



MEDIA STATEMENT

VAAL RIVER SYSTEM UPDATE: DWS reopens four (4) sluice gates at Vaal Dam to manage water outflow, and Bloemhof Dam water outflows remain at 1000 m³/s

26 November 2025

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has today re-opened four (4) sluice gates at hourly intervals from 10:00 until 13:00, to gradually increase water outflows to 950 cubic metres per second (m³/s) from 325 m³/s that was released yesterday morning. This is in addition to the three (3) sluice gates that remained opened following the closure of five (5) sluice gates over the past weekend to manage the outflow from the Vaal dam.

As the rains persist this week, the Department has constantly conducted its flood routine analysis to actively monitor the inflow water levels at both Vaal and Bloemhof Dams and a decision was taken to re-open four sluice gates today.

Therefore, the Vaal Dam will operate with seven (7) open sluice gates to manage water outflow due to the rising water levels at both dams as a result of rainfall that has resumed this week. At Bloemhof Dam, water outflow is still going on at 1002.3 m³/s since it was increased last week.

This morning, both Vaal and Bloemhof Dams are still hovering at their full water supply capacity of 104.77% and 102.46% respectively.

The sluice gates were opened as part of dam safety protocols, to control water releases from the dams when the water levels rise sharply and to prevent the water resource infrastructure from failing, as it may lead to a dam bursting and causing a disaster of unimaginable magnitude. The Department implements these necessary controlled water releases at the dams as part of dam safety precautions to safeguard the infrastructure and to protect human life.

Due to increased water releases by the seven (7) sluice gates, there may be possible overflowing of the riverbanks downstream, and this may affect infrastructure built in lower-lying areas within the floodplain and communities are urged to be alert to the rising water levels.

The Department of Water and Sanitation further cautions communities around the Vaal Triangle, Parys, and low-lying areas next to the river to be cautious, and farmers that have pumps and infrastructure directly next to the river are urged to take steps to safeguard them.

Those residing in the riparian areas of the Vaal River are also urged to be alert and remove valuable equipment, movable infrastructure, and livestock as river levels may continue to rise.

The Department of Water and Sanitation will continue to actively monitor the inflow water levels at both Vaal and Bloemhof Dams.

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**Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation For more information, contact
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