



**PARLIAMENTARY  
MONITORING GROUP**

## MONITOR

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

<b>Departments' targeted projects</b>	<b>Our lead story</b>	<b>Did you know?</b>
<p><b>For Women &amp; Children</b> The Department of Social Development (DSD) and the Department of Police, will prioritise addressing crimes against women and children. Centres for victims of crime and violence will be established in Eastern Cape and Limpopo and a social crime prevention strategy will be implemented.</p> <p>The DSD will be developing human trafficking rehabilitation programmes.</p> <p>The Portfolio Committee on Justice is still working on the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Bill.</p> <p>DSD will register child abuse, neglect and exploitation on the Child Protection Register (CPR).</p> <p>Gender Mainstreaming is an ongoing area of focus for the Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, and has received substantial budget allocations.</p> <p>The Department of Home Affairs intends to phase out the Late Registration of Birth process by 2012. Parliament has insisted that it be done in a way that still protects children</p>	<p><b>Local Government Elections: Greater assistance to citizens</b></p> <p>Local Government Elections will be held on 18 May 2011. Recent changes in the laws will make these better organized, and help citizens to vote more easily. Ongoing campaigns, including those using Twitter and mobile phones, should keep people better informed. There will be over 20 000 voting stations. This time, voters WILL need to vote at the voting station where they are registered, and may not move to other stations. The lists of voting stations, addresses, and routes for mobile stations, will be available at municipal offices from 21 April.</p> <p>Any voter who cannot cast a vote on 18 May – such as police or health officers on duty - may apply for permission to cast a special vote. The opening date for Special Vote Applications is 12 APRIL and the closing date is 3 MAY at 17h00. A person qualifying for this vote can vote from 08h00 to 17h00 on 16 May, at the prescribed voting station.</p> <p>Any person who cannot leave their home, due to illness or age, can also apply to cast a special vote, between 12 April and 3 May. If the application is approved, a Voting Officer from the Independent Electoral Commission will make a home visit, to record the vote, on 16 and 17 May.</p> <p>Mobile voting station hours will be published, but everyone in the queue before the closing time will be given a chance to vote before the station moves to its new location.</p> <p>Special templates should be available for visually impaired voters.</p>	<p>You can read reports on all parliament's meetings, and download supporting documents from the PMG website. Select "All Committee Meetings" from the check box on our home page.</p> <p><b>PMG also lists calls for comment</b> <b>Select: Requests for <a href="#">your comment</a> on our home page at <a href="http://www.pmg.org.za">www.pmg.org.za</a></b></p> <p><b>Legal Aid South Africa has a toll-free advice line: 0800 110 110 for advice on child, family and land issues</b></p> <p><b>A copy of the Victim's Charter should be available in all police stations – check if this is so at your local police station!</b></p>

### For youth

**Masupatsela programme** of the DSD will recruit youth for a period of two years, to train and expose them to social development issues, particularly in the rural areas. The current number of 2 000 young volunteers is expected to triple.

**The Department of Health** is dealing directly with schools to create opportunities for biomedical engineers to be trained.

The **Military Skills Development System** at the Department of Defence aims to recruit 5 700 new recruits per year, who are trained in a number of disciplines.

The **Department of Sport & Recreation** offers funding: see next page

**The National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC)**, an initiative of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, was launched nationally on 1 March 2011, and is targeted at rural youth, including 25% disabled youth. It will offer skills development training in discipline, patriotism, life skills and rights awareness, and by the end of their two-year training, under the supervision of professionals, youths should be competent to handle local infrastructure projects in infrastructure formerly given out to tender.

**The National Student Financial Aid Scheme** has a budget of R5.527 billion for 2011, and it has recently distributed a new handbook to all universities. It will be trying to improve access for persons with disabilities. R150 million has been made available to fund full-cost studies for critical skills, and rural students.

### Departments' strategies for 2011

Government departments and State entities have been presenting their plans and budgets for the 2011/12 financial year, and the longer term, to Parliament.

**The Department of Agriculture** promises increased support to farmers, plans to increase the number of smallholder farmers to 250 000 by 2014, and emphasise the agro-processing sector. It also hoped to achieve the rehabilitation of 3,2 million hectares of agricultural land by 2014/15; and is trying to achieve 10% recovery of fish stocks, such as abalone, hake and rock lobster.

