

**dedect**

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Economic Development, Environment,
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North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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MEC Bitsa Lenkopane Restores Trust through Turnaround Strategy at Golden Leopard Resorts

For too long, employees of Golden Leopard Resorts (GLR) have faced delays in salary payments, pension contributions, and third-party deductions. The Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT) is pleased to confirm that these challenges are being decisively addressed. A 4.7% salary increase has been approved for all GLR employees, effective from the 2024/25 financial year, with 19 months of back pay to be processed by the end of November 2025.

“This is not merely a financial correction; it is a restoration of trust, a reaffirmation of government’s compassion, and a recognition of the human impact that administrative and financial shortcomings have had on individuals, families, and communities,” said MEC Bitsa Lenkopane.

On behalf of the North West Provincial Government, DEDECT extends a heartfelt apology to all GLR employees and their families for the hardship, uncertainty, and distress they have endured. “Your patience and perseverance have not gone unnoticed. Your commitment, even through adversity, is the foundation upon which this renewal is being built,” the MEC added.

The MEC announced that the Department has successfully presented the Golden Leopard Resorts (GLR) Turnaround Strategy to the Executive Council (EXCO), marking a significant milestone in restoring stability and sustainability at the entity. This strategy represents more than a financial intervention; it is a commitment to rebuilding institutional integrity, restoring employee confidence, and positioning GLR as a sustainable and competitive contributor to the provincial tourism economy.

The history of GLR has not been without difficulty. The entity was transferred from the North West Development Corporation (NWDC) to the North West Parks and Tourism

Board (NWPTB) without corresponding financial resources, resulting in an unfunded mandate that placed immense strain on the Board's financial position.

This was compounded by historical debt dating back to 2014, resulting in debt owed to third parties, including the South African Revenue Service (SARS), provident funds, medical aid schemes, and family court maintenance orders. These obligations have not been honoured since 2022, despite deductions being made from employees' salaries.

MEC Lenkopane acknowledged, with humility and sincerity, that part of the historical debt burden stemmed from previously unapproved budgets and Annual Performance Plans (APPs). "The Department recognises that these governance lapses contributed to the financial distress that undermined service delivery and employee welfare. We are now turning this page with purpose and integrity," she said.

The department is working tirelessly to settle historical debts and strengthen governance systems that ensure sustainable operations. The approved Turnaround Strategy has paved the way for both operational recovery and the restoration of dignity to the hardworking employees who have endured years of uncertainty.

"The GLR turnaround is not only about financial recovery, it is about building a sustainable, ethical, and performance-driven organisation that values its people, strengthens governance, and contributes meaningfully to tourism growth and job creation in the North West Province," said MEC Lenkopane.

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