



**water affairs**

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 872 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: 31/3/10

~~DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED~~

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

DATE: 2010.04.01.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 872

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 23 MARCH 2010  
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 8)

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

- (1) Whether the Grootvlei mine on the banks of the Blesbokspruit is complying with the terms of its water licence; if not, why not; if so, how was this conclusion reached;
- (2) whether officials of her department visited this mine to assess compliance with the National Water Act, Act 36 of 1998; if so, (a) on what dates and (b) what was the outcome of each visit;
- (3) whether any directives have been issued at any time since 1 January 2009 against this mine for noncompliance with the Act; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) whether mine water being pumped by this mine into the adjacent water course poses a threat to the Marievale Ramsar site; if not, how was this conclusion reached; if so, what are the relevant details?

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**REPLY:**

- (1) No, the Grootvlei Mine is not complying with the terms of its water use license, as the mine is not using any chemicals to treat the final effluent being discharged into the Blesbokspruit.
- (2) Yes, My Department undertook three (3) site inspections within the mine premises.
  - (2)(a) The site visits were undertaken on 5, 10 and 12 March 2010.
  - (2)(b) During the 5 March 2010 site inspection, the General Manager of the Mine undertook to start dosing the mine effluent with effect from 6 March 2010.

During the follow up site inspection on 10 March 2010, My Department learnt that the dosing of the effluent had not taken place due to non delivery of chemicals for treatment.

During the 12 March 2010 site inspection, My Department's Blue Scorpions Unit took water samples and the results will be compared with follow up samples scheduled to be taken on 29 March 2010. Although analysis is conducted in five (5) days, due to the Easter Holidays, the results will only be available on 6 April 2010.

- (3) No, My Department has not issued directives to the mine. My Department's approach in dealing with mines is to issue water use licences with specific compliance conditions. In the event of non compliance to such conditions, my Department can proceed with immediate prosecution rather than issuing of a directive.
- (4) Yes, the untreated mine water poses a threat to the Marievale Ramsar site as high levels of iron content cause colouration of the effluent which could damage the wetland if exposed over a long period.

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