



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINISTRY OF WATER AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 395 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mrs H N Ndude (Cope); is attached for your consideration.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 11/03/2011

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

MRS B E E MOLEWA, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DATE: 9.5.2011

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 395

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 18 FEBRUARY 2011
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 02)

395. Mrs H N Ndude (Cope) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

Whether her departments have implemented any specific graduate development programmes over the past five years to help improve the supply of (a) climate change specialists, (b) water plant superintendants, (c) engineers and (d) technicians; if not, why not; if so, what (i) success have her departments recorded in respect of each specified category and (ii) percentage of her departments' critical staff were recruited through these programmes? NW429E

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REPLY:

- (a) The Department's graduate programme has not specifically focused on climate change specialist per se, but on environmental management broadly. However one Graduate Trainee is already actively involved in a project through the University of Stellenbosch on the invasion success of alien plants under global climate change.
- (b) Yes, there is a total of 19 graduate trainees within the water care; and waters and sanitation disciplines.
- (c) Yes, a total of 22 graduate trainees are within the engineering field (i.e. Civil, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers).
- (d) Yes, there are a total of 71 graduate technician trainees in respect of technicians.
- (i) Below is a list of success the Department recorded;
- Overall, in environmental management 67 graduates' trainees;
 - 19 Graduate Trainees of which 10 are within the water care and 9 in the water and sanitation disciplines;
 - a total of 22 Engineers Graduate Trainees qualified of which 11 are within Civil, 7 in Mechanical and 4 in Electrical Engineers; and
 - a total of 71 graduate trainees of which 62 Qualified as Civil, 5 Mechanical and 4 Electrical Engineering Technologists and Technicians.
- (ii) The Learning Academy is a long term training programme (up to 5 years) that started in 2007 and the first group will be absorbed into core, critical and scarce skills posts within the Department.
- The first group of 87 Graduate Trainees has been identified to be placed into candidate engineering, engineering technician, candidate scientist, scientist and scientific technician posts in line with Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD). This will be affected from the 1st of April 2011;

- Two Graduate Trainees have submitted applications for professional registration as Engineers with the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA). The outcome is expected in June 2011;
- 13 Graduate Trainees have already received their professional registration with the South African Council for Natural Science Professions (SACNSP) and are currently being considered for full time appointments within the Department. Further 15 Graduate Trainees have submitted their application for professional registration and their registration is pending as SACNSP will consider applications only in August 2011 again;
- One Graduate Trainee has submitted his application for professional registration as a candidate Surveyor with PLATO, the professional council for surveyors.

In addition it should be noted that:

The Learning Academy is a technical and scarce skills development programme which was initiated in 2007 as a response to the specific skills shortage challenge affecting both the Department and the national water sector. It represents an investment in sustaining quality in Department of Water Affairs' (DWA) human resources, thereby ensuring that in the long term, the DWA will remain competitive and be able to deliver on its mandate.

The Learning Academy programme is designed to meet specific organizational requirements, lead a sustained campaign to secure a steady supply of high-level skills in water-related science, engineering, and technical disciplines in order to meet projected demand within DWA and the water sector as a whole.

The Learning Academy responds to the imperatives mentioned with a dual focus by addressing both the academic and professional development components that will provide aspiring engineers, scientists and technicians the opportunity to be exposed to real-time professional experiences and valuable work experience.

A total of 350 bursaries have been granted since 2007 to learners at the identified Institutions of Higher Learning. Of these bursars, 211 have joined the Learning Academy's Professional Development Component.

By December 2010, 103 Learner Interns had successfully completed their experiential training with the Learning Academy. A new group of 36 Engineering Learner Interns joined the Learning Academy in January 2011 and is presently busy with their specific structured training programmes.

In total, 241 Graduate Trainees joined the programme by February 2011 and all of them have been placed successfully with a mentor in the various Directorates and regional offices within the Department.

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