



PARLIAMENTARY
MONITORING GROUP

MONITOR

A monthly briefing sheet to keep communities informed about what is happening in Parliament

Budgetary Review and Recommendation Reports (BRRRs) are drawn by all Portfolio Committees in Parliament after presentation of Department Annual Reports, and these take into account the information reported by departments during the year and in the annual reports, make comparisons with strategic plans, policy documents and mandates, and may also take into account information from quarterly or other special reports on activities, the Committee's own oversight visits, problems reported during the year, the reports of the Auditor-General (AG), Financial and Fiscal Commission (FFC) and other source documents.

All Portfolio Committees included in their 2013 BRRRs, where relevant, requests for explanations and plans to address specific financial reporting or monitoring inconsistencies, and also stressed the need to fill posts to ensure proper service delivery. In this year, Portfolio Committees were also particularly concerned with the links between spending and achievement of targets, whether value for money was gained, and use of consultants. Other issues raised in the BRRRs are summarised below, for each national department. Full reports can be found on the PMG website at www.pmg.org.za/node/33039

The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture noted that the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) did not always meet deadlines to respond to Committee concerns and requests. Many of its officials were in acting positions, hindering its efficiency and monitoring of its finances. The Committee was worried that there was not enough coordination and collaboration with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) to avoid duplication and wasteful expenditure. The Committee stressed the need for off-farm assistance to small producers, particularly in processing and marketing, and for a review of extension services.

This Committee, like many others, was concerned that although almost all budget was spent, the DAFF achieved less than 50% of targets, and that spending in the provinces did not result in sufficient service delivery or sustainable benefits to intended beneficiaries. The Minister was requested to ensure that Committee recommendations from past years, as well as this year, plus those from the AG and FFC were addressed. It was asked to re-look at budgetary allocations, and to ensure stern action against departmental, provincial and entity officials who had breached Treasury regulations or the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA).

The Committee recommended increased budgets were needed to implement the Fetsa Tlala Food Production initiative, to enable the National Agricultural Marketing Council to do marketing research and give assistance to small farmers. For the Working For Fisheries programmes, it insisted on quarterly reports conditional grants in 2014. The Committee was worried that some mentorship programmes were not currently benefitting land reform beneficiaries, but only the mentors or partners. It urged the Minister to seek sufficient funding for the soon-to-be implemented Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. DAFF was asked to finalise the Integrated Growth and Development Plan in agriculture and the Spatial Analysis of Agriculture to identify high potential agriculture, forestry and fisheries resources. It was asked, together with the Department of Mineral Resources, to brief Parliament on mining and prospecting applications on high-potential agricultural land. It must finalise and table the 22 pieces of legislation promised that year to ensure delivery of its mandate.

The Minister of Arts and Culture was asked to review the funding formula for the Department's entities and mandates to ensure more cohesion, to review their legislation and consider a sharing of human resources between entities. The Minister must ensure that the Department develops a system to monitor and ensure correct spending of conditional grants. Shareholder compacts should set out the expected results clearly, particularly about proper financial management, a repeated concern across several entities. The funding formula and legislation for its entities will need to be reviewed. Above all, the Department must ensure that value for money will be achieved and should develop a method for measuring this in the entities.

The Minister of Basic Education was requested to provide Parliament with a turnaround strategy and action plans to address the audit findings, and a remedial tool to address the gaps identified during the recent management performance assessment of the Department. Quarterly reports would be required on various issues, including the payment of Funza Lushaka bursaries on time to institutions and students, teacher supply and redeployment to match posts. The spending and service delivery on the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Development Initiative had to be improved. The Minister, in conjunction with provincial departments, was asked to promote a focus on inclusive education programmes but needy learners must have access to special schools with properly trained teachers. E-education must be accelerated. It was recommended that Umalusi should get extra funding to allow it to carry out its mandate effectively. Special recommendations on filling of vacancies and resolving irregular expenditure were offered for the Education Labour Relations Council, whilst South African Council of Educators was asked to reconcile registration systems between itself and the Department to ensure accuracy of data, and to fast-track Continuing Professional Teacher Development programmes. This Committee also asked the Minister of Finance to consider allocating additional funding to projects that would improve basic education, including incremental introduction of African languages, access to libraries, early childhood education, inclusive education, and better assessments and training.

