

# **SPEAKING NOTES FOR MINISTER N P MOKONYANE: MINISTER FOR WATER AND SANITATION**

## **EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE: MAKANA WATER AND SANITATION INDABA**

**Date: Friday 13 March 2015**

**Time: 09:00**

**Venue: Grahamstown City Hall**

**“Water is Life, Sanitation is Dignity”**

**“Water has no Substitute” – What if this is the last drop?**

### **INTRODUCTION**

*Citizens across Makana and Grahamstown in particular have over an extended period of time borne the brunt of protracted and often unexplained water supply interruptions. During August 2013, this situation led to unfortunate and well-publicized community protests.*

### **BACKGROUND**

*As a “caring Government” and taking into account that “water is life and sanitation is dignity” and that we have a Constitutional obligation to ensure that all citizens of South Africa have access to a safe and adequate water supply, National Government intervened in the crisis experienced at that time and effectively mobilized the “Makana Water Intervention” (the Intervention) in the space of a few weeks in late December 2013.*

*This Intervention continues to be led by the Department of Water & Sanitation in collaboration with key local, provincial and national departments. These public sector partners have been working collaboratively and with great dedication since 2013 to turn around water services delivery in the Makanamunicipality.*

*Through quick intervention by the Department, working very closely with the Municipality of Makana, the Presidential Infrastructure Coordinating Committee (PICC), the Office of the Premier, the Provincial departments of CoGTA, Planning & Treasury through its Implementing Agent the Eastern Cape*

*Development Corporation (ECDC) and Amatola Water Board, a rapid diagnosis was conducted to investigate the cause of the interruptions and to develop solutions for a water services delivery turnaround.*

*As a point of departure, a “business un-usual approach” was adopted which required the mobilisation of key institutions and resources to diagnose and simultaneously address numerous water services delivery challenges across the water value chain in Makana. With the facilitation assistance of DWS, supported by the MEC: Local Government and the Office of the Premier, the Amatola Water Board was appointed by the Makana to stabilise the bulk water supply system.*

*Initial efforts of the Intervention were, and continue to be, focussed on addressing crippling supply challenges experienced by Grahamstown in particular. The focus is however now shifting to the greater Makana, with the recent work undertaken in Alicedale with the upgrading of the Waste Water Treatment Works.*

*The Makana Water Intervention, as the “engine” driving improvements in water services delivery across Makana, has adopted a holistic, multi-faceted approach which cuts across and impacts key functions within the municipality. Through its various work streams the Intervention has to date, focussed on:*

- ✓ repair and upgrade of bulk water supply infrastructure*
- ✓ increasing water storage capacity*
- ✓ ensuring the integrity of water supply reticulation networks, and*
- ✓ refurbishment and upgrade of electricity systems necessary for water supply operations.*

*Importantly the Intervention is also contributing towards the financial sustainability of Makana and hence the water services function, through the upgrading and installation of smart metering systems and ensuring that municipal staff are trained to perform these tasks.*

*On reflection, and considering that the water value chain was used as the basis for diagnosis, also recognising the complexity and symbiotic nature of the various elements of water services delivery, it noteworthy that by March 2015, a number of the challenges identified at the outset of the intervention have been addressed. It is a source of pride for the entire operational team that despite numerous on-going challenges, significant progress has, and is, being made towards implementing lasting solutions. This work must be recognised and commended.*

*Have we learnt any lessons from this particular intervention? If indeed so, how do we then take these lessons forward by using Makana as a “model intervention” and replicate the approach in other Municipalities which are experiencing similar challenges/problems?*

## **BACK TO BASICS (B2B) APPROACH**

*Without detracting in any way from the successes achieved and the current work being undertaken through the Makana Water Intervention, it is essential that lessons learnt are incorporated into the National and Provincial Back to Basics (B2B) approach and more specifically into Municipal Support Plans.*

*The Ministry of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) is pursuing the Back to Basics (B2B) approach in order to sustainably address challenges faced by local government, strengthen municipalities and instill in them a demonstrable sense of urgency towards improving the lives of citizens.*

*In terms of this approach clear benchmarks of acceptable performance have been set in an effort to ensure that all municipalities do indeed perform their basic responsibilities every day without fail and without compromise. The Back to Basics Programme (B2B) is a programme being implemented by all of Government (three spheres).*

*The B2B approach has the whole-hearted backing of Cabinet as its implementation is monitored through an Inter-Ministerial Task Team on Service Delivery established by the President. This Inter-Ministerial Task Team which has the mandate to:*

