



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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Enquiries: Mr M. Keet
Telephone: 012-392-1306
Reference: 2/1/5/1

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 184 FOR ORAL REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mr G R Morgan (DA); is attached for your consideration.

Lungelo
DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: *9/9/10*

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DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

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

DATE: *11. 09. 2010*

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR ORAL REPLY

QUESTION NO ★184

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 07 SEPTEMBER 2010
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 27)

★184. Mr G R Morgan (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

(a) What is the current status of acid mine drainage in the (i) western, (ii) eastern and (iii) central basins, (b) when can a coordinated Government response dealing with acid mine drainage be expected and (c) what will the nature of the response be? NO3099E

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REPLY:

- (a) (i) Acid mine drainage (AMD) is decanting from the Western Basin at a rate of approximately 20 mega litres per day of which 15 mega litres per day is partially treated by the mines. The balance of the AMD is diverted through a wetland which acts as a passive treatment system, removing some of the suspended solids. Both the partially treated water as well as the AMD that flows through the wetland is discharged into the Tweelopies Spruit.
- (a) (ii) Mine water in the Eastern Basin is being pumped by the Grootvlei mine at a current rate of 50 mega litres per day. The Grootvlei mine has failed to meet the discharge standards as per their water use license. The sub-standard effluent is being discharged into the Blesbok Spruit and My Department is monitoring the situation.
- (a) (iii) Pumping from the Central Basin has stopped since October 2008. The predicted rate of rise in water level varies between 350 and 900 millimetres per day and is dependent on rainfall patterns. The mine water is approximately 550 metres below surface.
- (b) On 6 September 2010 I announced that Cabinet has approved an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) to address the current challenges of AMD.
- (c) The IMC had its first meeting on 01 September 2010 and the resolution of the committee is to appoint a team of experts that will
- appraise the risks ,
 - assess what has been done by various institutions,
 - assess available solutions and technology;
 - interrogate and assess the viability and costs of critical short-term interventions.
 - Integrate lasting and sustainable medium and long solutions and
 - Explore possible partnerships with the private sector

Furthermore, the IMC will reconvene in six weeks to receive a detailed report from the team of experts. Simultaneously, work will continue on the development of a medium to long term strategy which will be presented to the IMC in a few months' time.

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