality Education and Healthcare

Mr Speaker, in 2009 we inherited an education system that was failing the majority of the children in the Western Cape. The matric pass rate had suffered a year-on-year decline for five consecutive years, while literacy and numeracy levels in Grades 3, 6 and 9 were staggeringly low.

In 2010, we introduced a ten-point plan to turn the situation around. It involved:

- Testing all Grade 3s, 6s and 9s every year for literacy and numeracy competence. We are the only province to have rolled out these systemic independent tests, which also

provide a diagnostic assessment of our provincial education system. Last year, over 240 000 Grade 3, 6 and 9 learners were tested - three times the number of learners tested in the past eight years. It was also the second year in a row that all three Grades were tested in both state and independent schools.

- Setting outcomes targets for every school. Unbelievably, until we came into government in the Western Cape, there was no focus on measurable outcomes in education management. Now every principal knows what his or her target is for the year, and they are able to work towards it from day one.
- Holding principals, circuit and district managers accountable for the outcomes in their schools. The Western Cape Provincial School Education Act, passed last year, makes provision for performance agreements for principals and deputy principals. The department has subsequently undertaken a series of consultations with relevant stakeholders on the implementation of these performance agreements and in the next few months we will be launching a pilot, focused on linking school principals to performance contracts.
- Insisting that teachers spend more time in the classroom. Time-on-task remains one of the foundational principles that guide our turnaround in education.
- Provision for intensive teacher training and development. Last year, approximately 1 150 teachers attended 30 training programmes and over 2 000 attended school holiday training courses and conferences. The department also released a planning calendar for the upcoming school year, which includes a number of compulsory programmes and workshops for all educators in the province.
- A massive new investment in textbooks to ensure every child in the Western Cape learns in a text-rich environment. Last year, Minister Grant announced that his department would ensure that every learner from Grades 1 to 12 will have a textbook in every subject she is taking. This has been a first in South Africa. In order to fulfil this commitment, the Western Cape Education Department plans to invest R466 million in texts over the next four years. This is far beyond the national norm for textbook allocation. By the end of last year, we had delivered more than 2 million books to schools including mathematics textbooks for Grade 1 learners, another first.
- Ensuring that resources are directed at schools most in need. For example, 40% of learners in the Western Cape attend no-fee schools and last year we spent over R20 million to cover the cost of poorer learners exempt from paying schools fees. We spend six times more on each learner in the poorest public schools than we do on each learner in the least poor public schools.
- A massive new investment in education infrastructure. We have increased our schools maintenance budget by 46% in the last two years. Our plans for the next two years include building eight new schools and replacing 23 current school buildings. We also aim to build 768 new classrooms and replace 583 current classrooms by the end of next year. By the end of the 2011/2012 financial year, 11 new schools and five replacement schools will have been completed, as well as 570 classrooms.

While we realise that the impact of many of these interventions will only be seen in the years to come, we have already begun to see some progress in improving learner outcomes in the province.

In 2010, we reversed the six-year decline in the matric pass rate. Last year, we saw a further 6% improvement in the pass rate from 76.8% to 82.9%, making the Western Cape the best performing province in the country.

Even more encouraging is that we have improved the retention rate in our province by approximately 15% in the past two years, which means many thousands of children are staying in school longer and getting more education than used to be the case. We still have a long way to go however, and by 2019 aim to ensure that 90% of children in the Western Cape stay in school or attend another educational institution until the age of 18.

Last year, 800 more learners qualified for Bachelor Degree study than in 2010, despite the very much smaller matric cohort due to the introduction in 2000 of the requirement that children could only start grade one in the year they turn seven. And there was also a substantial increase in both maths and science pass rates over the past three years.

We also saw a remarkable reduction in the number of so-called "under-performing schools" - that is those that achieved less than a 60% matric pass rate - the number of under-performing schools dropped from 78 during the previous year to 30 in 2011. But we all know that is 30 too many. There is no place left to hide for these schools.

Mr Speaker, while all these achievements are encouraging and give us renewed energy to build on the successes of the past two years, there is one set of outcomes to which I wish to give special attention today. This statistic is a source of extraordinary encouragement and reassures me that we can reverse the tragic legacy of apartheid education if we do the right things in the right way.

Mr Speaker, the percentage matric pass rate across schools serving the poorest members of our community has increased dramatically. The pass rate of the poorest 20% of schools has improved from 57% to 70%, while among schools in the poorest three quintiles, the increase has been from 59% in 2010 to 70% last year.