The Portfolio Committee on Communications echoed the AG's observations on past instability of leadership in the Department of Communications, and recommended that it must prioritise filling vacancies, since these impacted negatively on service delivery, as well as critically assess the effectiveness of its performance management systems. The AG had highlighted several performance concerns for this Department and its entities. Whilst the Committee appreciated the new Minister's commitment, in August 2013, to address the poor performance of under 50% of targets, he was also asked to set realistic and achievable targets, ensure the necessary sanctions against those transgressing PFMA and Treasury requirements, and ensure, in particular, that capacity is sourced for internal audit units and to fulfil the monitoring responsibilities.

The Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs expressed its dissatisfaction with this Department's handling of some policy and legislative projects, such as the Municipal Property Rates Amendment Bill and National Traditional Affairs Amendment Bill, as well as its failure to provide monthly financial statements as requested by the Committee. It highlighted that not only had there been inconsistent provincial intervention into municipalities (in terms of section 139 of the Constitution) but even when this had happened, the projections tended to be over-ambitious, failed to consider long-term sustainability, or failed to ensure transfer of skills by administrators. Provincial legislatures often did not exercise oversight over provincial executive action. For these reasons the Committee urged that the proposed legislation on support, monitoring and interventions must be expedited. It repeated ongoing concerns about the need to improve municipal technical and financial capacity to operate and maintain bulk infrastructure. The Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency was urged to address this, plus ensure that capital grants would not continue to be used for operational costs such as salaries.

The Department was asked to provide specific reports, within set timeframes, on audit outcomes of all municipalities from 2009 to date, the plan of action to reach clean municipal audits, use of consultants, skills transfer plans, debt analysis and recovery and reports on disaster damage from 1998 to date, with a more effective strategy for the future. Further reporting was also required on municipal managers and their performance contracts, and the steps taken against those not meeting deadlines or complying, including criminal actions. Progress reports were requested on various pieces of legislation, and on progress of the Local Government Turnaround Strategy progress. The Committee wanted clarity on the roles and functions of the Anti-Corruption Inspectorate and the gaps in the Municipal Systems Infrastructure Grant, including plans to address any obstacles, ways to improve the spending and ways to assist municipalities to address any obstacles. The Department was requested to ensure closer consultation with Parliament on legislation and policy developments.

The Minister of Correctional Services was reminded of outstanding Committee requests arising both from the Portfolio Committee's oversight visits and previous BRRRs. The Portfolio Committee reiterated previous concerns about the credibility of information in the Annual Report, and the failure of the Department to properly align strategic plans and annual reports. The Committee noted its own repeated attempts to persuade the Department of Correctional Services to take Committee recommendations and Departmental accounting responsibilities seriously, but now noted that urgent intervention would be needed to ensure that the mandate was realised. The 2010 Turnaround Strategy largely failed to address weaknesses in the Department, and the White Paper's objectives for rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders were hampered by continued administrative challenges, including leadership instability, lack of discipline and financial mismanagement. The Minister was urged to now implement the recommendations from the Ministerial Task Team and consider the alternative recruitment strategies previously recommended by the Committee. The Committee overall expressed its continuing concerns about the small allocations to programmes responsible for the welfare and rehabilitation of offenders, which did not take into account the need to reduce the high recidivism and repeat offender rates, and reiterated that in order to realise any improvements there would have to be significant budget allocations to Rehabilitation, Care and Social Reintegration programmes.

The Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans focused on the need to correct internal audit and financial management functions, and asked the Minister and Secretary for Defence to ensure that investigations were done into financial misconduct, especially since severe under-funding of this Department heightened the need for stringent oversight over all spending. For Armscor, the Minister was asked to ensure appointment of a permanent CEO, training in scarce skills, and to clarify its position in the Defence Review, as well as report on delays and cost overruns of acquisition projects. Parliament requested more reports on how benefits were allocated to deserving military veterans, and wanted clarity on allocations of R10.4 billion to the Special Defence Account, and use of funds earmarked for deployment in the Central African Republic. The Defence Review must be urgently finalised, as lack of progress here was hindering further work on modernisation and new strategies. Finally, the Minister was urged to ensure the speedy establishment of the Defence Works Capability, to take over defence-infrastructure maintenance from the Department of Public Works.

