

**BRIEF REMARKS BY PREMIER TSP MAKWETLA AT THE SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARDS
Nelspruit, Thursday 24 November 2005**

Programme Director

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

It is a special privilege for me to join members of the Mpumalanga Cabinet and Legislature, our special guests and government employees in congratulating this year's recipients of the Premier's Excellence Awards.

More often than not public servants don't get to see the fruits of their labour first-hand, or get to hear people say "Thank you" for a job well done. This evening's Awards ceremony is about thanking all our civil servants, on behalf of all the people of the province, for your professionalism, dedication to your jobs, your commitment to excellence and to Batho Pele. To say thank you for making that difference. You may not want to accept it, but your work does make a difference. Your skill and dedication make the daily lives of the people of this province even better. The few embarrassing individuals who remain in the employ of our government can no longer continue to be the centre of focus in the midst of courageous efforts everywhere.

This year we are recognising 10 teams from the Mpumalanga Public Service who have put together outstanding projects, programs and initiatives. These teams have helped educate members of their communities, kept them healthy and also assisted in putting people back on the land and thus fight poverty.

Some teams have also played a pivotal role in ensuring that our message of no violence against women and children gets through to the communities. Together they have helped improve the quality of life for all the residents of this province.

Each team we are recognizing today, is deserving of praise, and is a strong representation of the wonderful work that goes on throughout the public service every day, in each and every department.

All of us are hugely impressed at the sterling work you are doing. That is why we have deemed it necessary to reward you because you continuously search for ways to become better public servants, We hope that through this action we will be able to encourage the continued improvement of service delivery levels in our province.

The teams receiving awards today have raised the bar and set new standards of excellence in their fields. The projects and programs being recognized demonstrate the very real and tangible impact that Mpumalanga's public services have on the everyday lives of the people of this province. For that, I would like to thank every patriotic member of the Mpumalanga Public Service.

To the Assessors, those men and women who worked behind the scenes in order to make sure that we have this awards ceremony, please take a bow for your leadership, integrity and passion. I am told that you have more often than not been summoned to come back to the office at short notice. But you never gave up, you went back to finish your job.

Finally, may the contestants, on behalf of all the people of this province, once again please accept my sincere thanks and congratulations for helping build what is a people-centered province of excellence. I look forward to seeing how the continued pursuit of excellence by the public service will shape the province in the years to come.

Thank you.