



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 694 [*225]

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(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 38)

694. Ms M Dlamini (Mpumalanga: EFF) to ask the Minister of Water and Sanitation: [★225]

What are the causes of the delays in water service delivery in the Amathole District Municipality which has experienced great difficulty in accessing water services for years, thereby infringing on the rights of residents?

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MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

The Amathole District Municipality (ADM) is a Water Services Authority (WSA) and Water Services Provider (WSP) to six local municipalities, namely Amahlathi, Great Kei, Mbhashe, Mquma, Ngqushwa and Raymond Mhlaba. The municipalities are rural in nature with undulating terrain and the households are sparsely distributed across the municipalities. There are limited surface water sources and groundwater in these areas with often poor yield. All these factors make it difficult and costly to install, operate and maintain water supply systems. The delays in providing the water service delivery in these areas is attributed to these factors and funding limitations.

The rural areas within these municipalities have been historically served with standalone schemes supplied from boreholes which are affected by low-yield challenges. These are being gradually replaced by larger regional water supply schemes funded by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) and the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA). The water supply projects are being funded through the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) managed by DWS and the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) managed by CoGTA.

The water supply projects at ADM are at various stages of implementation namely planning, under construction and some have been completed. Amongst completed projects are the Mncwasa Regional Water Scheme, Ngqamakhwe Regional Water Supply Scheme Phases 1 to 2, Mbhashe North Regional Water Supply, Xhorha Bulk Water Supply (contracts 1 to 7), Gcuwa West, Ibika Centane Phase 1, Idutywa East Water Supply and Mgwali South phase 1, Ehlobo Water Supply Scheme which

are funded through the RBIG and MIG. In addition, ADM implements various refurbishment, drought relief and water conservation, and water demand management projects funded through the Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG).

In the 2023/24 financial year, ADM was allocated R60,9 million under WSIG and is implementing twelve projects across the district with two projects under Mphashe and Mnquma to the value of R17,2 million. ADM has been allocated R115 million for 2023-24 through RBIG and is implementing the Ngqamakhwe Regional Water Supply Scheme Phase 5A and Xhorha Bulk Water Supply (contract 8). ADM has also been allocated a total of R615 million under MIG for the implementation of 33 projects for entire district area in the current financial year.

The operation and maintenance of the completed schemes is an ongoing challenge owing to the collapse of boreholes, vandalism, illegal connections as well as the relatively low allocation of funding to schemes that are more costly to operate than schemes in cities where there are greater economies of scale. The schemes are designed to provide mainly a Rural Development Programme (RDP) level of supply through communal standpipes and so cost recovery is very low.

Project planning and implementation delays are due to water source challenges, procurement processes and funding constraints. The operation and maintenance challenges are mitigated through water carting to the affected areas within limited timeframes by relevant Water Services Authorities. However, the WSA is unable to cart water to all the affected areas due to budget constraints.

The implementation of regional schemes is work in progress and a slow process due to fiscus funding constraints; community dynamics, poor performance by contractors, lengthy procurement processes and periodically staff protests which have led to go slows and instability of the municipality. These factors also affect the performance of ADM as they had lost funds due to the stopping of allocation across grants.

In addition, as is the case with many municipalities, there have been weaknesses with the governance and management of the municipality which have resulted in delays in water service delivery. The municipality needs to reduce its non-revenue water, improve its billing and revenue collection, budget adequately for the maintenance and operation of its infrastructure, and ensure that it has staff with the required skills and experience in key positions such as process controllers and managers of treatment works.

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



DR SEAN PHILLIPS
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
DATE: 20 10 23

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



MR SENZO MCHUNU, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION
DATE: 31/10/23