

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 517

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517. Mr M M Swathe (DA) to ask the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry:

- (1) What (a) was the backlog in respect of the eradication of the bucket system in each province (i) in 2006 and (ii) as at 15 March 2008, (b) amount was allocated by the Government in this regard in each of the past three financial years and (c) was the actual estimated cost to eradicate this backlog;
- (2) whether her department has conducted any audit of the (a) percentage of the budgets spent by municipalities to eliminate this backlog and (b) actual percentage of buckets that were eradicated; if not, why not; if so,
- (3) whether any discrepancies were found regarding these figures at any municipality; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

The programme of replacing the bucket system of sanitation was started in 2005. It is focusing on replacing all bucket toilets in established settlements that were in existence prior to 1994.

- (1)(a) The bucket sanitation backlog in 2006, as well as in mid-March 2008 is shown in the table below:

Province	(1)(a)(i) Backlog as at July 2006	(1)(a)(ii) Backlog as at 15 March 2008
Eastern Cape	23 521	1 924
Free State	102 142	36 471
Gauteng	1 325	0
Mpumalanga	3 435	0
North West	26 299	0
Northern Cape	7 321	1 739
Western Cape	1 869	0
Total	165 912	40 134

- (1)(b) The budget allocated to the Programme and ring-fenced in the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) which is managed by the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) in 2005 was R1,2 billion over the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08 and this budget was allocated as follows:

- 2005/06: R200 million;
- 2006/07: R400 million; and
- 2007/08: R600 million.

- (1)(c) The current estimate is R1,8 billion. At the beginning of the Programme, it was estimated that the cost of replacing each bucket toilet would range between R4 000 and R9 000. Assuming that the technology that would be used would range from on-site dry sanitation system e.g. a Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) latrine to water-borne sanitation system i.e. a flush toilet.

However, in 2006 it became evident that the unit cost was increasing due to, among other factors, inflation, excavation in hard rock and high demand for construction skills caused by the increase in infrastructural projects in the country. Additional funds were requested from National Treasury and an additional allocation of R400 million was made available at the beginning of the 2007/08 financial year and another R200 million was allocated in October 2007, bringing the total allocation to the Bucket Eradication Programme by Government to R1,8 billion.

- (2)(a) No. The responsibility of monitoring and assessing MIG expenditure rests with DPLG, however, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry works together with DPLG in respect of water services matters. Funds for the first two financial years have all been spent and the expenditure for the 2007/08 financial year looked as follows at the end of February 2008:

Expenditure on Bucket eradication

Province	Allocations Rx000	Actual Expenditure to Date Rx000	Expenditure of Total Allocation %
Eastern Cape	212 472	125 626	59
Free State	748 000	579 387	77
Northern Cape	100 241	40 176	40
North West	185 316	98 121	52
Western Cape	33 972	31 653	93
TOTAL	1 280 001	874 963	

At the end of February 2008 municipalities had managed to spend more than R874 million of the R1,280 billion, which represents 68% of the year's allocation. The Western Cape Province is the best performing province in terms of expenditure at 93%, followed by Free State at 77% and Eastern Cape at 59%.

- (2)(b) No, but according to the information at my disposal the position is that in February 2005 when this Programme started, the bucket sanitation backlog was 252 254 buckets and on 15 March 2008 the bucket sanitation backlog was only 40 134 buckets. This translates to 84% of buckets that have been replaced.
- (3) The only challenge that was experienced in relation to figures was with regard to the backlog figures, as most municipalities included buckets in informal settlements. My Department supported municipalities to verify the number of qualifying buckets in all municipalities that had bucket sanitation systems in established settlements that were in existence prior to 1994, in order to ensure that the budget is allocated appropriately, as well as for the purposes on monitoring progress in respect of buckets replaced and remaining backlogs.