



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ADDRESS BY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION, HON. NOMVULA MOKONYANE ON THE OCCASION OF THE WAR ON LEAKS PROVINCIAL PHASE TWO ANNOUNCEMENT AT THE GLENRIDGE CHURCH, ETHEKWINI METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY; KWAZULU NATAL PROVINCE

24 FEBRUARY 2017

SPEAKER'S NOTES:

Programme Director;

Mr. M. Manana, Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training;

Ms. N. Dube-Ncube, MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs;

Cllr. Z. Gumede, Executive Mayor of EThekwini Metropolitan Municipality;

Cllr. M. Sithole, EThekwini Metro Chief Whip;

Adv. M. Hashatse, Chair of Rand Water;

Chief Executives of the Water Boards and EWSETA;

Government officials;

Representatives of Provinces and Municipalities;

The Water Family;

Ladies and Gentleman;

INTRODUCTION:

- In August 2015, our President, Jacob Zuma, launched the War-on-Leaks programme at an event held in Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality. The launch was the realization of an announcement made in his State of the Nation Address that as government we would train 15 000 young people to assist the country to minimize current water losses.
- We have continually stated that as a country we lose approximately R 7 billion worth of water due to leaks, annually.
- Given our water challenges and the drought we confront, this is water that we cannot afford to lose when our country is in need of water.
- For an example, In the Johannesburg Metro alone, we have 35% of non-revenue water and of that, 16% is unaccounted for.
- In the Ethekewini Metro also, we have 40.7% of non-revenue water and of that, 59.3% is unaccounted for. In all likelihood, in both cases, this is water lost through leaks and illegal connections
- This is exactly the challenge that President Jacob Zuma has directed us to overcome and at the same time provide youth with skills and opportunities to become economic participants, CREATING A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL.
- What we are doing through this programme is providing our youth with the necessary skills and capacity to serve and assist in the War-on-Leaks and water losses whilst at the same time providing training to empower them to operate and manage their own small and medium enterprises in future, doing work for government and the private sector in the water sector.

- At the launch of the Programme, President Zuma outlined that we would be recruiting 3,000 young people in the first phase and 7,000 in Phase 2, with the remaining 5,000 in Phase 3, which will be in 2017/18.
- We have successfully enrolled the targeted 3,000 in the 2015/16 financial year and Rand Water, as the implementing agent and have now completed the recruitment of a further 7,300 young people.
- Again, these numbers will be spread across the country targeting in particular those areas known and recorded to have the highest water losses linked with the absence of skills to decisively deal with them.
- However, we must deal with challenges that have confronted the Programme since inception and that have a potential to dilute the impact we seek to make.
- Our meeting today is an attempt at ensuring that stakeholders across the water family and across the three spheres of government have a common and shared understanding of the objectives of the War-on-Leaks for water security in the future.

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED

- Admittedly, Phase 1 was a learning curve in advancing the project. The challenges experienced since the inception of the project were numerous, yet not insurmountable:
- Key amongst those has been the slow pace of placement of trainees into workplaces across South Africa. In light of the water losses we seek to address, it is the Municipalities as Water Service Authorities that must enthusiastically take up trainees to maintain infrastructure and repair leaks in communities.

- Currently, of the Phase 1, 2729 learners enrolled in the first intake, 1631 have been placed in opportunities of workplace training within municipalities. To see a success in the Programme we must accommodate the full complement of learners and begin to see a turn-around in water losses through-out the country.
- The placements of learners became a serious challenge, but we are heartened by the fact that the implementing agents have now managed to contain these challenges and that learner placement has now found traction.
- Another challenge that has arisen is that of displacement and accommodation of the trainees. Ideally learners need to be trained as close as possible to their home bases; invariably, this was not always possible based on the discipline choices.
- There has, generally, been poor coordination of the Programme between the department, Rand Water, EWSETA and the training centres and this impacted negatively on seamless and effective communication as well as uniformity and compliance with programme standards and deliverables.
- Previously, there was some agitation amongst learners in some of the provinces based on concerns relating to failure to deliver tools on time and to supply learners with protective clothing as per agreements. However, those agitations have been eliminated by proactive delivery by the implementing agents EWSETA and Rand Water.
- This has been due to the fact that most of the youth that applied for this programme do not have the required qualifications of Mathematics and Science or N2 which are the pre-requisite for artisans and plumbers. Discussions are underway with EWSETA to consider a bridging course which would assist the learners in bridging this qualification gap. Should the Department pursue this approach, additional time and funding would be required.

