



## water affairs

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



EdST

Enquiries: A Masefield  
Telephone: 031 336 2763  
Reference: 21/15/P/5

### MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

### NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 108 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above question asked by Mrs A Steyn (DA) is attached for your consideration.

*M. M. M. M. M.*

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 22/02/2012

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED <sup>as amended</sup> AMENDED

*B. E. Molewa*

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

DATE: 20/2/2012

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 108

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 6 FEBRUARY 2011  
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 01 )

**Mrs A. Steyn (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:**

- (1) Whether all dams at the SAPREF refinery in Durban have correct permits; if not, how can this be justified; if so, how was this conclusion reached;
- (2) whether the dams have been inspected by officials of the Department of Water since 1 January 2011; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (3) whether the dams are lined to stop contamination of soil and ground water; if not, what steps will be taken to rectify the situation; if so, how was this conclusion reached;
- (4) whether she has found that the dams require rehabilitation; if not, how was this conclusion reached; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (5) whether this facility discharges any water into the ocean; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what is the quality of this discharge? NW117E

---0000---

**REPLY:**

- (1) There are four storm water management dams on the SAPREF refinery site. The SAPREF refinery is currently in the process of registering with the Department in terms of regulation 3(b)(i) of the Water Use Registration Regulations published under Government Notice R1352 in Government Gazette 20606. This registration is for the storm water management system which is designed to route all rainwater to a point where it is automatically pumped into a set of holding basins. The first flush dirty water is separated and routed to the effluent treatment system and the clean rainwater is discharged into the tidal canal.

The SAPREF refinery is also in the possession of a Section 20 Permit Environment Conservation Amendment Act, 2003 (Act 50 of 2003) issued by the Department of Environmental Affairs for the two re-use dams located on site.

- (2) The re-use dams have not been inspected by the Department in 2011. However, the Department will ensure that these dams are inspected in conjunction with the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Rural Development before 15 March 2012.

One of our officials (name furnished) conducted an inspection of the discharge into the tidal canal on 5 December 2011 to determine whether any oil was entering the system. At the time of the inspection, no oil was visible.

- (3) The stormwater basins are concreted structures and the re-use dams are lined. Groundwater monitoring is conducted by the SAPREF refinery to monitor for any possible groundwater contamination.

- (4) No, this has not been concluded as the SAPREF refinery is planning on embarking on a structured groundwater monitoring programme to be initiated in Quarter 3 of this year. The results of this groundwater monitoring will be interrogated to determine if there are any structural problems associated with the dams. However, visual daily observations of the dams are conducted by SAPREF's operational staff and to date no anomalies have been reported
  
- (5) No, there is no direct discharge of water into the ocean. However, water containing waste from the facility is treated in an on-site effluent treatment plant prior to being discharged to the eThekweni Municipal sewer system which is ultimately discharged via the Southern Wastewater Treatment Works (operated by the eThekweni Municipality). The Southern Wastewater Treatment Works discharges via a marine outfall pipeline. Only rainwater which has passed through the oil/water separator is released into the tidal canals which are regulated by the eThekweni Municipality.

---0000---