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**Value-add audits**

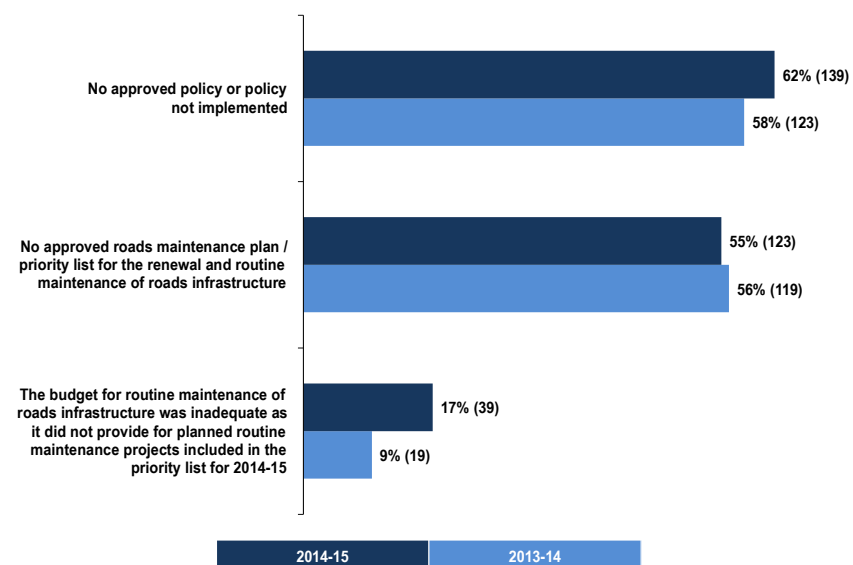
## 7. Road infrastructure

Adequate and properly maintained road infrastructure is considered a basic service and remains critically important for economic growth and development. South Africa has an estimated 750 000 kilometres of roads, of which 618 081 kilometres are proclaimed roads. National, provincial and local government share the responsibility for providing and maintaining these roads, the majority of which fall under local government jurisdiction. As such, local government has an important role to play in providing and properly maintaining road infrastructure under their control. As stated in the MTSF, the government has expanded access to basic services over the past 20 years, but backlogs remain and the quality of service is not the same everywhere.

In terms of the Constitution, the functions and powers relating to roads rest with those municipalities classified as roads authorities. The significance of road infrastructure for economic growth and development steered the AGSA to focus again road infrastructure for the 2014-15 financial year. The audit focused on the planning and budgeting for the maintenance of road infrastructure as well as delivery against these plans and budgets. We finalised the audits of 224 roads authorities nationwide.

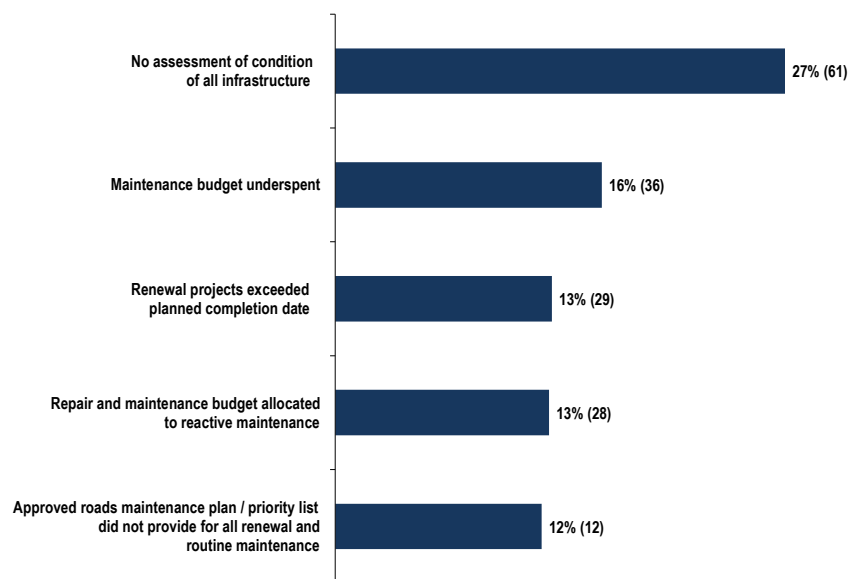
This is the third year that we executed procedures on road infrastructure. Municipalities were slow to address the audit findings raised in previous years, as indicated in figure 1. (The 2013-14 findings on the road maintenance plan were recalculated to ensure comparability with the 2014-15 reporting findings.)

Figure 1: Progress made in addressing findings previously raised



Our audit scope was expanded in 2014-15, which led to the additional findings as shown in figure 2.

**Figure 2: Deficiencies at municipalities affecting the delivery of road infrastructure**



- In certain instances rehabilitation/renewal projects have missed the planned completion dates by up to 387 days.

Ultimately, the condition of roads directly affects road safety. It has an impact on all citizens and, as such, poor road conditions create challenges for many, with unnecessary time delays, increased transportation costs and reduced access to education, health care and social services.

The most common cause of the deterioration in paved roads is neglect. If road maintenance is delayed, the cost of repairs and rehabilitation/renewal increases exponentially. To sustain basic standards of living and economic activity in our towns and cities, the planning, implementation and maintenance of basic infrastructure such as roads are critical.

Local government leadership must urgently attend to the following to ensure that government’s objectives in relation to roads are achieved:

- A suitable road infrastructure policy is key to managing this asset successfully. At 62% of the municipalities such a policy was not in place or not implemented.
- Most municipalities did not have an approved road maintenance plan / priority list to inform the maintenance and rehabilitation/renewal of road infrastructure.
- Where municipalities had a road maintenance plan / priority list, it did not provide for the maintenance of all road infrastructure within the jurisdiction of the municipality. However, the condition of all road infrastructure was not assessed to inform the road maintenance plan / priority list.
- The budget for routine maintenance of road infrastructure was inadequate as it did not provide for planned routine maintenance projects included in the priority list for 2014-15. Instances were found where 100% of the repair and maintenance budget was allocated to reactive maintenance (repairs that are done when road infrastructure defects are identified). The maintenance budget was also not spent at some municipalities.