



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Government working to put potholes in the past**

*Northern Cape, 10 August 2022* – Potholes will no longer be tolerated on South African roads. This was the message of Northern Cape Premier, Dr Zamani Saul, and the MEC of Roads and Public Works, Ms Fufe Makatong, when they launched Operation Vala Zonke, a campaign to fix potholes nationally, on the R374 just outside Barkley West on Monday.

The South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) will be the lead implementing agency on the pothole repair project, but will work closely with provincial and municipal roads departments throughout the country.

“Contrary to public sentiment, potholes are not only a symptom of roads that are not maintained. Like many other roads in the country, the R374, which is the main link between the R31 and the N12, has reached its design life, and the ever-increasing heavy vehicle traffic does not aid matters,” said Ms Makatong.

For 20km of the section from N12 to Barkley West, a light rehabilitation was completed in 2020, including the road being widened from 6m to 7.4m.

The 18km to Barkley West, which is the remaining section, currently shows defects which include potholes, edge breaks and crocodile cracks. The scope of the rehabilitation includes:

- Potholes repairs in the middle portion,
- In-situ recycling and stabilisation of a portion of the base and gravel shoulder (2.4m width),
- The gravel shoulders will be repaired to correct the edge drops,
- The middle portion will be treated with ralumac slurry, and
- The full road width will be sealed with double seal, using rubber modified bitumen.

“No country in the world is without potholes. How we manage it, repair and then put a long-term maintenance strategy in place will determine the eventual state of our roads. SANRAL is committed to working with the Northern Cape Provincial Government. We commend them for the quantity and quality of the data that the province submits in order for us to accurately assess the state of the roads,” said Randall Cable, SANRAL’s Western Region Manager.

The national pothole repair campaign was officially launched by Transport Minister, Fikile Mbalula, in Gauteng, with simultaneous provincial activations across all South Africa's provinces, being spearheaded by the various provincial governments.

Part of the launch included the introduction of a new Pothole Web App which the public can use to report potholes in their vicinity. The App will allow the public to raise any issues (such as uploading pictures, details of the issue and get real-time location of the road where the issue is raised) on an interactive map that will show the owners of the different roads, as well as get status updates on issues raised using a pothole ticketing system.

"We are confident that this technology will allow us to engage our road users, respond to their needs and keep them informed of the progress, every step of the way," said Dr Saul.

"Operation Vala Zonke is also geared to address youth unemployment, as we are using students who have completed training in road construction, to work on the pothole repairs, along with our internal resources," said Ms Makatong.

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