



CLLR MAPHETLE MAPHETLE – EXECUTIVE MAYOR

POTCHEFSTROOM CITY COUNCIL

STRUCTURAL COLLAPSE TRAINING COURSE

14 AUGUST 2006

14H00

POTCHEFSTROOM GOLF CLUB

Councilor Lucky Tsagae – the Speaker of the Potchefstroom City Council;

Councilor Gaba KaQhele – Member of the Mayoral Committee for Public Safety;

Councilor Sammy Thekiso – Member of the Mayoral Committee for Infrastructure;

Councilor Ina Stoltz – Member of the Mayoral Committee for Health and Environmental Services;

Alderman Chris Landsberg;

Professor Pieter Joubert;

Mr Radinaledi Mosiane – the Municipal Manager

Mr Badirwang Moumakwe – the Deputy Municipal Manager;

Mr Flip van Staden – the Manager for Public Safety;

Mr Sam Masibi – the Chief Fire Officer;

Mr Chris van der Walt – the Manager for Infrastructure;

Mr Mahesh Roopa – the Manager for Health and Environmental Services;

Mr Rex Strickland – Fairfax County Fire Department Instructor;

Mr Don Roy – the Los Angeles Fire Department Instructor;

Mr Collin Dyner – the Provincial Disaster Management Director;

Mr Ian Scher – the Rescue South Africa Director;

Sponsors;

Students;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

When I was informed about the nature of this event here today – I immediately remembered the September 11 event in the United States few years ago. The dust that came out of the Twin Towers after being hit by those planes – and most importantly, the way those walls collapsed after the hit.

One day when I was watching one of the programmes in Channel 65, a programme called Mega Structures – I realized how complicated it was to build those Towers. Programme Director, structural collapse is without a doubt one of the most technical and challenging fields of rescue and should not be undertaken by individuals without the necessary expertise and experience.

Last week Monday, our municipality launched a multi million rand shopping mall project – that will be built along the main route that travels through our City. This joint venture between the Potchefstroom City Council and the Mooirivier (Pty) Ltd. will see the building of a huge centre that needs to be erected according to prescribed standards.

I have been reliably informed that the National Disaster Management Center have entered into an agreement with the United States Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and the United Nations International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) whereby members of these Task Forces will be assisting and evaluating the presenting Structural Collapse Instructors.

Like I have mentioned before – the Potchefstroom City Council is committed to forming joint ventures with other organs of state or the private in ensuring the change in the lives of our people. Positive change will only be brought by experienced agents on various fields.

We should therefore take this moment – to show our appreciation to the confidence shown by Gauteng Provincial Disaster Management, West Rand District Municipality, Mangaung Local Municipality and Sedibeng Local Municipality for joining in this project.

We have all recently seen how houses and other buildings were collapsing in the Cape area due to unforeseen heavy rains that were experienced there. It is very disturbing to see how those municipalities are struggling at the moment – to extend and stretch their limited resources in assisting the destitute communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen - during a meeting held on Monday 26 June 2006 at the Potchefstroom Emergency Training Center, it was decided that a Structural Collapse Technician training course should be presented at the Potchefstroom Emergency Training Center from 14 August until 31 August 2006. The main objective of this training is to provide more skills and qualification to Structural Collapse Technicians.

Rescue South Africa aims to have a minimum of 500 qualified Structural Collapse Technicians in South Africa before the 2010 FIFA World Cup. The National Disaster Management Centre has entered into an agreement with the United States Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and the United Nations International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) whereby members of these Task Forces will assist and evaluate the Structural Collapse Technician Instructors trainees.

Thank you very much to the Department of Public Safety – for thinking ahead. We have seen what happened in Stilfontein not so long ago, with all those tremors that left many houses and people destitute. This area is barely 40 kilometres from our City – and this simply means that we can also experience the same things.

We are humbled by the presence of our guests from as far as United States, Gauteng and Mangaung – and please feel at home and leave a legacy to the people of this City.

I thank you.