Mr Speaker, that is real redress. That is real opportunity creation. That is the foundation for real economic empowerment. That is real transformation. I regard the improvement in education outcomes among the poorest of the poor in the Western Cape as the single most outstanding achievement of this government to date.

Consider for example that the Centre of Science and Technology (COSAT) in Khayelitsha was ranked ninth in matric outcomes in the province last year. That is the first time ever that a township school in the Western Cape has made the top ten! And it is just the beginning.

Consider also the Imizamo Yethu Secondary School in Thembalethu in George that improved its pass rate from 27% in 2010 to 82% in 2011, and the Masiyile Senior Secondary School in Khayelitsha that achieved an 86.8% pass rate, up from 34% in 2010. This is the difference a new and motivated principal can make to a school.

These examples show what can be done despite difficult circumstances. I salute every one of the principals, teachers, staff, learners and their parents at these schools whose hard work and dedication serve as an inspiration for every school in the Western Cape. Nowhere is the "Better Together" approach more dramatically illustrated than here.

Mr Speaker, despite these successes, in fact because of them, our province's education system faces increasing pressure from growing enrolment numbers each year. Over the past three years, there has been an increase of 13 609 learners in public ordinary schools from Grade R to Grade 12. The influx of learners from the Eastern Cape and other provinces has placed a major burden on our education budget, school infrastructure and resources, which we have to address within the context of underfunded annual general salary increases for educators.

Nevertheless, we are determined to achieve our objective, which is to provide every child in a Western Cape school an education that makes a productive and rewarding life possible for them. But every day we see how critical it is to reverse the catastrophic collapse of the Eastern Cape Education Department. It is impossible for the Western Cape to compensate for the failures of other provinces, indeed countries, on the limited budget we get that is linked to the last but one general census. We all know how dramatically the population of this province has grown since then.

Speaker, another area facing escalating demand as a result of in-migration is our provincial healthcare system. Compounding this problem is the growing burden of disease and the fact that approximately 80% of our health budget is being spent each year on diseases and injuries that could have been prevented if people had acted more responsibly.

Over 50% of injury-related deaths in the province are a result of domestic violence and road accidents, often fueled by alcohol and drug abuse. "Lifestyle" diseases caused by smoking, a lack of exercise and poor eating habits are also placing an increasing burden on our health service.

While hundreds of millions of rands are spent each year on easily preventable diseases and injuries, many patients suffering from unavoidable illnesses and serious disabilities are turned away from our health facilities because there is no funding or resources available to treat them.

The injustice of this situation was recently highlighted in a meeting I had with Tarryn Corlett-Boden and Tina Botha from the Sunflower Fund. This organisation was formed in 1999 by parents whose children had contracted leukaemia, and in some cases had lost the battle against it. Their aim was to increase the number of bone marrow stem cell donors in an effort to source life-saving transplants for leukaemia and for other patients suffering from fatal blood disorders.

Over the past 12 years, the Sunflower Fund has single handedly expanded the South African Bone Marrow Registry from 1 200 to over 64 000 donors. Ms Corlett-Boden and Ms Botha recently requested a meeting with me to discuss ways in which I could help promote their organisation through my role as Patron of the fund.

One has to question the priorities of a healthcare system that expects parents who have lost their children to leukaemia to expand and maintain the South African Bone Marrow Registry without state funding. Surely, this is a basic function of any state that claims to have a functional healthcare system? Instead we spend billions of rands each year on the entirely avoidable health consequences of unprotected sex with multiple partners and the violence engendered by drug and alcohol abuse.

Our government is committed to challenging and encouraging individuals to start taking responsibility for their health.

This underpins the Healthcare 2020 strategy recently launched by Western Cape Minister of Health Theuns Botha.

It represents a shift to the prevention of disease and creating a state of wellness in the province, rather than an exclusive focus on treating illness. It cuts across a number of provincial government departments including Health, Education, Social Development, Community Safety, Human Settlements, Transport, Environment and Planning and focuses on building strategic partnerships with the private sector and civil society in order to place patients at the centre of the healthcare system and treating them according to their individual needs.

Over and above Healthcare 2020, the Western Cape has continued to lead in a number of areas. For example, it has the highest TB cure rate in the country at 82.1% and has further decreased TB incidence from 948 cases per 100 000 people in 2008/2009 to 883 per 100 000 in 2010/2011.

We also continue to have the lowest incidence of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS in the country and by the end of the third quarter of 2011/2012 this rate had dropped to 2.1%. Just over 20 000 new patients started receiving ARV treatment by last December and just over 107 000 remained in the treatment programme during the same period.

