

SPEECH OF THE FREE STATE MEC FOR SPORT, ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION, MR DAN KGOHULE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE WEEK LAUNCH, 11 JULY 2011, BLOEMFONTEIN

11 July 2011

Programme Director
Honoured Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen
Comrades

It gives me a great pleasure to stand here before you on this beautiful day. It further gives me much greater pleasure to be part of this occasion which aims to rejuvenate the spirit of public service amongst us all as public servants.

I must say that this department has in recent years seen dramatic changes in terms of both form and content. Form in the sense of its public image which beforehand was perceived as the department of Mangaung African Cultural Festival (MACUFE) amongst other things. Content in terms of the caliber of personnel who are serving in it and the service delivery programmes it is running.

Because of these two factors we are now a fully-fledged Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation. Indeed a lot still needs to be done and is being done to ensure that we realise our vision and mission that we have set for ourselves.

As we embark on this Public Service Week, during which we will showcase our programmes and services, I want to extend my word of gratitude to all officials in the department for their undying commitment to ensuring quality service delivery to our communities in the Free State.

I want you to note that all your efforts are not going unnoticed. I also want to take this opportunity to thank our partners who continue to stand by us through thick and thin. Without your partnership we will not be able to do this work that we need to do all by ourselves. Your presence here is also testimony to your commitment to working with us.

Programme director, we are not just blowing our own trumpet when we say we have moved mountains to transform this department in terms of content and form. This fact has been born out by our winning of the Southern African Institute of Government Auditor's (SAIGA) Award on two consecutive years.

Like we said during the presentation of this award to us "winning the award of this magnitude is no mean task and therefore this achievement must never be underestimated. To be the winner in the category for all provincial departments in the Free State and to also achieve the highest overall score of all state departments in the country thereby rendering us the overall winner for the Annual Public Sector Reporting Awards, is indeed something worth an applause. Hard work has indeed gone into compiling this report".

I want to stand before you today and testify that our mandate to deliver sport, arts and culture services to Free State communities is indeed a huge mandate which is at the centre of enhancing nation building and social cohesion.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we engage in this Public Service Week efforts we must be mindful of another critical aspect that our government has undertaken to ensure quality service delivery to all our people: the need to evaluate performance on a continuous basis. Performance and monitoring has

become a critical aspect of service delivery. This task of publicly evaluating and reporting performance has become much sharper and whether government has realised its goals or not will be under close scrutiny.

The role of our public servants as well as our stakeholders and partners must therefore be strengthened than ever before, whether through training or other means. One of the critical skills that we have to enhance is the ability to evaluate and report. This function, which relates to strategic planning, will be enhanced in the Department as we are in the process of finalising the appointment of a strategic planner at senior management level.

Our ability to report will therefore be further enhanced. As the department we have succeeded in doing this task of monitoring and evaluation as borne out by the SAIGA awards we won in the last two financial years. According to the Southern Africa Institute of Government Auditors this department has through the 2007/2008 and 2009/2010 annual reports indeed managed to comprehensively report on its mandates. By implication the department has adhered to reporting standards and this bodes well for increased transparency and public accountability. SAIGA further stated that the score of the Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation, that is 95.19%, is the highest score ever recorded by a department since the award's inception in 2002. This is indeed a historical achievement. We must further work hard on this.

Let me again take this opportunity to thank you all.

I thank you.