

**1 person dies as fire destroys 22 shacks in Effingham Informal Settlements: Duma in liaison with Lt General Nhlanhla and SAPS Forensic Teams in order to ensure the removal of human remains**

19 May 2025

Inkosi Mhlabunzima Maphumulo House: We extend our deepest condolences to the family of the victim of the fire that broke out in Effingham Informal Settlements last night.

A 29-year-old Ayanda Ziqethu, Port St. Johns, Eastern Cape, was burnt beyond recognition.

I have sent a team from my office to meet with the family member and to express our deepest condolences.

I am in liaison with Provincial Commissioner Lt General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi to ensure that he sends his forensic team to remove the remains of the victim.

I have interacted with the National Minister of Human Settlements, Thembu Simelane and the Mayor of eThekweni, Cllr Cyril Xaba in order to accelerate our interventions.

Importantly, I am also scheduling a visit to the area to be on the side of communities in distress. They remain our priority.

At this stage, we don't know what caused the fire. We will be getting a report from the eThekweni Mayor.

Our highly dedicated roving team from the Department of Human Settlements—national and provincial— is working with eThekweni Disaster Teams.

They are doing the profiling of households in order to guide our decisive intervention.

According to a preliminary report, 22 shacks have been destroyed resulting in the displacement of 21 to 28 individual members of families.

In particular, once the roving team has finalized the verification process of households, we will be seized with the acceleration of interventions.

We commend the Minister for her swift response, especially when we are faced with disasters requiring emergency houses and building materials.

Working in an integrated fashion, we offer to do everything possible to ensure that the people of Effingham Informal Settlements rebuild their lives.

Ends

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