The provincial Department of Health also distributed 45 million male condoms during the first quarter of 2011/2012 and administered over 1 million AIDS tests as part of the national government's counseling and testing campaign that ran between April 2010 and June 2011.

HIV/AIDS prevention was also the focus of our government's 16 Days of Activism Campaign for No Violence against Women and Children. Our "Weet en Wen" campaign encouraged people to know their HIV status by getting tested.

This campaign was part of our government's commitment to incentivise behaviour change in order to reduce the burden of disease in the province.

The results were encouraging. The latest statistics, finalised and verified by the health department this week, reveal that an additional 15 096 people were tested over a ten-day period compared to the average. In the Central Karoo district municipality 1 029 people got tested over this ten-day period when the usual average is around 600 people per month.

We learnt a lot from this campaign, and we plan to run it again, sequentially, in various health districts, to maximise the benefits in every location. However, we will convene a meeting with healthcare stakeholders before we do so.

The construction of Khayelitsha District Hospital was completed in October and the first patients were transferred to the facility last month. I am very much looking forward to the official opening of the hospital on 17 April. However, the 24-hour emergency centre and the obstetrics and paediatrics wards are already fully operational.

The construction of Mitchell's Plain District Hospital is also on track and will be completed by October and fully commissioned by March 2013.

A number of district hospitals and clinics have also recently been renovated and upgraded including ARV treatment facilities at the Cross Roads, Gugulethu and Retreat clinics as well as repairs to district hospitals in Beaufort West, Vredendal and Riversdale.

Last month, Health Minister Theuns Botha also announced that our government will embark on a R1 billion revamp of Valkenberg Hospital. Seventeen buildings will be added to the complex and the bed capacity will increase from 92 to 432, which will contribute towards better care for psychiatric patients and drastically reduce the waiting lists of awaiting trial prisoners who need psychiatric observation. This will be the largest construction project yet undertaken by our provincial government and will be completed in July 2016. There has been a disturbing and very sharp increase in the number of patients requiring hospitalisation as a result of drug abuse, particularly Tik - another entirely preventable chronic condition that is very expensive to manage.

Creating the Conditions for Increased Social Inclusion

Mr Speaker, drug and alcohol abuse are the key drivers of the social dysfunction and family breakdown that ravage this province. Unless we can come to grips with this scourge, we will not achieve our objective of increasing social inclusion and alleviating poverty.

It is estimated that alcohol abuse is associated with at least 80% of murders while drugs, in particular Tik, are one of the main drivers of violent crime, including aggravated robbery.

Individuals under the influence of a substance (alcohol or drugs) are also more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviour and are more at risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS.

As a consequence, we designed and launched a comprehensive strategy in 2010 to combat substance abuse. Now we have successfully introduced and implemented a number of initiatives outlined in that strategy.

This includes re-establishing a Western Cape Substance Abuse Forum that embraces our "Better Together" approach by representing all stakeholders who are working together to deal with this plague. Other initiatives include:

- An increase of R24 million in the budget to fight substance abuse, bringing the budget to R67.4 million.
- Expanding subsidised spaces in drug treatment programmes to over 4 800, an increase of more than 1 000.
- 18 new treatment centres in the province in partnership with a number of NGOs.
- A successful partnership with three Western Cape universities in order to create postgraduate and undergraduate courses in addiction treatment services.
- The launching of a TV campaign designed to challenge the misconceptions South Africans have about alcohol and alcohol abuse. The Health Department is currently negotiating with one of our national TV broadcasters to air the series on their channel.

The single largest intervention to reduce alcohol abuse and its related harms in the province is, of course, the implementation of the Western Cape Liquor Act, which we passed in 2009 and which, among other things, will control access to alcohol in residential areas. The act seeks to implement the "high street model" creating zones where alcohol may legally be sold and consumed. These high streets will provide secure business environments with

increased lighting, policing, pedestrian walkways and partnerships with taxi associations to ensure that people drink more responsibly and get home safely. During my recent fact-finding visit to Namibia, I learnt a great deal about how they implemented the "high street model" and its encouraging results. In Kuisebmond, for example, the number of criminal cases dropped from around 70 per week to 15 after illegal liquor outlets were closed in residential areas.

This pattern was also seen in Nyanga in 2010, when a major four-day operation resulted in 400 shebeens being closed across seven policing districts over the festive season, leading to a significant drop in serious and violent crime.

Our Liquor Act seeks to achieve similar sustained outcomes.