The Portfolio Committee on Economic Development expressed satisfaction with the compliance record and achievements of the Economic Development Department. However, it made recommendations on staffing levels, the internal risk and audit unit, and called on the Department to ensure mainstreaming of gender balance and increase its efforts to support small enterprises and cooperatives. Its organogram should be reviewed, to allow it to support the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Commission fully, and it should ensure that other departments cooperated more closely in their work with the Small Enterprise Finance Agency.

The Portfolio Committee on Energy, in a lengthy report, noted that the Department of Energy had not received adequate funding because its financial baseline was incorrectly calculated, so that despite spending 98.9% of funds it only achieved 58% of targets. This Department should increase its attempts to transform the liquid fuels sector, and improve data management. The Committee had noted that despite an increased rate of electricity connections, the working relationships between municipalities, Eskom and the Department were not ideal. The Committee requested several reports, including updates on plans, programmes for people with disabilities, and the household electrification strategy. The Minister of Energy was asked to ensure that the Grand Inga Hydro Power Project is treated as a priority project, that SANEDI be empowered to engage in energy efficiency programmes, and to expedite delivery of Integrated Energy Centres, particularly in rural areas. The Minister and relevant partners should ensure intensification of skills in the sector, and proper coordination of and commercialisation of research in the entities. The Minister should exercise robust oversight over Energy Efficient Demand Side Management Programme Municipalities and Eskom, and entrench clear policies on gas and new entrants to the market. In future, government properties would have to be energy and resource-efficient, so joint plans in this regard were requested from the Ministers of Energy and Public Works. The Minister of Energy was asked for assurances on several elements of the Independent Power Producers Procurement Programme, and the Committee said that the financial and trade sectors should collaborate also to find solutions to renewable energy challenges. The Minister should ensure increased public awareness around nuclear programmes. The Ministers of Energy and Transport should work together to develop green transport strategies and programmes, and to present research on fossil fuels by the end of 2014/15.

The Standing Committee on Finance asked the Minister of Finance to ensure that a number of reports on individual Treasury programmes were produced, clarifying matters such as failure to meet targets, how Treasury would improve performance, address lack of capacity, and ensure that municipalities complied with reporting regulations. The finalisation dates for the fraud and corruption prevention framework and One-Stop Border Post policy were requested. A detailed forecast was required of South Africa's net debt, provisions and contingent liabilities over the medium term. The Minister was asked to formulate a plan to remedy under-expenditure on pensions and benefits programmes, and to report on the status of various grants, funding and training, including initiatives in the provinces. The Minister must explain the R303 million unspent funds in the Employment Creation Facilitation Fund. National Treasury must address improvement of its human resources, the high sick leave rate in its senior management service, its long disciplinary processes and increased consultancy payments.

The Portfolio Committee on Health commended the Minister's strong stewardship, but noted some challenges in tracking performance and spending in the Department because of inadequate definition of some indicators and some unreliable data. In future, quarterly reports would be required from the Compensation Commissioner for Occupational Diseases, who did not submit an annual report. This Committee appreciated the fact that the Department was taking a strong line in recovering expenses from employees who lost laptops, or did not honour hotel bookings. Particular appreciation was expressed for HIV initiatives. The Minister was asked to ensure that norms and standards were properly implemented, that hospitals were managed by skilled professionals, as well as try to increase recruitment and retention of health personnel in peri-urban and rural areas. The budget for the Department overall, and the allocations to mental health, must increase, to allow, amongst others, for increased monitoring of TB in the mining sector and strengthened GeneXport technology, the updating of the cancer registry, the financial demands of entities and to address the high burden of disease. The National Health Laboratory Services legislation must be amended to ensure full delivery on its mandate. Finally, the Portfolio Committee recommended that Government should move away from a hospicentric approach to focus more on re-engineering primary healthcare, specifically maternal care.

The Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training commended the Department on broadening access to post-school education and artisan development programmes. It urged the Department to attend to the necessary Environmental Impact Assessments for the two new university sites. The Minister was asked to pay particular attention to specific concerns listed for each of the Department's programmes. The Minister should request additional funding for specific universities, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, a curriculum review and review of funding norms in the Further Education and Training sector, implementation of the National Senior Certificate for Adults, and to enable the SA Qualifications Authority to digitise pre-1992 records, and this body was also urged to hasten and improve its processes for verifying qualifications. The Minister was asked to develop a funding mandate for the examination function of Umalusi. The Minister must ensure filling of vacancies, to address the shortfall on 37% of delivery targets, and come up with retention strategies. Strong leadership was required to ensure accountability. Various entities were urged to prioritise employment of persons with disabilities. The Department was asked to check data of universities and follow up inconsistencies, and to urge government entities to open their workspaces for integrated learning for FET and University of Technology graduates.

