



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINISTRY OF WATER AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

2010 -04- 09

PRIVATE BAG X313
PRETORIA 0001

Enquiries: L Snyders
Telephone: 0538308804
Reference:

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 1047 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mrs S V Kalyan (DA); is attached for your consideration.


DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 7/4/10


DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


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

DATE: 13/04/2010

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 1047

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 30 MARCH 2010
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 9)

1047. Mrs S V Kalyan (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) (a) On what date was a certain mine (name furnished) awarded a water use licence and (b) when did the mine first become operational;
- (2) since the date that the water use licence was granted, (a) what was the date of each audit done by her department to determine compliance with the terms of the water user licence and (b) what was the (i) name and (ii) designation of the most senior official of her department who conducted the audit in each case;
- (3) whether she has been informed that the use of water by the mine has affected surrounding farmers negatively in terms of (a) water quality and (b) water availability; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) whether her department has received any requests for assistance from farmers who were concerned about the effects of the mining operations on their farms; if so, how has her department responded;
- (5) whether the water user association of which this mine is a member is functional; if not, why not; if so, how was this conclusion reached?

NW1195E

---00000---

REPLY:

- (1)(a) Sishen Mine was issued a water use license in terms of Section 41 of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) on 6 June 2008. Prior to the issuance of the license under the National Water Act, 1998, Sishen Mine operated under a water permit issued in terms of the Water Act, 1956 (Act No. 54 of 1956).
- (1)(b) Sishen Mine first became operational in the early 1960s.
- (2)(a) Following the issuance of the water use license on 6 June 2008, a compliance audit was conducted by my Department on 2 March 2009. Furthermore, one of the conditions of the water use license is that a full compliance audit must be conducted by Sishen Mine on an annual basis. Such audit has been conducted by an external auditor, MSA Group, during July 2009.
- (2)(b)(i) Mr. Sam Dywili conducted the compliance audit.
- (2)(b)(ii) Acting Deputy Director: Lower Vaal Water Management Area.
- (3)(a) The potential impact of the mining activities on the groundwater quality was identified and investigated as part of the water use license application process. In order to monitor the potential impacts the mine is required to conduct water quality monitoring on a monthly basis. The water quality monitoring results are submitted to my Department on a quarterly basis and the available water quality results indicate that surrounding land owners have not been negatively affected.

- (3)(b) The potential impact of the mining activities on the groundwater availability was also identified and investigated as part of the water use license application process. As part of the license application process, an extensive consultation process was conducted with surrounding land owners on the issues relating to potential impacts on water availability. Such consultation resulted in conditions being included in the license which require the Sishen Mine to monitor groundwater levels on surrounding farms on a monthly basis and to either compensate or provide surrounding land owners that are negatively impacted with alternative sources of water.
- (4) Yes, a Groundwater Management Committee, where issues relating to groundwater availability can be discussed, has been established and a protocol for the reporting and investigation of individual water availability queries registered by surrounding land owners has also been established. My Department has also ensured that surrounding land owners are compensated or alternative sources of water are provided in cases where it was proven that surrounding land owners has been negatively impacted upon.
- (5) Yes, the Tshiping Water Users Association (WUA), established in terms of Section 92 of the National Water Act, 1998 on 28 February 2008, is functional. The WUA is conducting the initial functions as stipulated in their approved constitution.

---0000---