



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

EdST

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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES: QUESTION 562 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above question asked by Mr M J R de Villiers (DA-WC) is attached for your consideration.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 30/10/2012

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

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

DATE: 2012/10/31

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 562

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 19 OCTOBER 2012
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 31)

562. Mr M J R de Villiers (DA-WC) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether the correct processes will be followed before Alexkor transfer the village of Alexander Bay (details furnished) in terms of the waste water treatment plant and reticulation system to the Richtersveld Municipality; if not, why not; if so, what (a) measures are in place and (b) are the further relevant details;
- (2) whether any study has been conducted to ascertain that there is sufficient capacity for the (a) current population and (b) possible future population growth of the said municipality; if not, why not; if so, what are the findings in each case;
- (3) whether all legal requirements have been met in terms of the (a) plant and (b) reticulation network; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) whether the location of the plant is within reasonable distance of the residential area of Alexander Bay; if not, why not; if so, what (a) is the position and (b) are the further relevant details?

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REPLY:

- (1) The Department of Water Affairs is aware that the processes as prescribed in Section 78 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) have been followed in order to provide for the future provision of water services by the Richtersveld Local Municipality in Alexander Bay. Furthermore, it has come to the attention of the Department that, an agreement has been reached between the mine and the Richtersveld Local Municipality, which stipulates that the transfer of the village of Alexander Bay in terms of the wastewater treatment plant and reticulation system to the Richtersveld Local Municipality will only be done upon the mine having completed either refurbishment, upgrading or construction of the wastewater treatment plant and replacement of the reticulation network. The replacement of the reticulation network as well as construction of a new wastewater treatment plant is currently underway and it is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2012.
- (2) The mine, in consultation with the Richtersveld Local Municipality, has commissioned studies to determine the reticulation network and wastewater treatment capacity requirements based on both current population figures and future population growth estimates over a 20 year planning horizon. The design capacity of both the reticulation network and wastewater treatment plant makes provision for the future growth in population.

- (3) The legal requirements for the construction of the wastewater treatment plants have been met and the Department of Environmental Affairs issued a waste license in terms of the Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008) for the new wastewater treatment plant whilst an environmental authorisation in terms of the National Environment Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) was issued for the decommissioning and rehabilitation of the old wastewater treatment plant. Furthermore, the mine does not need to apply for a water use licence in terms of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) since the volume of waste water to be disposed falls within the ambit of a general authorisation. As far as the reticulation network is concerned, it has been confirmed that, no environmental authorisation is required since the activity entails the replacement of an existing reticulation network, which falls within the thresholds as stipulated in the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations in terms of the National Environment Management Act, 1998 (Act No 107 of 1998).
- (4) The existing wastewater treatment plant currently in use in Alexander Bay is located within a distance of approximately 100 metres from the nearest residential area. During the planning phase of the new wastewater treatment plant, the impact of the wastewater treatment plant on residents, especially as it relates to bad odours was raised as a concern and as such an alternative site, located at a reasonable distance of 500 metres from the nearest residential area, was selected to mitigate for these impacts. The wastewater treatment plant currently in use will be decommissioned upon completion of the new wastewater treatment plant.

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