The Minister of Home Affairs was commended on the significant progress in achieving the targets for refugee management turnaround times, birth registrations, provision of IDs for the youth, and for implementing electronic queue management systems and reduced turnaround times. However, the Portfolio Committee suggested special interventions, such as after-hours work, to address backlogs in permanent and temporary residence permits, which was negatively affecting the country's aim to attract 50 000 skilled immigrants each year. The Departments of Home Affairs, Trade and Industry, Labour and Education should coordinate their efforts to identify numbers and types of skills required. The Portfolio Committee was disappointed that the audit report was qualified, and urged that any early warnings of under-performance must be immediately addressed, and that management must strengthen its governance and improve accountability.

The Minister was asked, for the sake of security, to prioritise the IT Modernisation Programme, to improve performance and prevent under-spending, and to improve finalisation times on disciplinary matters. The Minister must urgently resource the Counter-Corruption Unit. The Ministers of Home Affairs and Public Works must report on the continued delays on various projects, and discuss alternatives to the present arrangements for Home Affairs buildings. The Minister must finalise the regulations to the Immigration Amendment Bill and Refugees Amendment Bill in this financial year, and present the Draft Immigration Policy and a draft Border Management Agency Act to Parliament. The Committee asked the Independent Electoral Commission to put more emphasis on voter education, and expand youth voting outreach programmes. The Film and Publications Board and Independent Communications Authority of South Africa relationships needed to be improved and better aligned. The Minister and National Treasury should consider how to encourage more use of Government Printing Works, which showed improved quality yet declining revenues. Appropriate, speedy technology was needed to ensure proper registration and management, integrity and security of all civil records against destruction by war, unrest or natural disasters. South Africa and other SADC countries were urged to share experiences on management and control of migration. It urged the ratification of the SADC Protocol on Facilitation of Movement of Persons.

The Minister of Human Settlements was requested to ensure that the Department of Human Settlements (DHS) would develop ways to assess the capacity of municipalities before accrediting them, to review the National Housing Code to ensure that title deeds were handed over with houses, and to come up with action plans to address all issues identified by the AG, Public Service Commission and FFC on the work of the DHS. A report was requested, within 30 days, on the use of consultants. The DHS was requested to brief Parliament on the Mortgage Default Insurance process, disaster expenditure proposals, and projects in mining towns. This Department was also asked to prioritise the filling of vacant posts, acquisition of office space, and to improve its performance in implementing the Rural Housing Infrastructure Grant (RHIG). The Committee wanted FFC to conduct a study on the discrepancy between the growth of budget allocation and the number of units delivered, and recommend a relevant intervention strategy and policy regulation to Parliament by February 2014.

DHS was also asked to make recommendations to National Treasury on a review of the Division of Revenue Bill to enable the Urban Settlement Development Grant (USDG) to be extended to secondary cities and mining towns. The Minister must ensure closer alignment between budget allocations and construction of units, and a comprehensive integrated human settlements policy legislative framework must be drawn that incorporated sanitation, housing cooperatives, and backyard dwellers. Municipalities must be assisted with land audits and land acquisition, and MECs must report on purchase of land for human settlements. This Committee also made recommendations to the Minister of Finance, stressing its view that the DHS was now ready to manage the RHIG grants, but requesting a re-scheduling to an indirect Schedule 6B grant. Although some municipalities were not using the USDG as intended, for infrastructure improvements, the Committee recommended that it now should perhaps be extended to allow backyard dwellers to access housing with secure tenure. It asked Treasury to draw specific notes on how this grant must be used, or at least to ring-fence a portion for infrastructure development. The Minister of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation was asked to monitor proper transfer of the sanitation function to the DHS.

