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## MEDIA STATEMENT NEWS JOURNALISTS / EDITORS 06 JANUARY 2025

### Concerns regarding the collapse of old corrugated metal culverts during the rainy season in the province

The Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport wishes to address the increasing number of incidents involving the collapse of old corrugated metal culverts across the province, particularly during the current rainy season. We recognize the critical role that these structures play in maintaining our road networks and ensuring the safety of our residents and transport systems.

Following a series of oversight visit by MEC Thulasizwe Thomo and the Roads Infrastructure team, including a visit to road PI77 along R33 and N17 between Chrissiesmeer and Carolina, it has become evident that many of the culverts, some of which date back several decades, are suffering from severe wear and tear. Extreme weather conditions, compounded by prolonged periods of heavy rain, have exacerbated the vulnerability of these structures, resulting in several collapses that compromise road safety and accessibility for our communities.

As a responsive Department, we want to assure the public that we are actively addressing this issue. The Department has initiated the following measures:

- 1. Assessment and Inspection:** We are conducting a thorough evaluation of all culverts across the province, prioritizing those that have shown signs of distress. This includes visual inspections and detailed engineering assessments.
- 2. Maintenance and Repairs:** Where possible, we will undertake immediate repairs on affected culverts to restore their functionality and safety. Our maintenance teams are mobilizing resources to areas most impacted by culvert failures.
- 3. Long-Term Strategy:** We are planning for a comprehensive replacement program aimed at upgrading old and deteriorating culverts to more durable materials better suited to withstand extreme weather conditions. This initiative will be factored into our medium to long-term infrastructure development plans.

The Department urge residents to report any visible signs of culvert damage or unusual water flow patterns in the vicinity. Prompt reporting is crucial for timely intervention and maintaining road safety.

MEC Thomo said “We are going to collaborate with local municipalities to address the broader challenges posed by flooding and infrastructure resilience. I have been in the various municipalities such as Mkhondo, Dr JS Moroka and Chief Albert Luthuli just to mention the few, assessing the infrastructure with the team”.

We appreciate the patience and understanding of our citizens during this challenging time. The safety and well-being of our communities are our top priorities, and we are committed to ensuring that our infrastructure can withstand the demands placed upon it, especially during adverse weather conditions.

ENDS.

**For more information, contact Mr Bongani Dhlamini on 079 293 6515.**