**The Department of Arts and Culture's** Library Information Services Charter, will provide a framework for eliminating illiteracy and inequality, and promote social cohesion and knowledge through reading. The Department offers bursaries for translators, editors, document designers, interpreters, human language technologists, terminologists and lexicographers. Dedicated language units in provinces must be in place by 2012 and language support will be mainstreamed

**The Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs** has announced a Special Purpose Vehicle – a new stand-alone government component – to fast-track service delivery, from April 2011. R 196 million had been allocated and local contractors should be used wherever possible. The Department invited applications for bursaries for engineering students, who would be expected to work at municipalities.

**The Department of Economic Development** has announced the merger, during 2011, of the funding institutions Khula Finance, SAMAF, and the Industrial Development Corporation's small and medium enterprise portfolio. Khula Direct would be piloted as a new project in 2011. Parliamentarians continue to stress the need to support cooperatives and small enterprises.

**The Department of Health** was urged by the Portfolio Committee to give precedence to rural areas and find incentives to keep doctors at rural hospitals. The Department announced the achievement of a price reduction of 53% in ARV medication. The Department was trying to place facilities so that nobody would have to walk more than 5 km to a health facility. Nutrition programmes would be extended. The school health programme would be extended from primary school, also to target younger children, and also about 12 million secondary school students, where the focus would be on high-risk sexual activity, offering safe and confidential counseling, HIV testing, psychosocial support and long term support for those who tested positive. Nurses would be allocated by district. Distribution of female condoms would be increased. Health facilities would be audited to test their responsiveness to female health issues and victims of violence.

**The Department of Higher Education** aimed to strengthen the Further Education and Training (FET) college sector, rationalise programmes, and emphasise workplace exposure for FET students.

**The Department of Justice** promises that there will be improvements to the Maintenance system, and a person who does not pay maintenance as ordered can have his property attached and sold.

**Legal Aid South Africa** will be extending its services for some civil cases, like damages cases.

**The Department of Labour** is hoping to introduce new labour law legislation, which would include the ability of inspectors to issue on-the-spot fines, and to strengthen the Labour Inspectorate. Improvements to services at Labour Centres now included the full processing of Unemployment Insurance and a fully information technology (IT) driven registration service and front desk. It had entered into partnerships with Eskom in Limpopo and Sasol in Mpumalanga and Free State to support programmes for job seekers.

### **For Disabled People**

National Rural Youth Service Corps initiatives (see previous page) aim at 25% disabled training.

The Department of Social Development will promote procurement especially from small enterprises that employ or are owned by people with disabilities, women or youth.

### **Sheltered Employment Factories (SEFs)**

SEFs were created in 1943 for rehabilitation of World War II veterans, but have not until now supported growth, nor complied with employment equity. The National Treasury Technical Unit will assist to convert these into trading entities, and the Department of Labour has been urged to recruit about 2000 people to them, including veterans.

### **For Rural communities**

The "War on Poverty" programme of the **Department of Social Development** and **Department of Rural Development and Land Reform**, will identify poverty-stricken wards, list individual members of deprived households, and identify suitable assistance.

### **For Military Veterans**

The Under Pressure Agency and Heritage Association are running a pilot "Half-Way House" project for Military Veterans in Gauteng, hopefully to be extended to other provinces, where veterans are trained as heritage guides. The Department of Agriculture is hoping to involve military veterans in visible patrolling, to act as a deterrent against poaching

**The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA)** targets unskilled and unemployed youth who have:- ♦ dropped out of school, or have matric with no vocational skills; ♦ are skilled and unemployed, or employed but unskilled; ♦ are self-employed. There is special focus on youth in rural areas, and disabled youth, and creating opportunities for them to serve their communities. In 2011, it aims to create about 27 000 jobs, across a wide range of programmes, and give about 35 000 micro loans, with emphasis on textile, manufacturing, mining and production skills, opening small factories, and training 500 people in artisan skills such as welding, plumbing, boiler-making and carpentry. A NYDA Youth Bank project will be started. About 2 000 youth will be enrolled in its matric re-write programme.