The Portfolio Committee on International Relations commended the overall performance by the Department, and its correct use of budget, and commended the work of the Ministerial Task team to monitor compliance. The Committee cautioned that the African Renaissance Fund might pose some challenges to service delivery programmes, and the missions abroad might expect decreased developmental support from cooperating partners in the face of global recession. The Minister was asked to report back on how strategic priorities and the organogram could be worked to ensure a more streamlined, cost effective and responsive approach to changing needs. The Minister must prioritise the upgrading of ICT infrastructure and train ICT officials to implement a new and comprehensive strategy. It was recommended that foreign policy should focus on emerging trends, including space technology development, climate change and sustainable development and energy.

The Portfolio Committee on Justice and Constitutional Development submitted a detailed report setting out a number of requests for specific reports on operational issues, ranging through the building and maintenance of new courts, appointment and vetting of staff, updates on the TRC process, updates on initiatives for vulnerable groups, establishment of dedicated sexual offences courts, Guardian's Fund services, judicial training and legislative amendments. This Committee set out, and urged the Minister of Finance to give sympathetic consideration to the requests for additional funding for the Department, the National Prosecuting Authority, Legal Aid South Africa, the Public Protector, and the South African Human Rights Commission, to enable them to fulfil their mandates. Detailed observations and summaries were given on each of these entities' programmes.

The Portfolio Committee on Labour noted that this Department did not achieve 47% of its targets and had under-spent by R120.7 million. The Minister of Labour was asked to ensure that the Department develop clearer indicators, come up with a remedial plan to ensure that it could achieve its targets, and ensure strict compliance with Treasury regulations in future, in addition to ensuring that non-compliance by staff is properly sanctioned. Sufficient resources must be made available, particularly to the Inspection and Enforcement Services programme, to ensure proper monitoring and enforcement of labour legislation. The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration was asked to play a more proactive role in resolving labour disputes, and the Minister must ensure that it was appropriately capacitated to do so. Job creation initiatives by the Unemployment Insurance Fund and the Industrial Development Corporation were commended, but the Minister was asked to ensure that the sustainability of all jobs must be reported to Parliament. The call centres must be fully capacitated and their effectiveness monitored. The Minister was asked to ensure the development of mechanisms to ensure that businesses owned by foreign nationals were complying with South African labour legislation. The Minister must monitor and report on the turnaround of the Compensation Fund.

The Department of Mineral Resources was urged by the Portfolio Committee to specifically address issues around recruitment, retention, and building of capacity to ensure compliance with legislation. It must review the indicators used to measure performance on projects impacting on vulnerable groups, since the AG had reported that many mining companies were not reporting on compliance with social and labour plans, and must develop a clearer scorecard on compliance with the Mining Charter, a point that the Portfolio Committee had also raised in the previous year. The Department was urged, overall, to improve the quality of its performance information, and to improve its stakeholder engagement and outreach to communities when formulating or implementing mineral industrial policies. It must track developments in integrated financial management systems and ensure full alignment of its own licensing processes with legislative requirements. It must improve on training, both of employees of the industry and of mining communities, in conjunction with the Mining Qualifications Authority.

The Portfolio Committee on Public Enterprises was concerned that non-alignment of performance information across the Annual Performance Plan and Annual Reports made it difficult to track the achievements of the Department of Public Enterprise (DPE), and it must also improve its financial management and ensure quality spending to reach targets. Although it had ensured stability in most State Owned Company (SOC) boards, a legal framework was needed to support and enable better performance in those SOCs. Full reports were requested by the Portfolio Committee on audit findings, litigation and contingent liabilities and efforts to strengthen controls. The Minister of Finance was asked to ensure the necessary budget allocations to ensure successful long-term implementation of the turnaround for South African Airways, and to consider more funding for the DPE itself to address its human resource constraints. National Treasury was requested to develop a framework for funding SOCs' rural development programmes. The Minister of Public Enterprises was asked to ensure that objectives were measurable and properly quantified in future, and that strategic and annual reports correlated, as well as to strengthen the audit function. This Minister was also asked to increase oversight over SOCs through robust and regular interaction with their Chief Executive Officers, board members and audit committees, to undertake regular oversight visits to infrastructure projects, and to ensure that SOCs implemented government's policy objectives. The Minister was asked to consider introducing Shareholder Management legislation that would empower the DPE to have more effective oversight over the SOCs, and consider implementing the recommendations of the Presidential Review Committee on State Owned Companies. Finally, it was noted that closer alignment was needed of both planning and implementation across the three spheres of government.

The Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration acknowledged the negative impact of the Cabinet reshuffle on the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and was critical of insufficient funding and inadequate planning for the establishment of the National School of Government from the former Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA). Although DPSA achieved only 69% of targets, the Public Service Commission was commended on its satisfactory work, and National Treasury was requested to increase PSC's budget, particularly to allow it to extend its mandate to all spheres. DPSA was asked to improve targets for affirmation of people with disabilities, to pay more attention to ICT programmes in the rural Thusong Centres, to focus on value for money and to conduct a proper analysis of data to isolate the cause of lack of productivity in some sectors and address community dissatisfaction. The Committee was critical of insufficient collaboration between the DPSA and external research councils and asked it to report how it would improve scarce skills. The Department was urged to expedite the Public Administration and Management Bill, to address challenges in section 100 interventions, anti-corruption programmes and improve compliance.

The Minister was asked to introduce a Consequences Management Strategy to deal with non-compliance with laws, regulations, policies and sound financial management practices in the public service and to report on whether the Disciplinary Code and Procedure for the Public Service was helping the public service to deal with disciplinary issues, including failure to meet disability targets. Exit strategies must be formulated to ensure that skills were passed on by departing employees to other identified people, and that all ministers would end "evergreen" contracts of consultants. The Committee urged National Treasury to attend its meetings whenever cross-cutting issues were addressed, and called for a full report from the Government Employees Pension Fund and Administrator on the last three years of pension payouts and challenges. PALAMA was requested to ensure proper tracking of graduates of the Breaking Barriers to Entry project, efficient models for funding of trainers, and more attention to the Service Charter. The State Information Technology Agency's failure to match targets and spending would have to be monitored and its pricing models reviewed to ensure it was effective and competitive. DPSA was finally asked to report on its perspective on the concept and features of a developmental state.

The Portfolio Committee on Public Works tabled a long list of its reporting requirements for the Department of Public Works, with timeframes, ranging from audit queries and requests for full details of exactly what remedial action would be taken, to reports on its human resource and training challenges, the financial health of the Department, its Property Management Trading Entity and Independent Development Trust. The Minister was asked to ensure that the national, provincial and municipal asset registers would be aligned by the end of the 2014/15 financial year. Policies must be determined for State funerals and functions. The Minister must ensure that the Department would focus on attracting and retaining the required technical skills, that all staff would be held accountable for unauthorised, irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure and that guidelines would be drawn for the Department's disciplinary committees on appropriate sanctions. Monthly financial statements must be provided to the Portfolio Committee in future. The Minister must monitor the role of consultants on construction projects, and both consultants and contractors must be held accountable for large overrun costs. Closer monitoring of variation orders was also required, to ensure that the State, overall, always received value for money spent. The Department should improve standard operating procedures to record actual achievements accurately, and monitor the completeness of source documentation.

The Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform noted appreciation for the improved spending by the Department (DRDLR). The Committee had questioned the apparent discrepancy between money spent and targets achieved, but was told that in this year more time and money had been spent on full consultations to develop policies. Treasury had not approved requests for additional funding for 2014/5, so the Committee noted that DRDLR would be required to realise savings, which would affect projects on land acquisition, rural development and implementation of new legislation. The Committee urged the Minister to seek additional Treasury allocations for the new legislation allowing extended lodgment for land restitution claims. The DRDLR and Treasury would have to agree how to finance outstanding land backlog claims by 2014, as court action in the past to force the DRDLR to act had proved very costly. The Recapitalisation and Development Programme was crucial for rural development and the Minister was asked to request more funding for this. The Minister would need to request funding to cover the budget shortfall for implementation of the new Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act. The DRDLR had to improve on implementation, and pay more attention to getting the right human resources. It was asked to monitor and report on NARYSEC, the youth employment initiative, and how it was cooperating with and coordinating other sector departments for delivery of linked services in rural areas. Ingonyama Trust Board must report on its qualified audit report and remedial action.

The Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry highlighted concerns by the AG, particularly the increased irregular expenditure by the Department and some entities and urged that these be addressed. It emphasised the need for coordinated planning across all spheres and between departments. This Committee had not had sufficient time to perform effective oversight over all the entities within its mandate and therefore requested that it be accorded priority committee status to enable this to happen in future. It expressed the need to review the National Credit Act, and for strict enforcement of that Act for protection of creditors.

