



INTERNET ARTICLE

Deputy Minister Mahlobo calls for a culture of work, service, and professionalism to improve the performance of the water sector

27 August 2023

The Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr. David Mahlobo, has emphasized the need for a culture of work, service, and professionalism within the public sector and amongst key stakeholders.

The Deputy Minister made the remarks during the Emfuleni Section 63 Support Stakeholder Meeting held at Three Rivers Lodge in Vereeniging, Gauteng, today, 25 August 2023.

The meeting was attended by the Mayor of Emfuleni Local Municipality, Cllr Siphon Radebe, and stakeholders from various structures representing business and civil society within the Sedibeng District Municipality.

The purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on the progress made on the Emfuleni Section 63 Interventions and the planned work leading up to the commissioning of 150 megalitres a day at pump station 5.

In 2021 Minister Senzo Mchunu invoked and placed Emfuleni Local Municipality under Section 63 of the Water Services Act and took over water and sanitation services after it failed to manage its water and sanitation services which resulted in sewer spillages in communities and into the Vaal River polluting the raw water source.

Rand Water was appointed as an Implementing Agent to deliver an effective solution that will eradicate pollution in the river and its tributaries and eradicate water and sanitation service delivery challenges, inhibiting both social and economic development in the region.

The Deputy Minister was appointed by Minister Mchunu to chair the Political Stakeholder Committee of the project in the region to keep all stakeholders abreast of the progress in the implementation of the intervention.

Noting the overwhelming progress on the work that has been done to address spillages, some had ended in people's homes, Deputy Minister Mahlobo urged the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) and other water sector stakeholders to improve their work ethics, service delivery, and professionalism and stressed the significance of regular information sharing to demonstrate the progress being made and to foster patience among the public.

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Furthermore, the Deputy Minister highlighted that this approach would ensure that stakeholders are well-informed about the ongoing developments and can collaboratively address any challenges that arise. Deputy Minister Mahlobo also emphasized the importance of transparency in water management.

“The sharing of information plays a crucial role in informing the public about the measures implemented to enhance the provision of adequate water services. It also allows for clarification on the progress made in various water projects. This, in turn, helps to build trust and confidence within the public. Additionally, transparency holds all stakeholders accountable for their actions, thus enhancing good governance within the water sector,” said Mahlobo.

Deputy Minister Mahlobo's call for a culture of work, service, and professionalism reflects a commitment to improving the water and sanitation sector in South Africa.

Rand Water, a DWS water utility responsible for supplying potable water to the Gauteng province, presented its report on various water-related projects. Significant advancements were reported, including the refurbishment of pump station 2, which is currently 80% complete, and pump station 9, which has reached 50% completion. Additionally, the gravity main to pump station 2 is halfway through its renovation, while pump station 10 is nearing completion at 95%. Another accomplishment highlighted was the successful completion of the collapsed sewer pipeline in Union Street, Vereeniging, standing at 100% completion.

The Deputy Minister also highlighted that there is a need for collaborative efforts with the private sector to succeed.

“It is through the collective efforts of the Department of Water and Sanitation, stakeholders, and the public that meaningful change can occur. By cultivating a culture of work, service, and professionalism, the water and sanitation sector can address existing challenges and pave the way for a future marked by sustainable and equitable access to water resources”, said the Deputy Minister.

Given the platform, many of the attendees expressed their gratitude towards the progress made by the intervention, adding that it has been evident that the Emfuleni Section 63 worked exceptionally well and that more opportunities must be availed for women.

Deputy Minister Mahlobo concluded by directing the Department of Water and Sanitation Provincial Head for Gauteng, Mr Justice Maluleke, and his team to ensure that real issues are captured and that they must site visit the said areas and give feedback the following Monday.

Tshigofatso Mashile

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