

# No application to remove statues

The Department of Arts and Culture says it has not received a formal request to remove any of the statues in the country...

"It must be emphasised that the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 stipulates particular technical as well as consultative processes that should be followed in the case of a removal and/or relocation of a statue," the department's spokesperson Sandile Memela said.



This statue of Smuts in the grounds of the Iziko National Art Gallery has not been damaged... yet, but others have been, including one in PE dedicated to war horses of the Second Boer War.

Memela said an entity or community that wants to move or remove a statue or monument will need to undertake a 30-day public consultation process.

This will include public notifications that entail presentation to the authorities and inviting comments from affected and interested parties.

"As a result, it is advisable that a consultative process be initiated at the earliest opportunity in the process where the applicant must notify all relevant bodies, including applying to the South African Heritage Resource Agency or relevant provincial or local structures," he said.

Memela said heritage sites and national monuments have cultural significance and value because of their importance to a community in revealing a pattern of South Africa's history.

"They demonstrate a particular aspect or time of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects," he said.

The statues may also hold strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Memela said government's attitude and policy to all heritage sites, including statues of former colonial figures like Cecil John Rhodes and Paul Kruger, is based on a national policy of reconciliation, nation building and social cohesion.

Memela said government does not support nor encourage the defamation or violent removal of any statue because it does not encourage people to take the law into their own hands.

"In fact, we cannot allow anarchy and demagogues to play on the feelings of the people by whooping up emotions on

this issue.

"The process emphasises consultation and reconciliation as government policy and this should not be mistaken for capitulation," he said.

Students of the University of Cape Town (UCT) have recently embarked on protests to have the statue of Cecil Rhodes removed from the institution's grounds.

The Paul Kruger statue was also vandalised in Church Square, Pretoria. Kruger's bronze statue had lime green paint splashed over it on Sunday.

**[Editor's note: What was also vandalised was the memorial to SA's war horses in PE - [EFF damages PE horse memorial](#) - "The Horse Memorial is a registered provincial heritage site, which was erected in memory of the horses that served and died during the Second South African War (previously known as Second Boer War). The memorial was unveiled on February 11, 1905."]** [Download a comment from Walter Pike.](#)



A memorial to horses... wantonly vandalised. (Image: Public Domain)

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