



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR ORAL REPLY

QUESTION NO 3699 (★715)

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(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 42)

3669. Mr M R Mashego (ANC) to ask the Minister of Water and Sanitation:

Whether, noting that the Census 2022 has drawn attention to migration to the Republic's economic hubs, particularly Gauteng and the Western Cape, which will result in the current water and sanitation systems in the two provinces being severely strained by an increase in population and lead to water shortages and the deterioration of sanitation facilities, his department has developed plans to make sure that the infrastructure for water and sanitation in both provinces is adequate to meet the demands of a growing population; if not, what is the position in each case; if so, what are the relevant details in each case?

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MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

The Department has developed a comprehensive integrated national water and sanitation master plan, which is intended to guide the water sector with investment planning for the development of water resources and the delivery of water and sanitation services over the horizon until 2030, and beyond. The plan identifies key actions in the water sector and allocates roles and responsibilities to all in the water sector, from the various tiers of government, the private sector, and other stakeholders for the implementation of the plan. It also includes a list of key programmes, projects, and actions to be implemented for the protection and development of the national water resources, and for the provision of adequate and reliable water and sanitation services for all citizens. It addresses the enabling requirements, such as the institutional and legal arrangements for implementation, operation and maintenance, funding requirements and models, and monitoring and evaluation models.

Demand for water in Gauteng has grown rapidly, largely due to population growth, and partly due to increasing leaks in municipal distribution systems. The planners in DWS anticipated this growth in demand and put in place plans to address it as far back as the 1980's, through the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP), which transfers water from Lesotho into the IVRS. The R40 billion Phase 2 of the LHWP has been delayed by nine years. It is now under construction but is only due to be completed by 2028.

Rand Water's total current supply capacity is 5 200 million litres of treated drinking water per day, and it is already exceeding its abstraction limit from the IVRS. It will only be possible for Rand Water to increase its abstraction of water from the IVRS after LHWP Phase 2 comes online.

Rand Water has a R35 billion capital programme which is timed to result in substantial additional treatment and storage capacity becoming available when LHWP Phase 2 comes online. This includes the recently completed R3.5 billion augmentation of the capacity of its Zuikerbosch Water Treatment Plant by 150 million litres per day. This additional capacity is now contributing to reducing the risk of shortages of water for Rand Water's municipal customers but is also contributing to the over-extraction of water from the IVRS by Rand Water.

In this context, the demand-supply relationship for treated water in Gauteng is very tight and the system is vulnerable to disruptions caused by heavy load shedding, electro-mechanical breakdowns or theft of cables. Usually, such breakdowns would not have a noticeable effect on water supply due to the ability to draw on reserve supply capacity, but now there is no reserve supply capacity. Because the water is usually gravity-fed from municipal reservoirs to households, high-lying areas are worst affected by disruptions in supply.

To reduce the risk of water supply disruptions in future, the municipalities need to improve their billing and revenue collection and allocate increased funding to maintenance and to reducing leaks. There are also investments that they can make in pumps and reservoirs which can improve their ability to withstand the kind of disruptions described above (the City of Joburg is currently implementing several such investments).

The Minister of Water and Sanitation is coordinating regular meetings with Rand Water and the Mayors of the Gauteng municipalities. In addition, officials from Rand Water and the Gauteng municipalities are having daily meetings to ensure improved coordination of responses to disruptions in supply.

Even after LHWP Phase 2 comes on stream, Gauteng's long-term water consumption will need to be carefully managed, because there are limits to which further phases of LHWP or other water transfer projects can continue to provide additional water to Gauteng at an affordable cost. The reality is that South Africa is a water-scarce country with limited sustainable water resources and amongst the top 30 driest countries globally.

DWS will be working with Rand Water and the municipalities in Gauteng to implement a more effective communications strategy regarding the need for people to use water more sparingly. Average per capita water consumption in Gauteng is 253 litres per day compared to the world average of 173 litres per capita per day. If water supply disruptions are to be avoided in Gauteng in future, a culture of careful water use needs to be promoted and awareness raised of the fact that, if some people do not use water sparingly, other people will get none.

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Over half a million people have migrated into the Western Cape in the last fiscal year to date with vandalism of infrastructure exacerbating the issue. This has put a strain on water and sanitation infrastructure in the province. A total of R3,146 billion has been allocated by the Department for the next three fiscal years to fund infrastructure projects in the province through the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) and Water Services Infrastructure Grants (WSIG).

DWS is implementing several water resource infrastructure projects in the Western Cape, to ensure security of supply of water. For example, the R4 billion project to raise the wall of Clanwilliam Dam is currently underway. The project will enable improved assurance of water supply for agriculture and provide for water allocations to resource-poor farmers on the West Coast.

The TCTA is in the process of raising finance for the Berg River Voelvlei Augmentation Scheme. The project will increase the yield of the Voelvlei Dam and improve regional water security and create a more reliable supply to domestic, agricultural and industrial water users.

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DRAFT REPLY: RECOMMENDED/ ~~NOT RECOMMENDED~~/ AMENDED



DR SEAN PHILLIPS
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
DATE: 30 11 2023

DRAFT REPLY: APPROVED/ ~~NOT APPROVED~~/ AMENDED



MR SENZO MCHUNU, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION
DATE:

5/12/23