TRAINING PROGRAMME

- A total of 3008 phase 1 learners were recruited and only 2729 are currently enrolled onto the programme, of which 55% are artisans, 37% are water agents and only 8% plumbers. The number has decreased as a result of attrition.
- The total number of enrolment for Phase 1 (2729) per province is as follows: Eastern Cape 263, Free State 248, Gauteng 1023, KwaZulu-Natal 375, Limpopo 146, Mpumalanga 441, North West 41, Northern Cape 47 and Western Cape 145.
- In order to make up the numbers, 7373 trainees were recruited for the Phase 2. Of the 7373 trainees 32% are artisans, 58% are water agents and only 10% plumbers
- The table below illustrates the distribution of the Phase 2 per Province and per discipline.

Province	Electrical	Fitter & Mechanist	Instrumentation	Welder	Plumber	Water Agent	TOTAL
Eastern Cape	169	49	14	13	106	483	834
Free State	99	32	12	8	33	675	859
Gauteng	150	102	48	39	34	239	612
KwaZulu Natal	326	56	19	23	225	425	1074
Limpopo	239	93	29	19	81	431	892
Mpumalanga	110	89	25	25	93	705	1047
North West	97	55	36	26	59	488	761
Northern Cape	182	87	29	31	50	308	687
Western Cape	12	15	3	5	24	548	607
TOTAL	1384	578	215	189	705	4302	7373

- The Programme currently has a total of 10102 learners

KWAZULU-NATAL

- As alluded to above, The Province of KwaZulu Natal has 375 Learners on Phase 1 as illustrated below: Water Agents 135, Artisans 174 and Plumbers 66.
- The Phase 2 of training started on 10 August 2016 with the number of learners recruited as shown in the table below.
- Total number of learners 1074: Water Agents 425, Artisans 424 and Plumbers 225.
- Out of the 39 training institutions for phase 2, 7 are in Kwa Zulu-Natal

Placement of Phase 1 Trainees

- All the 1006 Water Agents who joined during the Phase 1 uptake, have been placed within the different communities and municipalities and they are assisting with water use advocacy, meter reading, identification of leaks and reporting them to the municipality or respective households.
- They also were involved in the “drop the block” campaign in the different Provinces.
- The placement of artisans is a challenge. 42% (715) of the artisans had been placed while 58 % (1010) had not been placed. Since Gauteng had the highest number of artisan trainees (740), it is also the one with the highest number of unplaced trainees at 521 (30%).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The private sector has to be considered as a partner to take up some of the trainees for the on the job training and where possible provide further training on entrepreneurship.

- In order to improve the requisite skills required in some of the municipalities there is a need for them to recruit qualified plumbers and or artisans who will be able to mentor the trainees.
- Due to the low number of plumbers recruited in the programme, the phase 3 intake should focus on plumbers in order to ensure that the objective of fighting water leaks is obtained.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- We must set standards and ensure that learners are treated equally and that they receive the required and due materials on time and of similar quality.
- Importantly, we have also placed immense importance on the need to train and develop Water Agents, whose task will be to educate and empower communities on how to use water responsibly and manage demand in communities.
- This is specifically important given that South Africa is a water scarce country and recently, we have experienced the worst drought in decades, from which we are still counting our losses and recovering.
- South Africa is the 30th driest country in the world and with the effects of global warming and climate change upon us, we are forced to take a new and vigorous approach to water saving and management.
- Significant strides have been made and work continues to connect more communities and people to water. Currently, over 90% of South Africans have access to water.
- This is a significant development and sign that indeed our government is committed to restore the dignity of our people and eradicate situations where our people drink water from rivers with animals.

- As we lay out new infrastructure to serve these communities, our intention is for some of you to take up opportunities within municipalities to operate and maintain these new and refurbished water systems and pipelines.
- The War on leaks project must be the project that paves the way for radical changes to non-revenue water in South Africa. The support of all stakeholders in particular SALGA and its constituency must be emphasised as without them the project is unable to realise the primary objective of non-revenue water reduction in South Africa.

Dankie!

Ngiyabonga!