



Provincial Legislature
Private Bag x0051 or
Independence Ave
Bhisho, 5605

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE
Member of the Provincial Legislature

Retief Odendaal, MPL
(Democratic Alliance Spokesperson on COGTA)

Tel: -
Fax: -
Cell: 082-462 0668
e-mail: retiefodendaal@telkom.sa.net



03 March 2025

To: Hon. Zolile Williams MPL
MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs
Eastern Cape Provincial Government
Per email

Dear MEC Williams

RE: FAILED INTERVENTION IN MAKHANDA

I refer to the aforementioned matter.

It is with regret that I once again must address correspondence to you in respect of the situation in Makhanda.

When the Democratic Alliance first had an engagement with you over the collapsing state of infrastructure but more specifically, the water crisis in Makhanda some seven months ago, we reached an agreement that CoGTA would intervene by sending some much-needed technical human resources to the municipality. You acted decisively and immediately. Within a matter of days, the seconded technical support team arrived in Makhanda.

From what we could tell through the feedback from local residents as well as our DA Councilor colleagues in Makana Local Municipality, your technical support team under the leadership of Reynhardt Brittnell made quick strides in not just assessing the problems but also by providing much needed expertise and leadership.

Sadly, this progress was not to last. Clearly your support team was ruffling far too many feathers in a captured environment and in November 2024 Mr. Brittnell fled Makana out of fear for his life. Sadly, your office was kept abreast of all these developments and by what I can tell, you however failed to put measures in place to protect your team. More specifically, you were requested to facilitate/arrange a risk assessment on the security threats to Brittnell and neglected and/or failed to facilitate same. This effectively meant that Brittnell could not return to Makana.

Since Brittnell's departure we have, to the best of my knowledge, seen little to no progress in respect of the Section 154 intervention. Makhanda still experiences daily water interruptions, and your team has to date done little to stabilize the situation or at least, make demonstrable progress.

Whilst Brittnell is certainly not the only civil engineer available to be deployed in Makhanda, I find it curious that CoGTA would deploy technical experts to an ailing municipality and then allow these experts to be effectively chased out of the administration without providing them with the necessary support and backing needed in order do their jobs.

It is against this backdrop that I want to put on record that the Section 154 Technical Skills support intervention to Makhanda is failing. We simply must double down on our efforts to make some kind of demonstrable progress with regard to the collapsing state of infrastructure in this town. Key to such progress will be to make sure that CoGTA deploy the very best expertise available to this town which must include a Civil Engineer with appropriate experience in overseeing complex infrastructure refurbishment and maintenance work.

Given the aforesaid, the Democratic Alliance requests that you immediately facilitate the return of Mr Brittnell to Makhanda. Your department has already wasted a considerable amount of money by not providing him with the necessary support and protection to do the job and paying him whilst he was not fulfilling his function. If, for whatever reason, Brittnell is no longer able to fulfill the support function, that another civil engineer with suitable experience be seconded to Makana with post haste.

I furthermore suggest that you urgently visit Makhanda in order to obtain firsthand information as to the status quo in the municipality.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Retief Odendaal, MPL

Shadow MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
Constituency Head: PE South West

CC: Hon. Jane Cowley MPL