

MEDIA STATEMENT

18 SEPTEMBER 2017

MDB CONDUCTS CONSULTATIONS ON THE TECHNICAL MISALIGNMENT OF MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES

As part of performing one of its core mandates, the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) has embarked on a process to address technical municipal boundary misalignments. The misalignments happen when there are, for example, split settlements (when a municipal boundary goes through a settlement such as a suburb) or split farms (when a municipal boundary splits a parent farms into different municipalities). If left unresolved, misaligned municipal boundaries could create administrative challenges at municipal level e.g. in the management of municipal property rates when one farm is split into two municipalities. Municipal boundaries which split settlements often lead to disruptions during local elections when communities realise that a portion of their settlement is split between two municipalities which obviously translates that they cannot be the same ward.

To ensure ease of management and afford each group of MDB's stakeholders adequate time and attention, consultations are carried out in five phases. The first phase which entailed conducting boundary assessments was implemented and concluded in 2016. Phase 2 started in April 2017 and it involved conducting further technical analysis and consultations with key stakeholders which included the Chief Surveyor General, the Independent Electoral Commission, Statistics South Africa and the Department of Traditional Affairs. Provincial Executive Councils and the National House of Traditional Leaders were also consulted. Phase 3 commenced in July and is envisaged to be completed in October 2017. This involves consultations with municipal representatives responsible for technical issues such as town planning and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in their respective municipalities. This process

affords municipalities an opportunity to make inputs and provide guidance to the MDB on spatial options for resolving the technical boundary misalignments.

Phase 4 will be carried out as part of the MDB's public participation programme that will see the MDB engage in consultations with communities living in areas affected by the misalignments. This process will afford respective communities an opportunity to make comments or propose alternative configurations where possible. This demonstrates commitment by the MDB in putting people first by seeking locally developed solutions for demarcation. The public participation programme will commence in November 2017. The MDB hereby urges the public to avail themselves and be part of the process.

Following consultations with communities the MDB will consider all inputs and options received and then decide which of the technical misalignment cases should proceed to Phase 5 which will see the MDB commence with the legal process planned to start in February 2018 for conclusion in July 2018 when final municipal boundary changes are published. This process entails further consultation with the public through the mandatory publications in provincial gazettes, newspapers, radio and further public meetings where necessary. Finally, publications will be made to invite objections which will be considered before the final re-determinations are made.

The MDB is grateful for the support it has received from municipalities thus far and looks forward to the optimal participation by the South African public in affected areas. For more information and regular updates on the programme, please visit our website: www.demarcation.org.za

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