



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



EdST

Enquiries: A Masefield
Telephone: 031 336 2763
Reference: 16/2/7/W122/B33

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 1663 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

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

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE:

20/06/2012

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

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

DATE:

2012/06/30

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 1663

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 15 JUNE 2012
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 18)

1663. Mr G R Morgan (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether, with reference to her reply to question 774 on 30 March 2012, officials of her department have conducted any further inspections at Foskor in Richards Bay; if not, why not; if so, (a) on what dates and (b) in each case, what are the (i) names and (ii) designations of the officials;
- (2) whether her department has taken any action at the Thulasihleka Pan since her reply to question 774; if not, why not; if so, what (a) action and (b) are the further relevant details;
- (3) whether Foskor has provided her department with new (a) water samples and (b) fish results; if not, what action has she taken to rectify the situation; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) whether she has found that the drinking water supply of Richards Bay has been affected by pollution emanating from Foskor; if not, how was this conclusion reached; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (5) whether she has found that Foskor has made progress in (a) treating and (b) containing contaminated groundwater; if not, what action has she taken to rectify the situation; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

- (1) An environmental audit was undertaken by the Department of Water Affairs (DWA) and the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) between 26 and 29 March 2012. The DWA also undertook site inspections at Foskor on 16 April 2012 and 25 May 2012. Refer to table 1 below for dates, name and designations of official who conducted inspections at Foskor in Richards Bay.

Table 1: Dates, names and designations of officials

(1)(a) Date	(1)(b)(i) Names of officials	(1)(b)(ii) Designations
26 to 29 March 2012	Names furnished	Details furnished
16 April 2012	Name furnished	Details furnished
25 May 2012	Name furnished	Details furnished

- (2)(a) The Department has since taken water samples at the Thulasihleka Pan and the results indicate that natural remediation is occurring as the pH of the pan has stabilised. Further, the Department continues to audit the Foskor results which are submitted on a weekly basis.
- (2)(b) Foskor, as part of its water use licence application, has submitted a stormwater management plan which will be incorporated in the water use licence application.

- (3)(a) Since the spill on 3 March 2012, Foskor has been taking water samples from the pan on a weekly basis. The results have shown that there has been an improvement in some of the key water quality variables in the pan and that the pan has now stabilised.
- (3)(b) Since the pan has stabilised due to a decrease in the pH level, there has been no further fish kills observed and thus no new samples have been taken for analysis.
- (4) The potable water supply in the Richards Bay area is supplied by Mhlatuze Water and the Mhlatuze Local Municipality from a raw water abstraction point which is upstream of the pan hence the drinking water quality was not affected by the spillage.
- (5) Yes, Foskor has made progress with the containment and treatment of ground water as such has submitted a remediation plan indicating where cut off trenches (below the impacted site) will be constructed. Thus far, Foskor has already constructed the cut off trenches and the water containing waste collected from the trenches will be captured and disposed of in the Foskor Stormwater Dams to be recycled.

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