

Premier in U-turn over departments

The roads and transport departments will again merge under a single political leadership, premier Phumulo Masualle has announced.



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The roads department is currently under the leadership of Public Works MEC Thandiswa Marawu, while transport is part of safety and liaison under MEC Weziwe Tikana. Masualle said the move formed part of a strategy to align government departments according to their functions. The changes will be from April 1.

"If you talk about roads maintenance and looking into how roads are being used, the functions are located at different places so it does not make sense," the premier said. It was unclear under whose leadership the two departments will fall.

Records show that under then-premier Nosimo Balindlela in 2004, transport was part of Safety and Liaison MEC Thobile Mhlahlo's portfolio. When Noxolo Kiviet took over in 2009 and made changes in her cabinet in 2010, roads became part of transport. Both functions fell under public works. But when Masualle became premier last year, roads was again separated.

Masualle said he had reconsidered the changes after the findings of a team responsible for establishing whether departments were structured properly. Masualle also said capacity in the Department of Public Works had to be improved as the province continued to rely on external agencies, such as the Independent Development Trust and Coega Development Corporation. This was because engineers at public works had migrated to the private sector, some with the

information they had.

"They now provide consultant services," Masualle said.

Source: Herald

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