



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Reference: 6/2/2/6

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 720

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 20 OCTOBER 2023
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 41)

720. Mr S F Du Toit (North West: FF Plus) to ask the Minister of Water and Sanitation

Whether, with reference to the Vaal Barrage sluices that were opened and resulting in damages to the residences and businesses on the riverbanks, he has any plans to place the management of the Vaal Barrage infrastructure under his department in order to (a) prevent further financial losses by citizens and (b) ensure food security; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

There is no intention to transfer ownership or management of the Barrage to the Department of Water and Sanitation. The Vaal Barrage was constructed and is owned by the Rand Water Board, as a primary point of abstraction for water to be treated and conveyed to the wider supply area. However, due to a steady deterioration in water quality, the abstraction point was moved upstream to the Vaal Dam where there is a much lower risk of pollution.

The Barrage remains a Rand Water asset but has no revenue base and therefore cannot be readily transferred into the asset register of the Department's water trade account (which is revenue-based). This, however, holds no bearing on food security since the Vaal River system is operated as an integrated scheme consisting of 19 dams.

The flooding incident recorded in February 2023 was predominantly due to a flash flood that occurred in the tributary rivers to the Vaal River. It is in fact required for the operator to open the floodgates since the barrage has no flood attenuation capacity, and to allow the peak hydrograph to flow through with limited obstruction.

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



**DR SEAN PHILLIPS
DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

DATE: 31/10/23

DRAFT REPLY: APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED/ AMENDED ✓



**MR SENZO MCHUNU, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION**

DATE: 7/11/23