We will also be cracking down on distributors and retailers who supply an estimated 25 000 illegal shebeens currently operating in residential communities. Under the new act they will be liable for penalties that include very heavy fines, jail terms and the seizure of assets. It is long past time that we did something dramatic to manage the disintegration of families and communities through alcohol and drug abuse.

The implementation plan for the Liquor Act was passed by Cabinet at the end of August and nominations for the board of the Western Cape Liquor Authority closed on 27 January. It will be established by 1 April. This day may be popularly known as April Fool's but we want to make it clear: we will not be fooling around when it comes to alcohol and drugs.

It is also crucial that the criminal justice system plays its role when it comes to tackling drug-related crime. I would therefore like to congratulate the SAPS for their recent arrests of high-flying crime bosses.

Police investigations have found that these prominent underworld bosses are allegedly the key players controlling the flow of drugs into our communities, in particular the Cape Flats.

It is imperative that we stem this flow at its source and that government and law enforcement agencies send a clear message to these kingpins that we will not stand back while they target our children with their criminal activities. We are committed to continue working with the police to keep up the pressure on these criminal syndicates.

However, the recent admission by Western Cape Police Commissioner General Lamoer that the R12 billion worth of drugs confiscated over the past 12 months is just the tip of the iceberg highlights just how serious this problem is.

That is why our government believes that the reinstatement of specialised drug and gang units by the SAPS is a policing need and priority for the Western Cape.

Specialised units have proven to be effective in the past, until they were disbanded by the national government. Specialised units enable dedicated teams to work on specific crime categories, and develop the expertise required to investigate, detect, arrest and ensure successful convictions in the underground world of sophisticated organised crime.

At the end of last year, Minister Dan Plato tabled the re-establishment of specialised units at a MINMEC meeting and we will continue lobbying the National Minister of Police through every channel available.

This is one component of the "Better Together" approach we are taking to make the province a safer place to live, work and learn.

Although we have a limited constitutional mandate in this regard, I wish to draw attention to two prongs of our safety strategy.

First, we will fully embrace the oversight function provided for provinces in the Constitution, something that no provincial government has done before. To this end, we are introducing a Western Cape Community Safety Bill to give effect to our Constitutional oversight responsibility. The purpose is to improve policing significantly. The bill was approved by Cabinet in December and was published for comment in yesterday's government gazette.

Key provisions include:

- Ensuring that this provincial government determines the policing needs and priorities of the province, as provided for in the Constitution, and enabling us to hold the SAPS to account for this.
- The establishment, administration and maintenance of an integrated information system to give the Provincial Government the management information we need to focus resources on the key locations and root causes of crime.
- A requirement that the Provincial Police Commissioner and the Metro Police provide regular written reports to the Provincial Minister of Community Safety on a number of indicators, for example, the number of firearms issued to police officials in the province that have been lost or stolen, the number of persons arrested during the month, the number of cases referred to court, the number of those cases that have been prosecuted and the number of convictions, the allocation of budget and resources and the number of complaints about police misconduct and criminal cases against police officers. This information is crucial if we are going to provide effective oversight. We will not tolerate cover-ups.
- The establishment of an Ombud with far-reaching powers to investigate reports of police corruption, abuse of power or service delivery failures.
- Support for the voluntary accreditation of neighbourhood watches. The provincial minister may also provide for the training of neighbourhood watches and enable them to submit reports on incidents of crime in the areas in which they operate.
- The maintenance of a database of community organisations that are actively involved in community safety initiatives and to provide support to these organisations. Community organisations on the database will also report information on incidents of crime to the head of department, to assist in the determination of the province's policing needs and priorities and to secure the greatest possible statistical accuracy in order to guide the right interventions.
- The registration of private security service providers and a requirement for them to provide information on their areas of operation. This is a topical issue given the news prominence of an organisation providing "bouncing services" to Cape Town clubs.

Minister Plato has already forwarded copies of the draft bill to the National Minister of Police, the Civilian Secretariat for Police, the Provincial Commissioner of Police and the Provincial Ministers of Community Safety. We plan to introduce the bill in this provincial legislature later this year.

As part of our oversight reforms, the Department of Community Safety has already developed a web-based Community Safety Expanded Partnership Programme (CSEPP) where community police forums will be tasked with visiting police stations on a regular basis and will supply the department with accurate, verifiable information.

Thirty-one CPFs have been identified to take part in the first phase of this project, which commenced in November last year and which will run for six months. The pilot project will then be evaluated and, if successful, the programme will be rolled out to all 149 CPFs in the province.

We also remain committed to continue working in close partnership with Municipal Police Services, particularly when it comes to traffic enforcement and crime prevention in our communities.