**The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform** has 467 projects identified under the Recapitalisation and Development Programme, which aim to address land reform projects and defunct irrigation schemes of the former homelands. Previous problems of lack of coordination across departments, and at municipal levels will be tackled.

**The Department of Public Works'** Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) was outlined to the Portfolio Committee on 1 March 2011. The EPWP aims to create at least 100 days of work per person per year. The Department was trying to cover as many households as possible, and a number of different departments and non-profit organisations provided programmes for infrastructure, environment and culture, community works. The National Youth Service Programme focused on training the youth in artisan trades, with six months each spent on theory and practice. Parliamentarians have asked for lists of rural spread and programmes to monitor.

**The Department of Social Development** will try to link 50 000 grant beneficiaries to economic activity and community development, to assist them to become self-supporting. Social behavioural change, HIV/AIDS and health are seen as key concerns in development. Further programmes to address substance abuse and peddling will be created through the Central Drug Agency.

**The South African Social Security Agency** will be closing some of its paypoints soon, when it enters into agreements with the S A Post Office for a more secure direct-payment system.

**The Department of Sport** plans to increase the campaigns for mass participation in school sports. As part of the 2010 World Cup Legacy, 52 artificial turf facilities are to be created in South African Football Association (SAFA) districts, and youth programmes and community involvement are important aspects, whilst small businesses may also be operating at these facilities. People running football and social projects can apply, through the Department, for funding from the FIFA Legacy Fund of \$80 million, and experts in youth development are needed to run programmes.

**The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform's** Programme on Food Security and Agrarian Reform aims to provide comprehensive production support to 15 000 new farmers each year for the next four years. This would involve the training of extension officers and the transformation of existing agricultural colleges into training institutions, operating as "centres of excellence." Support packages for smallholder farmers will form the core of the agriculture production, health and food safety component,

**The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP)** is managed at a national level by Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and in the provinces by the Office of the Premier. It has three phases, the first aiming to meet basic human needs, the second assisting with enterprise development and the third creating village industries and access to credit facilities. It should be rolled out to 39 wards in 2011. Councils of stakeholders and Village Sector Committees will be appointed to hear needs and achieve cohesion. The aim is to empower communities to create their own jobs and maintain the infrastructure. Further Education and Training Colleges are encouraged to take in youth trainees.

### Some of the Bills pending in Parliament.

**The Immigration Amendment Bill** was introduced in March 2011, and is currently under discussion at the NCOP. The Minister of Home Affairs explained that it was introduced to put some checks and balances in place to stop the spread of organised crime, trafficking in persons and corruption, and to address abuses that had grown up around South Africa's open immigration policy. She stressed that the immigration policy should, whilst taking human rights requirements into account, also be in line with national priorities, including those of job creation. The new system is aimed at attracting highly-skilled workers. Foreign companies can obtain a business visa if they intend to engage in a business that is "in the national interest" and that will employ a prescribed number of South African citizens. The Bill was criticised as providing little opportunity for low-skilled immigrants, and civil society organisations also objected to the possibility of pre-screening at borders, and the new requirement for asylum seekers to report to a Refugee Reception Centre within five days of entering South Africa. The Department and Portfolio Committee did not support these objections. The Bill also calls for all children under 16 to have their own passports, to reduce trafficking. Immigration practitioners may continue to give advice, but foreign nationals must now apply in person for visas. A positive change has been the proposed reintroduction of a provision that would allow foreigners under the age of 25 years, to obtain permits or visas to seek work in community-based organisations.

**The Refugee Amendment Bill** has been returned to the National Assembly for consideration of some amendments by the NCOP. It was introduced to rectify problems with the Refugees Act of 1998, in particular the loss of credibility in the system, which resulted from adjudications by a low-level official, and the number of improper applications that were clogging the process. South Africa has a policy to grant refugee status to people who fall into the following categories:-

- ◆ those who have a well-founded fear of persecution, and cannot avail themselves of protection in their own country;
- ◆ those whose country has been invaded by an aggressive force, or events seriously disturbing public order; and
- ◆ the dependent spouse or child of a refugee.