The Portfolio Committee on Science and Technology commended the Department of Science and Technology (DST) on its achievements, but was worried about inadequate reports on transformation in the entities. It was concerned at continuing weakness in coordination across government, which led to delays in finalising various science strategies, and welcomed initiatives for closer relationships on the National Innovation Framework. DST was asked to provide updates on its role and work within the task team on hydraulic fracturing of shale gas in the Karoo. Various observations from oversight visits were noted.

DST should explore greater involvement of South African researchers in the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Technology Development, and investigate international science cooperation agreements, including possibilities with Bulgaria. This Committee recommended that the 440 pilot housing units built in Kleinmond to the specifications of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research could be a better alternative to current subsidised housing schemes, and hoped the model could be promoted through effective inter-governmental partnerships. It urged that the University of Fort Hare's Community–University Partnership Programme for sharing of knowledge and expertise be replicated in other universities. It recommended that the Department of Basic Education should now implement nationally the successful Cofimvaba Rural Education Initiative and Schools District Technology Project. The DST was urged to attend to conflicts in otherwise commendable projects, and continue seeking partnerships with business. The Committee supported the DST's additional funding requests.

The Portfolio Committee on Social Development highlighted that the Department of Social Development (DSD) faced challenges of delays when it had to cooperate with other departments. It expressed concern about irregular expenditure by the DSD, the SA Social Services Agency (SASSA) and National Development Agency (NDA), the DSD's shortfall in achieving 46% of targets, and failure of the Central Drug Authority to table its annual report on time. Oversight visits to Eastern Cape had shown that although the provincial departments did improve people's lives, there were substantial hindrances caused by lack of training, particularly of Home Community Based Care Workers, and inadequate office space and systems. The Minister was asked to address the shortage of personnel to implement the Children's Act, and to find ways to improve the delays in assessing and issuing foster care orders. The Committee noted that South Africa lacked qualified and accredited social workers, which led to prevalence of private inter-country adoptions, and warned that this posed an increased risk of opportunities for human trafficking, unless properly monitored.

It then urged the Minister of Social Development to intensify campaigns to de-stigmatise adoption, improve adoption processes, and ensure that the Foster Care grant did not indirectly deter full adoptions. The Minister was also asked to fast-track the implementation of the Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act after the regulations were promulgated, and to ensure more Departmental awareness campaigns on drug trafficking and use of drug mules. Rehabilitation centres must be prioritised in all provinces, and concerns around safety standards at old age homes must be addressed. The Ministers of Social Development, Police, and Justice and Constitutional Development were asked to resolve the confusion around the interpretation, implementation and reporting on the Child Protection Register and to ensure that relevant convictions were reported immediately to the DSD. The Ministers of Social Development and Human Settlements were urged to jointly discuss and find solutions to the lack of housing for places of safety.

The Portfolio Committee on Sport and Recreation commented that although expenditure on the Mass Participation Programme had grown, there was not reliable evidence that leagues and clubs were established in communities, and the Department had withheld conditional grants pending submission of provincial business plans to implement programmes. The efforts of the Minister in establishing the Transformation Commission for Sport was commended. The Committee asked the Minister to ensure that data capturing and collation in the Department improved. It recommended that additional funding should be given to sport support services, to enable continued support for federations and agencies with a good track record of improving facilities and distributing equipment in the rural areas. In addition, the Minister was urged to seek further funding for Boxing South Africa, to allow it to become financially sustainable, and to fill key posts to address governance challenges. The legislation for Boxing SA and the Institute for Drug Free Sport needed to be amended, to strengthen their mandates. The Minister was asked to ensure that recurrent concerns of the AG on internal controls, irregular expenditure, and oversight would be addressed.

The Portfolio Committee on Water and Environmental Affairs urged the Department of Water Affairs and its entities to correct the under-expenditure in this year, which had required it to return funds to National Treasury. It was also concerned that 96% of budget was spent; yet only 60% of targets were achieved. Progress reports were requested on the amounts owing to the Water Trading Entity, which was owed R4.6 million, as well as on its attempts to reconcile data. The critical role of water and sanitation under Strategic Integrated Project 18 was noted, and the Department was required to provide a budget for the medium term for this project, as a matter of urgency.

