



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR ORAL REPLY

QUESTION NO 197

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★197. Mr I Ismail-Moosa (Al-Jama-ah) to ask the Minister of Water and Sanitation:

Given the ongoing water crisis in several municipalities, particularly the continued water supply disruptions in cities such as Johannesburg, Tshwane and Gqeberha, as well as the persistent sewage spillages contaminating rivers and dams across KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, what urgent, measurable interventions has her department implemented to (a) address ageing bulk water infrastructure in the specified cities and (b) ensure accountability from municipalities that continue to underspend or mismanage conditional infrastructure grants?

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MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

- (a) The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has conducted and supported various technical assessments on infrastructure, regulatory inspections and oversight interventions in affected municipalities, including Gauteng municipalities, eThekweni and Nelson Mandela Bay. These assessments, together with reports from the Department's regulatory programmes such as the Blue Drop and Green Drop assessments, have helped to identify the key causes of water supply disruptions.

A number of immediate and medium-term interventions have been implemented by the municipalities, water boards and other stakeholders to stabilise water supply in affected areas, supported by DWS, COGTA and relevant provincial governments.

It should be noted that the Department does not directly fund and implement water services infrastructure projects in the case of metropolitan municipalities, such as those in Gauteng, eThekweni and Nelson Mandela Bay. The Metropolitan municipalities are funding projects through their own revenue streams and the USDG grant. The Department's role in these cities is therefore primarily regulatory and supportive, including monitoring performance, providing technical guidance and facilitating coordination where required.

In Gauteng, the Presidential Johannesburg Working Group (PJWG) has been established to coordinate efforts to address water supply challenges. The Presidential eThekweni Working Group (PeWG) was also established for the same purpose. There are workstreams within the respective working groups tasked with monitoring the implementation of the Water and Sanitation Turnaround Plans, which were adopted by the Councils of the two metros.

In addition, DWS is working collaboratively with the City of Tshwane Metro in addressing the Hamanskraal water challenges, including water quality and pollution issues.

The root causes of water service disruptions are not only affected by the water services function itself, but include broader governance, financial management and supply chain challenges within the municipalities. Where the water services function is not properly ringfenced, these institutional challenges can directly affect service delivery.

- (b) DWS is already converting its infrastructure grants to indirect grants where municipalities have demonstrated that they are incapable of spending the grants effectively. This measure helps to ensure that grants are spent timeously and as intended but does not address the other causes of poor performance, such as lack of maintenance by municipalities, municipalities not hiring staff with the required qualifications, and municipalities not carrying out the required treatment processes properly.

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DRAFT REPLY: RECOMMENDED/ NOT RECOMMENDED/ AMENDED

SPhillips

**DR SEAN PHILLIPS
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
DATE: 06.03.2026**

DRAFT REPLY: APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED/ AMENDED



**MISS PEMMY C.P. MAJODINA, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION
DATE: 09/03/2026**