An asylum seeker is defined as a person who has fled his or her country of origin, and has applied for but not yet obtained refugee status, and a refugee is one whose application for asylum has been approved. Asylum seekers do not need a port of entry visa prior to entering the country, if they declare intention to seek refuge in the country. In future, a Refugee Status Determination Committee would decide applications, decisions would be automatically reviewed by the Director General of Home Affairs and appeals would lie to the Refugee Appeals Authority. In addition, an asylum seeker or refugee, whose child is born in South Africa, will in future be required submit the birth certification to a Refugee Reception Centre to ensure that the child is registered as a dependent, and can be provided with healthcare and education services.

**The Military Veterans Bill** was discussed in public hearings in March 2011. A military veteran includes any person who retired from active military service under any military organisation before or after 1961, or one who joined the South African National Defence Force after 1994. The Social Assistance Act makes provision for veterans of World War I, World War II and the Korean War, but very few veterans of these wars are still alive. The Bill proposes that a range of services may be made available to military veterans, including education, housing, free transport, healthcare and pension payments, and repatriation and burial assistance, as well as assistance being provided for business opportunities or referrals to other organisations who can help in establishing a business. A means test will apply, and not all veterans will be automatically entitled to receive benefits. It is possible that the Military Pensions Act might also be amended. Healthcare was already available, at military institutions, to about 2 000 veterans older than 60, and those who suffered from chronic illnesses. It has been suggested, during the public hearings, that a Medical Appeal Board might be needed, and a wide range of both mental and physical conditions may need to be treated. Some public comments called for recognition also of non-military contributions to achieving democracy, which involved personal sacrifice. Other submissions stressed the need to build communities and re-empower victims and noted that children who had been involved in the conflict required as much support as older veterans. Responses by the Department will be given on 10 April.

**The Protection of (State) Information Bill** has received much criticism and attention, but is still under consideration by an ad hoc Committee, which has until June to consider it and report back to Parliament. There have already been substantial changes including the deletion of all references to the "national interest", addressing of concerns about protection of whistleblowers, and a new definition of "national security".

**The Protection of Personal Information Bill** is still under consideration by an ad hoc Committee.

Reports are expected....	Reports are expected...	New initiatives....
<p><b>The Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform</b> held public hearings on 16 March to discuss conditions faced by rural farm workers and farm dwellers. They noted that although The Extension of Security of Tenure Act makes provision for the Minister to make funding available, this has not been done. The Draft Land Tenure Bill of 2010 has also come under criticism. Long term plans are needed for about 1 500 redistributed land units. The Committee still needs to issue its full report.</p> <p><b>The University of the Western Cape's Centre for Disability Law and Policy</b> recently expressed concern at South Africa's inadequate performance in complying with international conventions on disability and children's protection. It urged that legislation relating to disabled people was not being properly funded, that political will was not strong enough, and suggested that Parliament should call the Executive to account.</p> <p><b>The Department of Social Development</b> has stated that it will be undertaking an extensive campaign to address access to special schools for the disabled that would be far reaching</p> <p><b>The Department of Transport</b> still needs to make available full details on the Shova Kalula bicycle campaign for rural schoolchildren</p>	<p><b>Medium and small enterprises' problems in accessing funding</b> were discussed recently in public hearings, but a report is still to be given by the Portfolio Committee on Economic Development.</p> <p><b>The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries</b> is collating comments from the public meetings in November 2010. Its solutions should be ready to be tested in some areas by June 2011. The Department was trying to involve about 5 000 likely beneficiaries in projects where communities would share fishing rights. There would be three year projects for training and building the abalone industry. Affected communities whose abalone fishing rights were taken away could qualify for social relief payments.</p> <p><b>Communal Property Associations</b> are supposed to be established where groups of people or communities receive land from government, but these have been hindered by misunderstanding of their nature and purpose. A Mediation &amp; Transformation Practice (MTP) has now been identified by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, with full reports to be given in June 2011.</p>	<p><b>Business Unity South Africa (BUSA)</b> has started a pilot project, with unions, to set up a labour ethics hotline that parties can call for advice and support behind the scenes.</p> <p><b>The Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities</b> reports that the Advisory Council on Gender Based Violence should be in place by June 2011, and will be running a 364-day campaign against gender based violence. This Department is negotiating for unused government buildings to be converted into overnight shelters for the abused, and resource centres.</p> <p><b>The Department of Human Settlements</b> has been trying to implement innovative housing techniques, but finds that many communities are unwilling to accept them, and that there are still problems with costs and the need to import materials. This Department is still facing challenges of inadequately-trained inspectors.</p> <p><b>Productivity South Africa, an entity of the Department of Labour</b>, seeks to promote collaboration with management and labour, encourage productivity and achieve delivery through partnerships. It manages projects promoting competitiveness, business recovery, improving productivity, and turnaround. Its Turnaround Solutions projects aim to save jobs, manage retrenchments, and create new jobs. It has intervened in the agriculture, civil and construction fields, clothing and textiles, and manufacturing. It can also be called in to make proactive impact assessments and give early warning systems.</p> <p>The <b>Department of Labour</b> is hoping to introduce new labour law legislation, which would include the ability of inspectors to issue on-the-spot fines, and to strengthen the Labour Inspectorate. Improvements to services at Labour Centres will allow for full processing of Unemployment Insurance and IT-driven registration service and front desk. The <b>Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF)</b> is also to initiate a virtual office project, so that accredited clients can do unemployment functions, including claims, online. The <b>Compensation Fund</b> has decentralised claims to three provincial offices, who can receive, adjudicate, process and pay claims.</p>

