



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries:
Telephone:
Reference:

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2528 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above question asked by Ms B D Ferguson (Cope) is attached for your consideration.

M. Sinye

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 08/10/2012

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DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

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

DATE: 2012/10/08

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2528

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 14 SEPTEMBER 2012
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 30)

2528. Ms B D Ferguson (Cope) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) What measures have been put in place to attract appropriate skills in the water sector, with specific reference to the (a) infrastructure requirements of the sector and (b) need for persons who have a full understanding of integrated water catchment management;
- (2) whether there is a human resource plan for the sector; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

- (1) The Department as long established a Learning Academy in order to attract appropriate skills in the water sector. The Learning Academy gives bursaries in integrated water management. Graduates are then absorbed in the department under the Integrated Water Resources Programmes. Some graduates have been appointed in permanent positions in the Catchment Management areas. We have also given about 100 bursaries in engineering fields such as mechanical, electrical etc are trainees meant for the Infrastructure Sector.
- (2) The Water Research Commission is carrying out skills audit to determine the needs and numbers for the whole sector inclusive of the Department of Water Affairs. Significant progress has been made; 70% of the study will be completed in October 2012 and a final report is expected in May 2013.

Further the Department plans to do the following:

**Short Term Strategies to Address the Skills Crisis (0-2 Years)
2010 - 2013**

- **Targeted recruitment of engineers and technicians outside of South Africa.** These will be placed in the neediest Municipalities. This will relieve immediately the skills shortage in these municipalities, but also offer a base from which new entrants to the workplace can be mentored and facilitated into the workplace. This short term strategy is dependent on inter-country compatibility of water reticulation and wastewater treatment facilities, as well as water education/training codes and norms.
- **Deploying full-time mentors to municipalities.** These mentors provide support to employees and managers in municipalities. These mentors will be drawn from engineers from other countries (as per programme above) and retired engineers in South Africa.
- **Targeted recruitment of engineering learners in the final year of training** and in HET band in 2010 and 2013 to increase entry rate into the workplace in 2011 and 2014.
- **Extend retiring engineer's tenure in the workplace** as a means of addressing directly the shortage expected as a result retirements due between 2010 and 2013.

- **Unemployment Graduate Programme** to immediately increase capacity at municipal level. These will be on a programme of mentoring and retraining to meet the needs of the municipality and sector.

Medium Term Strategies to Address the Skills Crisis

Targeted recruitment of learners in Grade 12 with financial assistance scheme for the technical related fields of study in the water sector. This would increase number of graduates entering the water sector in 2014 and 2015

- A **workplace training programme** that will increase skills levels of those already in the sector to ensure alignment and appropriateness to sector's present and future needs.
- Structured **mentorship programme**, building on the mentorship and learnership programmes implemented.

Long Term Strategies to Address the Skills Crisis 2016-2020 (and beyond)

- Targeted recruitment of learners in the FET band (grades 10-12) into **Water Academies** will see increased uptake of learners in the HET band between 2013 and 2020. This will be done through the combination of competitions, the multimedia programme and the water education (curriculum) since 2009. The impact in the water sector: A strong increase in new entrants to the water sector field from the year 2017.
- Rolling out of a **comprehensive water education and public awareness programme** in all schools, across all learning areas from the GET to HET band, will increase understanding of water issues, water sector and water related career fields and thereby increase the pool that will have an interest in and pursue water sector fields.
- A structured approach and interaction between DWEA as sector leader and institutions of learning in FET and HET band – to ensure that there is a **seamless transition for graduates** entering the workplace.

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