



the **dedet**

Department:
Economic Development, Environment and Tourism
MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

Building Number 4, No. 7 Government Boulevard,
Riverside Park Extension 2, Nelspruit, 1201
Private Bag X 11215, Nelspruit, 1200
Tel. 013 766 4271/4132/4148

MEDIA STATEMENT

Date: 26 June 2014

Attention: Editors, Executive Producer and Journalists

Mpumalanga recovers 16 m and launches second Consumer Court

Bethal – The Mpumalanga Consumer Court has recovered over R16, 6 million on behalf of consumers from unscrupulous business operators in the last three years. This was revealed by the MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Mr SE Kholwane at the swearing in of 15 Consumer Court Members in Bethal today.

“As a Province, we continue to be inundated by complaints from consumers who are suffering serious losses at the hands of unscrupulous business people. To signify the gravity of this matter, the Department has investigated 2027 lodged consumer cases and resolved 2093 between April 2013 and March 2014. In the process, we have recovered about R5.2 Million on behalf of consumers during the same period. We can also report that through the work of the Consumer Court, we have managed to recover over R6.3 million after resolving 1974 cases in the 2011/2012 financial year, and a further R5.1 million after resolving 1810 cases in the 2012/2013 financial year, said Kholwane.

The Mpumalanga Consumer Court was established in 2009 with only one court serving three Districts Municipalities (Ehlanzeni, Nkangala and Gert Sibande). The court was able to conduct its work through the cooperation of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development. Nelspruit and the Bethal magistrate court were used as the sitting venues of the Consumer Court.

In an effort to demonstrate government commitment in defending and accelerating the rate of resolving consumer complaints, the Mpumalanga government recently approved the establishment of the second Consumer Court which will service the Nkangala and Gert Sibande District Municipalities

The two Consumer Courts will be composed of 15 members, with eight (8) members serving the Ehlanzeni District Municipality and the other seven (7) members focusing on consumer complaints in both Nkangala and Gert Sibande Municipality District.

During the swearing-in ceremony of the new members of the two Courts, MEC Kholwane urged them to be mindful of striking a balance between government’s responsibility to develop, and grow business and protecting vulnerable consumers.





“We hope you will be able to strike a balance, having in mind that whilst it is our responsibility to develop and grow businesses, this should not happen at the expense of vulnerable consumers,” urged MEC Kholwane.

The MEC also emphasised that the Department of Economic Development and Tourism will continue with consumer awareness programmes to empower and make consumers aware of their responsibility towards their Protected Consumer Rights. He further said that the government will continue to strengthen and support the Office of the Consumer Protector to resolve consumer complaints more expeditiously.

The fifteen (15) members of the two (2) Consumers are as follows:

Ehlanzeni Consumer Court:

XXXXX
XXXX
XXXX
XXXX

Nkangala and Gert Sibande Consumer Court:

XXXXX
XXXX
XXXX
XXXX

***Issued by the Communication Directorate
Mpumalanga Department of Economic Development and Tourism
For media enquiries, contact: Mohau Ramodibe on 082 771 9950/ 013 766 4148***