**Contact details for more information:**

Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (012) 319 6000 [www.daff.gov.za](http://www.daff.gov.za)

Department of Arts and Culture (012) 441 3000 [www.dac.gov.za](http://www.dac.gov.za)

Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs: (012) 334 0600 Web:[www.cogta.gov.za](http://www.cogta.gov.za)

Department of Economic Development (012) 394 3799

Department of Health (012) 395 8402 [www.health.gov.za](http://www.health.gov.za)

Department of Higher Education and Training (012) 312 5555 [www.dhet.gov.za](http://www.dhet.gov.za)

Department of Justice & Constitutional Development (012) 315 1111 [www.doj.gov.za](http://www.doj.gov.za)

Department of Labour (012) 309 4000 / 5000 [www.labour.gov.za](http://www.labour.gov.za)

Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (012) 312 8911 [www.dla.gov.za](http://www.dla.gov.za)

Department of Public Works (012) 337 3000 [www.publicworks.gov.za](http://www.publicworks.gov.za)

Department of Social Development (012) 312 7794 [www.dsd.gov.za](http://www.dsd.gov.za)

Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA) (012) 304 5000 [www.srsa.gov.za](http://www.srsa.gov.za)

Department of Defence (012) 355 6220 / 6219 [www.dod.mil.za](http://www.dod.mil.za)

Department of Human Settlements (012) 421 1311 [www.dhs.gov.za](http://www.dhs.gov.za)

Department of Transport (012) 309 3000 [www.transport.gov.za](http://www.transport.gov.za)

Independent Electoral Commission (012) 622 5700 [www.elections.org.za](http://www.elections.org.za)

Legal Aid South Africa 0800 110110 [www.legal-aid.co.za](http://www.legal-aid.co.za)

National Student Financial Aid Scheme of South Africa 021 763 3232 [www.nsfas.org.za](http://www.nsfas.org.za)

National Youth Development Agency 08600 96884 [www.nyda.gov.za](http://www.nyda.gov.za)

South African Social Security Agency (012) 400 2000 [www.sassa.gov.za](http://www.sassa.gov.za)

Business Unity South Africa (BUSA) (011) 784 8000 [www.busa.org.za](http://www.busa.org.za)

Productivity South Africa (011) 848 5300 [www.productivitysa.co.za](http://www.productivitysa.co.za)

Compensation Fund 0860 10 53 50

Unemployment Insurance Fund 012 337 1680

University of the Western Cape's Centre for Disability Law and Policy (021) 959 9466

National Rural Youth Service Corps (012) 312 8445

Sheltered Employment: [www.labour.gov.za/contacts/statutory-bodies/sheltered-employment-factories](http://www.labour.gov.za/contacts/statutory-bodies/sheltered-employment-factories)