The Portfolio Committee on Tourism noted the negative impact of violent strikes and down-rating of South Africa on tourism, and urged the Department of Tourism (DOT) to ensure that relationship-building with other countries translated into economic tourism benefits. The Department must address visa delays and, in conjunction with the Departments of Finance and Home Affairs, improve customer care at border posts. The Department must ensure synergy in tourism strategies across all spheres of government, and cross-cutting issues must be addressed with other departments. The contribution by and need for partnerships with the private sector was emphasised. The Portfolio Committee thought that the tourism budget, overall, was too limited to allow sector strategies to be properly implemented and urged that National Treasury attend to this, as well as clarify its toolkits for tourism. The Department must tap into the potential for growth in the African markets and regional tourism, and look into the provinces' request that revenue from SA Tourism levies should be proportionally allocated to tourism routes in the provinces where they were generated.

While the Committee was generally satisfied with the 98% spending and performance, it urged DOT to set up proper monitoring controls over social responsibility implementation, to have early warning systems to detect fraud and to critically assess the value for money achieved from some of the Expanded Public Works tourism programmes. The Committee supported an increase in the DOT budget to cover increased advertising, opening of offices and marketing hubs in African markets, development of domestic tourism and more assistance to small enterprises with start-up capital. Noting the major challenges posed by high utility costs, it asked that the Minister of Tourism should engage with the South African Local Government Association to investigate whether municipal rates and taxes could be lowered to take account of the volatility and seasonal nature of emerging businesses, and said sustainable alternative energy sources for the tourism industry should be promoted. DOT was urged to work with other agencies to allow small enterprises near major parks to get cheaper concessions and to promote domestic tourism for rural communities living around protected areas. The Committee made several suggestions on the future hosting and format of the Tourism Indaba, and the need for more research, particularly on ways to increase the number of jobs and tourism products, and consumer research. It also recommended closer linkages between tourism sporting, cultural and off-season events, more emphasis on domestic and rural tourism, and collaborative work with the Department of Transport on reducing costs of travel to South Africa.

The Portfolio Committee on Transport noted that the Department of Transport had not reported on skills development in the industry, nor establishment of bicycle manufacturing plants in rural areas, as specifically highlighted several times by this Committee and that its targets did not address challenges identified in the 2003 National Household Travel Survey, including the cost and duration of travel. It had no strategy to make air-travel more affordable nor had it addressed the challenges faced by low-fare airlines. The Minister was asked to ensure that these matters were attended to. The Minister must also finalise the Aviation Safety Board and Committee, and the White Paper on Civil Aviation Policy and review of the Civil Aviation Strategy should be produced within the next six months. The Minister should ensure that the Department consider the establishment of training programmes to assist provinces with developing and retaining skills in the industry, including partnering with other training institutions. The Minister must prioritise the necessary legislative amendments that would enable the Road Traffic Management Corporation to fulfill its mandate, including an overhaul of the National Land Transport Act. A review was needed into the rationale for the current transportation subsidies, with more focus on subsidising passengers, not modes of transport, as previously emphasised by the Committee.

The Portfolio Committee on Women, Children and People with Disabilities noted, with concern, that the Department's objectives, targets and indicators had still not been aligned and were not measurable or attainable, and that there were still several outstanding reports that it must deliver to the Committee. The Department, however, was also undertaking activities that fell outside of its core mandate. Progress reports were needed on the status of resolutions adopted at conferences and national initiatives, the working relationship between the Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Unit and Commission on Gender Equality, outstanding country reports and agreements with provinces. The Minister was therefore urged to ensure that the Department would focus its attention on core mandates of coordination, monitoring and evaluation, to ensure that full briefings were provided on ongoing investigations, and to check that activities and initiatives falling under other departments were not duplicated. Concerns of the AG and this Committee must be addressed urgently, with monthly reports on the turnaround strategy, and detailed reports on all conferences, campaigns and initiatives. The Minister was asked to provide clarity on performance bonuses, given that only 27% of targets were achieved, a detailed account of "exorbitant" leave payouts, and a detailed breakdown on how the additional funding requested would be spent and how this would assist in programme performance. The Minister must also ensure that the Department urgently finalise its mainstreaming strategies, monitoring and evaluation framework and tools to assist other Departments in implementing issues related to women, children and people with disabilities.