In addition to police oversight, our attention is also focused on reducing the number of accidents and fatalities on our roads.

This week, the Minister of Transport and Public Works Robin Carlisle announced a 24% reduction in road fatalities since the end of 2008.

The recent festive season saw a more than doubling of the usual number of roadblocks, resulting in 161 989 vehicles being pulled over. Furthermore, a total of 3 250 long-distance public transport drivers were forced to rest for up to four hours as part of our Fatigue Management Campaign during this period. It is also gratifying to note that calls to our provincial traffic hotline have increased, which is proof that citizens have partnered with us to take action against reckless drivers.

I would like to reiterate Minister Robin Carlisle's appeal to parents to make sure their children wear seatbelts at all times. This small safety intervention will go a long way in reducing the number of child fatalities and serious injuries on our roads each year.

Mr Speaker, another key social inclusion intervention is the introduction of 174 MOD centres across the province. For those not in the know, "MOD" stands for Mass Participation and Opportunity and Development!

These centres have been set up primarily in poorer communities and at schools that have few, if any, sports facilities. The idea is to give children opportunities for development after school hours and so reduce the risks of them becoming involved in destructive activities that compromise their futures.

Currently, over 12 500 learners participate in the MOD centre programme on a daily basis. Of the 174 currently in operation, eight have been selected as pilot sites (four in primary schools and four in high schools) where a much broader set of after-school activities are offered. They are in Delft, Khayelitsha, Hangberg and Lavender Hill. We are carefully monitoring the impact of these centres on learner outcomes and social dysfunction and hope to expand the offer to more in future.

Mr Speaker, our MOD centres have already produced a few jewels who started as rough diamonds. They are now being polished at our SHARP centre for excellence in sport. For example, Chevonne Mentoor, a Grade 7 learner who participated in the Hillwood Primary

School MOD Centre in Lavender Hill has been identified for her skills in softball and has been chosen to play for the Battswood Softball Club's Super League team, which is the highest league in the Western Province Softball Federation. She is also currently being registered to attend the Western Cape Sports School (WCSS).

Another young sportsman discovered through the MOD Centre programme is Siyasanga Zenani, who joined the Sakumlandela Primary School MOD Centre programme last year. Soon after, he was chosen to attend the District East SHARP Centre for football and was successfully registered at the Sports School from 1 January 2012.

Both of these learners would not have been discovered or been given the opportunity to develop their skills under good coaches at top sports facilities if it hadn't been for our government's MOD Centre programme.

Mr Speaker, these MOD Centres are central to our social development philosophy, which holds that citizens must be active partners in shaping their future.

We cannot continue spending money on programmes that encourage youngsters to live in a state of permanent victimhood, becoming and remaining reliant on government hand-outs to survive.

That is why our administration will be rolling out a number of social interventions in the next few years that focus on incentivising positive and responsible behaviour with the objective of creating conducive circumstances for individuals to empower themselves and live lives they really value.

Despite this encouraging progress, Speaker, major challenges remain. And where they exist, they tend to be the result of problems with co-operative governance and partnerships. We can solve each one of them by living our "Better Together" brand.

We have appointed five professional resource teams in our Human Settlements Department to ensure that all stakeholders plan and manage the long and complex pipeline of delivering housing opportunities for all. This pipeline has, in the past, broken down regularly because of the failure of integrated planning, the lack of required infrastructure (such as sewerage systems), the unavailability of well-located land and the bureaucratic red tape nightmare that delays so many key projects.

With a provincial housing backlog of some 500 000 units, it is absolutely pitiful that the regulatory environment makes it almost impossible to deliver low-cost housing on any site in less than six years. This simply has to change.

Another major delaying factor is the conflicts that inevitably arise in poor communities when any form of resource allocation occurs in them. We have learnt that conflict often accompanies development because of the contestation over access to resources. I have asked the Minister for Human Settlements to facilitate a meeting between ourselves and the Professional Resource Teams so that we can emphasise the crucial importance of their role in ensuring much quicker delivery of housing opportunities.

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, I trust I have given the house an overview today of our progress to date, some of the challenges we face and a clear sense of our future direction. Our strategy is set, our plans and budgets are aligned, the capacity of our organisation to deliver is constantly improving. What is required now is consistent implementation of our plans in partnership with other spheres of government, the private sector, civil society and every citizen of the Western Cape. Because however effective the provincial government may be by itself, there is no doubt that the Western Cape works better, together.

Beter Saam. Kungcono xa sikunye. Ningadinwa nangomso. Maz'enethole!