



**ADDRESS BY Ms NOMVULA MOKONYANE, MINISTER OF WATER AND  
SANITATION AT THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HELD AT MALUTI-A-PHOFUNG  
MUNICIPALITY, FREE-STATE PROVINCE.**

**28 FEBRUARY 2017**

**SPEAKER'S NOTES:**

**INTRODUCTION**

- The water sector is critical for government's transformation and development objectives. Providing safe and accessible water supply and sanitation services profoundly affects poor people's daily lives.
- Water is life and has a catalytic cross-cutting impact on socio-economic development as well as peace and stability.
- Water is enshrined as a basic human right in our Constitution and specifically two sections of the Bill of Rights:
  - Everyone enjoys the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being;
  - Every citizen of South Africa enjoys the right of access to sufficient food and water.
- The South African Government has made a commitment through the National Development Plan (NDP) which calls for the development of a National Infrastructure Plan.
- This plan which got approved in 2012 has identified various Strategic Infrastructure Projects (SIPs). Of particular interest, in this regard, are SIP 6 on Integrated Municipal Infrastructure and SIP 18 on Water and Sanitation Infrastructure.

- The State of the Nation Address in 2016 further highlighted the need for infrastructure projects to encourage economic growth and the creation of jobs through such projects.
- Efforts to manage protect and preserve water as a critical resource in a sustainable manner speaks to the collective responsibility of all the stakeholders in the water sector.
- It is, therefore, for these reason and many others that the Inter-Ministerial Task Team (IMTT) on Service Delivery has endorsed and supported for implementation a proposal by the Department of Water and Sanitation to implement a “Radical Approach for Operations and Maintenance of Water and Sanitation Infrastructure”.
- Through the Radical Approach for Operations and Maintenance, the Department of Water and Sanitation invariably issue directives to Water Boards in terms of Section 41(1)(ii) of the Water Services Act to implement the intervention in order to amongst other activities:
  - Restore the operational integrity of dysfunctional water supply and sanitation systems;
  - Provide capacity support to municipalities to improve service delivery with regard to water supply and sanitation services.
- In support of the national government’s infrastructure investment, Sedibeng Water continues to be an implementing agent to the Maluti-A-Phofung municipality in terms of drought relief measures, water conservation and water demand management as well as other water related issues.

## **DROUGHT RESPONSE MEASURES**

- In the effort to address and mitigate the potential impacts of the drought the department put in measures for the immediate/short, medium and long term. These measures included:
  - Strict implementation of drought operating rules at all dams including restrictions
  - Increase the water mix especially ground water utilization (drilling of additional boreholes), rainwater harvesting, re-use of return flows and packaged desalination plants

- Reduce operational risks by proper infrastructure operation and maintenance with associated skills development
- Implementation of water conservation and demand management programmes
- Emergency interventions by tankering

## **CURRENT AND FUTURE PLANS**

- A co-ordinated effort between Sedibeng Water, DWS and Maluti-A-Phofung ensured that short-term and long-term plans were put together.
- The following **short term plans** are in the process of being implemented by Sedibeng Water through Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG):
  - Makwane Water Treatment Works (WTW) has a surplus of 4 Megalitres per day (MI/d) which will be connected to the Fika Patso system through the Mphatlalatsane reservoir,
  - Refurbishing and upgrading the Fika Patso WTW,
  - Refurbishing existing 27 boreholes upon pump and water quality testing for suitability & good yielding results
  - Drilling of 60 new boreholes that will be connected only if good yield and water quality results are obtained
- Long term solutions that will provide sustainable water supply to the municipality are the following:
  - Further increase the Sterkfontein from 10MI/ to 40MI/d including increasing storage capacity for Phuthaditjhaba,
  - Construct new parallel 34km pipeline to Phuthaditjhaba reservoir and the Garankope reservoir,

- Surplus from Makwane system to be transferred to the Fika Patso system via off take point at Pereng pumpstation (2nd off take point from Mphatlalatsane reservoir).
- Bulk inter-connections from Bluegumbosch to the existing Phuthaditjhaba network ( upon upgrading the WTW to 40MI/d)
- Bulk distribution pipelines (Matshekgeng and Phahameng East) currently in construction to relieve the water tankering from Bluegumbosch

## **STATUS OF PLANS**

- The DWS would like to see the fast-tracking of the short term interventions to alleviate the water supply shortages.
- The Department had therefore requested Sedibeng Water to provide concise and comprehensive implementation plans and programme of action with time frames as a matter of urgency for both short term long term plans.
- To give impetus to the plans, the department would like to have preliminary designs of all the above proposed long term projects by end of March 2017. This will assist greatly in terms of proper planning and facilitating funding of the projects.
- All long-term projects need to find traction and all the bottle-necks in regards to appointments and procurement to be unblocked.
- Sedibeng Water has drilled 46 of the 60 boreholes to augment water supply.
- The interconnecting of bulk network will go a long way to ensure a sustainable water supply for the Qwqwa area.

## **GENERAL REMARKS AND THE WAY-FORWARD**

- Due to improved Fika Patso dam levels, the DWS has decided to withdraw the trucks in a phase-out approach.
- This will give the municipality time to plan and implement contingency plans as prescribed in the Report on the Post Drought Operations of Fika Patso Water Supply System.
- The municipality should pay particular attention on the challenges of operation, optimization and maintenance that has been raised and ensure that they are addressed urgently as stipulated in the report,
- It is very important that the storage reservoirs are flushed out and cleaned properly to appropriately deal with water quality issues.
- The water quality for domestic use must be of highest quality to avoid breakout of any diseases and contain health problems for communities
- The treatment capacity of the plant must be increased gradually to avoid flooding the reticulation network that will lead to serious pipe burst.
- The municipality should now focus their energy and resources in dealing with water conservation and water demand management challenges.
- The Department is appealing to the municipality to cooperate with all stakeholders in fast-tracking of the short and long term plans as highlighted in the report.

Dankie

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