- ✓ *Fast track service delivery in areas where there are bottlenecks;*
- ✓ *Quickly respond to areas where there are service delivery problems;*
- ✓ *Ensure that service delivery is improved;*
- ✓ *Ensure policy coherence and consistency;*
- ✓ *Ensure alignment of infrastructure development and operations and maintenance plans with national, provincial and municipal IDP's;*
- ✓ *Conduct comprehensive capacity and compliance assessments across sectors to determine the ability of municipalities to deliver against national programmes; and*
- ✓ *Propose initiatives to strengthen delivery institutions including appropriate delegation, devolution and/or assignment of powers and functions.*

*Acceptable levels of performance mean therefore that municipalities **MUST**:*

- *Put people and their concerns first and ensure constant contact with communities through effective public participation platforms;*
- *Create conditions for decent living by constantly delivering services to the right quality and standard, which must include:*

- *Planning for and delivery of infrastructure and amenities;*
- *Maintenance and upkeep;*
- *Ensure no failures in service, and where services do fail to restore the services with a greater sense of urgency; and*
- *Ensure that budgets are available to provide services.*
- *Municipalities must be well governed and demonstrate good governance and administration by:*
  - *Cutting wastage;*
  - *Spending public funds prudently;*
  - *Hiring of competent staff; and ensuring transparency and accountability.*
- *Ensure sound financial management and accounting, prudent management of resources so as to deliver services on a sustainable basis and bring development to communities; and*
- *Build and maintain sound institutional and administrative capabilities, administered by dedicated and skilled personnel at all levels.*

*In summary the pillars of the Back to Basics programme are:*

- *Put people first and their concerns – listen and communicate;*
- *Deliver municipal services to the right quality and standard;*
- *Good Governance and sound administration;*
- *Sound financial management and accounting;*
- *Building institutional and administrative capabilities.*

## **CURRENT B2B PROGRESS IN EASTERN CAPE**

*In Eastern Cape the launch of the Back to Basics Programme took place on 12 November 2014 and agreements have been signed between the Mayors and MEC regarding the implementation of the programme.*

*Despite the rollout currently being on hold, significant work has already been done by the multi-disciplinary Provincial Task Team (PTT) with representation from the following Departments and entities: Eastern Cape Local Government and Traditional Affairs, National CoGTA, Provincial Treasury, SALGA, MISA and Department of Water and Sanitation.*

*The initial focus of the PTT is to conduct diagnostic assessments in every municipality and to develop support plans for each municipality. The Department of Water and Sanitation is working actively with the PTT and through bi-lateral engagements with the Municipalities to develop support plans and develop an intervention strategy.*

*The municipalities in Eastern Cape will be categorised according to three categories:*

- *Well Performing (Functional) (doing well);*

- *At Risk (Challenged); and*
- *Dysfunctional (Requiring Intervention).*

*Water and sanitation issues are indeed reflected in the DWS Municipal Action Plans. In developing the Municipal Action Plans, the Department has ensured that there is alignment between the 16 legs of the Municipal Strategic Self-Assessment (MuSSA) and the 5 pillars of the Back to Basics (B2B) programme.*

## **CONCLUSION**

*Through the process of developing the support plans it is necessary for us to also always take cognisance of the expected outcomes of the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) Outcome 9 in relation to water and sanitation (water services). Cabinet has set a clear goal of 90% reliable water services by 2019. In working towards this target we have to be aware of the current benchmark for reliable services in the priority district municipalities:*

- *Currently only 43% reliability; and*
- *57% of households reported that they do not have reliable services, meaning that they experience service interruptions for more than 2 consecutive days and more than two weeks in total per year.*

*Therefore to achieve this 90% target for reliability within 5 years requires an improvement of 10% per annum. This will require a major effort and commitment in terms of the management, operation and maintenance of existing infrastructure and the provision of new infrastructure.*

*Our Back to Basics support plans must, as we are doing in Makana, therefore have a focus on:*

- *Addressing households that do not have access to operational water and sanitation systems;*
- *Failed systems;*
- *Operations and maintenance;*
- *Aged and new infrastructure;*
- *Water security;*
- *Improved governance including capacity and institutional aspects.*

*This means that we need to pool our resources, as we have done in Makana, to ensure that we effectively address the aforementioned focus areas and achieve the target of 90% by 2019. With the good work already done in Makana and with sustained effort, these targets should not be difficult.*

*I Thank you.*