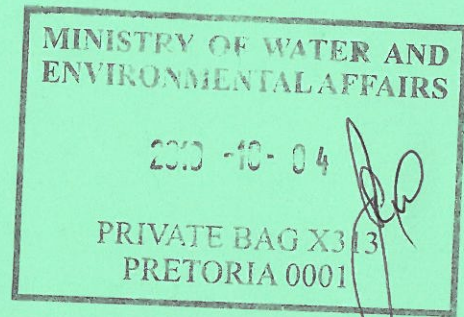




## water affairs

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Enquiries: Ms D.G. Mochotlhi/Dr H.Pienaar  
Telephone: 012 336-7255  
Reference: 2/1/5/1

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

### NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2354 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

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

  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 4/10/10

  
DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

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

DATE: 04. 10. 2010

## NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

### FOR WRITTEN REPLY

#### QUESTION NO 2354

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 30 AUGUST 2010  
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 25)

#### **2354. Mrs A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:**

- (1) With reference to Project Letsema, (a) how many water use licence or authorisation applications were still outstanding as at 31 July 2010, (b) how many such applications have been outstanding (i) for less than 6 months, (ii) between 6 - 12 months, (iii) between 12 - 18 months and (iv) for longer than 18 months and (c) what steps will her department take to ensure that a backlog of processing applications does not recur in future;
- (2) (a) what is the average rate of time spent by her department in processing and finalising these applications, (b) what is the anticipated date by which the backlog of applications will be cleared, (c) what are the factors that cause delays in processing these applications and (d) how does Project Letsema ensure that water use allocations do not exceed available water supply;
- (3) whether a preliminary determination of the reserve for all rivers has been made; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) whether this determination is considered as part of the application assessment in terms of section 22(5) of the National Water Act, Act 36 of 1998; if not, why not?

NW2923E

---0000---

#### **REPLY:**

- (1)(a) An estimated 1 812 water use licence applications (WULAs) were outstanding as at 31 July 2010.
- (1)(b) Outstanding WULAs per period is as follows:

<b>Category per period</b>	<b>Estimated number</b>
(i) Less than 6 months	245
(ii) 6- 12 months	145
(iii) 12-18 months	190
(iv) over 18 months	1232

- (1)(c) Capacity building has been taking place with the staff that processes licence applications as the backlog is being dealt with. My Department has also appointed contract workers so that they can assist in ensuring that new applications are processed in time.
- (2)(a) On average, an application takes six months to finalise depending on the nature and complexity of the application.
- (2)(b) My Department anticipates finalising the WULA backlog by end of March 2011.

- (2)(c) Factors causing delays in processing licence applications include:
- Incomplete WULAs, i.e. Insufficient and incomplete information provided by applicants.
  - The nature of the reserve determination to be undertaken
  - Delayed inputs from other departments
  - Complex legal and technical aspects required for authorisation
  - Lack of capacity in processing complex integrated WULAs.
- (2)(d) My department considers the Reserve and uses information from the National Water Resource Strategy and Internal Strategic Perspective documents to ensure that water use allocations do not exceed available water supply.
- (3) Preliminary determination of Reserves has not been carried out for all rivers in the country. The national coverage of preliminary Reserve determinations to date is approximately 60% for all groundwater and surface water resources (which include rivers).

The determination of Reserves (as prescribed through chapter 3 of NWA) also requires the development of methodologies to establish ecological water requirements for various components of water-linked ecosystems (i.e. rivers, wetlands, estuaries and groundwater).

My department has however managed to gradually shift from Reserve methodologies development towards the determination thereof. A phased approach towards Reserve determinations was also necessary taking into account the limited budget allocation to execute this function. Measures have since been put in place to address this shortcoming in order to accelerate the massification of Reserve determinations.

- (4) Yes, the preliminary Reserve is taken into account.

---0000---