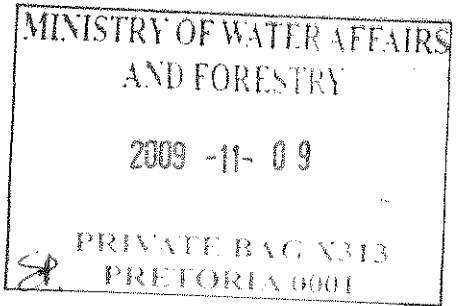




water affairs

Department:
Water and Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA




Enquiries: O.O. Ayaya
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Reference: 3/3
3/4

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 117 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mr M W Rabotapi (DA), is attached for your consideration, please.


DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)
DATE: 05.11.09

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


MS B P SONJICA, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DATE: 12. 11. 2009

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION NO 117

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 13 OCTOBER 2009
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 21)

■117. Mr M W Rabotapi (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:
[Written Question No 717]

Whether, in light of the current recession and the consequent shortfall in state revenue, her department has introduced any austerity measures to reduce its expenditure with regard to (a) official vehicles, (b) travel, (c) travel by departmental officials, (d) accommodation and household help or (e) any other aspects of government business; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? NW813E

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REPLY:

- (a) Yes. The Department has instituted a policy with regard to car rentals, which states that all officials will qualify and may hire a 1600cc vehicle, while Deputy Director Generals will qualify for a 1800cc vehicle. The Director-General and the Minister may hire any class and is not restricted. Officials must also share transport when travelling to the same destination.
- (b) It was agreed that business class travel is a major cost driver, and hence it was agreed that all officials with the exception of the Minister, DG and DDGs should fly economy class both domestically and internationally.
- (c) Refer to the response in (b) above
- (d) It was decided that a benchmarking exercise should be done with regards to hotel accommodation limit; and that there be discussions with the travel agencies on the cost of hotel accommodation.
- (e) Other cost cutting/ saving measures which the department has implemented with immediate effect are as follows:
 - Land line telephone It was decided that officials should comply with the Department's policy, which requires them to pay for private calls above the permissible amount allocated for private use. Officials should complete a telephone calls certification form on a monthly basis and managers should monitor and scrutinize officials' telephone usage in line with the applicable policy prescripts.

- Cell phone and 3Gs The list of officials who have cell phones and 3G cards for official usage, as well as spending for the past three months was noted. It was pointed out that this equipment is regarded as working tools for officials to perform their functions and that the need is indicated by the job analysis information. It was agreed that Branches should examine/ review the allocation of cell phones and 3G cards, including the allowances (also in terms of job descriptions to confirm if this equipment is required in terms of the officials' jobs) to ensure compliance with policies.
- Use of private vehicles It was agreed that non-SMS members should be allowed to use their own vehicles and will be reimbursed provided that a cost benefit analysis was done between the usages of a hired vehicle versus the use of an official's private vehicle.
- Catering It was agreed that the Department's approved policy on catering should be applied/ implemented strictly by all officials.