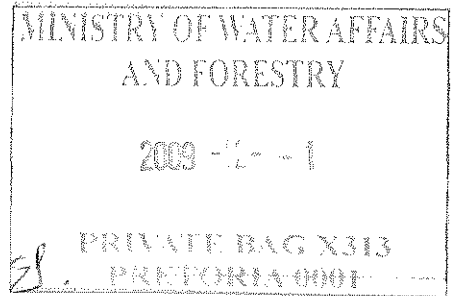




water affairs

Department:
Water and Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Enquiries: N Mnkwa
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Reference: 6/2/2/6

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2307 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mrs A T Lovemore (DA), is attached for your consideration, please.


DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE:

01/12/09


DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/~~AMENDED~~


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

DATE: 01. 12. 09

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2307

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 20 NOVEMBER 2009
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 29)

2307. Mrs A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether she has been informed of any functionality problems at the Somerset East sewage treatment plant in the Blue Crane Route Municipality; if so, (a) how will the problems be dealt with and (b) when;
- (2) whether the Little Fish River into which the sewage plant discharges its outflow is regularly tested to assess its effect on the river; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (3) whether this sewage plant is included in the Green Drop report; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

(1)(a) Yes, My Department's Regional Office: Eastern Cape was informed of the functionality problems at the Blue Crane Route Municipality as follows:

- On 14 September 2009, a community member advised My Department that a manhole below the hospital in Somerset East was overflowing into the Little Fish River.

A follow-up inspection on 15 September 2009 to confirm whether the matter has been rectified and to ascertain the effectiveness of measures put in place. A number of concerns were highlighted during the inspection, and samples were subsequently taken for analysis.

The results indicated high levels of E. coli and Ammonia which are indicative of raw sewage. A written notice which gave the municipality 14 days to rectify the identified problems was issued on 25 September 2009.

- On 30 September 2009, a sewage spillage complaint below the bone factory in Somerset East was lodged by My Department.

My Department conducted an inspection on 7 October 2009. Such inspection included a follow up on the previous complaint. A meeting was subsequently held with Municipality to discuss the findings, causes, challenges as well as the support that might be required.

The analysis of the results of samples taken indicated escalated amounts of E. coli, Ammonia and Chemical Oxygen Demand, which are all indicators of sewage contamination. A written notice was issued to the Municipality on 30 October 2009 for the highlighted concerns to be addressed. Subsequent analysis conducted on 29 October 2009 indicated a drop in the levels of the above parameters.

- (1)(b) Falls away
- (2) Yes, My Department conducts monthly monitoring of the river. The water quality results have shown deterioration between the period of September and October 2009 due to blocked manhole spillage.

Table 1 below reflects the latest results from the monitoring programme:

Table 1: Monitoring Results

Parameters	Location of monitoring point with reference to sewage works	15 September 2009 (Skone Uitsig)	7 October 2009 (Skone Uitsig)	29 October 2009 (Skone Uitsig)	SSE WwTW final pond – 15 September 2009	SSE WwTW final pond – 7 October 2009	SSE WwTW final pond – 29 October 2009
Ortho phosphate	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	12.7	10.5	12.4
	Downstream	0.282	2.25	1.08			
E. Coli (per 100 mL)	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	11 800	12 000	930
	Downstream	12	70	196			
Faecal Coliform	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	19 000	17 000	1150
	Downstream	12	86	264			
Nitrates / Nitrites	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	1.18	1.59	0.49
	Downstream	1.22	0.85	1.18			
Suspended Solids	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	155	178	-
	Downstream	9	20	-			
COD	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	252	228	84
	Downstream	19	36	19			
Ammonia	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	71.7	62.8	56.8
	Downstream	0.079	7.55	3.17			
Electrical Conductivity	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	187	159	167
	Downstream	153	131	146			
Sulphate	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	57	-	-
	Downstream	51.1	-	-			
Oxygen Absorbed	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	27	11	12
	Downstream	2	2	3			
pH	Upstream	No flow	No flow	No flow	7.8	8.3	8
	Downstream	7.8	7.6	7.9			

- (3) No, the plant is not part of the Green Drop report as the municipality did not comply with the requirements of the Green Drop Certification Programme during assessments and audits.