



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

EdTM

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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2269 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above mentioned question asked by Mr B M Bhanga (Cope) is attached for your consideration.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 26/08/2015

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/~~AMENDED~~

as amended

Error; Amend & send

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

DATE: 2015/08/26

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2269

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 23 AUGUST 2013
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 28)

2269. Mr B M Bhanga (Cope) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

Whether she has been informed that Rhodes University in Grahamstown is shutting down as a result of operating without water for days; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what (a) steps has her department taken to remedy the situation and (b) are the further relevant details?

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REPLY:

Yes, I was informed of the water crisis in Rhodes University: Grahamstown and its intention to shut down due to operating without water for days.

(a) Steps taken by the Department of Water Affairs (Department) to remedy the situation can be summarised as follows:

(a)(i) The Department assigned Amatola Water Board, which is currently appointed as its Rapid Response Unit (RRU), to support Makana Local Municipality (LM). The relevant experts have been dispatched 14 August to Grahamstown to stabilise the city's water supply systems. On 18 August 2013, the team conducted a sight inspection to ensure the pumps are operational.

(a)(ii) The Department has set up an Inter-Governmental High level meeting between the Makana LM, the Department of Provincial Local Government & Traditional Affairs (DPLG&TA), the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the Rhodes University on 15 August 2013 and agreed on an Action Plan for urgent, short-, medium- & long-term solutions.

(a)(iii) The Department supports the Makana LM through its Accelerated Community Infrastructure Program (ACIP) on Water Conservation and Water Demand Management (WC/WDM) as high water losses and lack of metering are seriously compromising sustainable water supply, particularly when water systems are stretched to the limit.

(a)(iv) Facilitated information sharing amongst key stakeholders on a day-to-day operations.

(b) Further details are as follows;

(b)(i) Grahamstown has two water schemes connected by a ring whereby the majority of the city can be served by either of the schemes. Both schemes require substantial pumping over the watershed on each side of the city. The two schemes are:

- Waainek Water Treatment Works (WTW), which receives water from Howisenspoort and Settlers Dams and serves the Western half of Grahamstown, including the Industrial sites and the Rhodes University; and
- James Kleynhans WTW, receiving water from Glen Melville Dam in the Great Fish River catchment, which serves the Eastern half of Grahamstown and most of the townships.

- (b)(ii) The Howisenspoort Pump Station (PS) has had breakages with its pumps, coupled with electrical connectivity problems from time to time. These are attributed to the ageing infrastructure. Further delays in restoring water supplies are largely because service providers are based in Gauteng.
- (b)(iii) The Makana LM has ensured that water from the second scheme, i.e. James Kleynhans Scheme, was shared over the majority of the city by opening the ring mains during day and closing them at night. However, high water demand exceeded supply from only one plant, and reservoir levels on both schemes declined, affecting the higher lying communities on both sides of city.
- (b)(iv) The Rhodes University Residences were amongst the high-lying areas of Grahamstown's worst affected by the water disruptions. In this regard, road tankers were employed to ensure that these areas were supplied with emergency water. In addition, a dedicated road tanker was assigned to Rhodes University once the magnitude of the situation was realised, thereby delivering water to the header tanks of each affected residence.
- (b)(v) The RRU and the Makana LM technical teams are closely monitoring the situation. The water treatment works are fully operational, therefore the pumping and filling of reservoirs is under way. However, the water services remain extremely vulnerable as Howisenspoort pump station has an ageing electrical power supply line that is prone to failing in bad weather, with no stand-by motor, until repairs are completed.
- (b)(vi) The Makana LM is procuring the services of the Amatola Water Board (AW) to assist with day-to-day provision of water services and is currently finalising a Service Level Agreement with the water board. This is strongly supported by the Department as the Makana LM is struggling to perform both Water Services Authority (WSA) & Water Service Provider (WSP) functions. It is envisaged the process will be finalised by end of August 2013.
- (b)(vii) Furthermore, the Makana LM and the Cacadu District Municipality (DM) are procuring new pumps to replace the existing ones. On the other hand, the RRU is assessing and costing the current electrical and major leakages for immediate upgrade and repairs.
- (b)(viii) Poor communication with consumers and the lack of a customer care hotline has aggravated the situation. The Makana LM has undertaken to use all communication means to inform and request consumers to use water sparingly and impose restrictions immediately if there is any risk of failure in any water delivery system.
- (b)(ix) The Makana LM has commenced with work that is aimed at increasing existing capacity. The intention is to ultimately increase the capacity of the James Kleynhans WTW to meet the estimated 2040 demand. However, a phased approach has been adopted as follows:
- Phase 1(a) entails the Construction of an additional pumping main and 6.6MI concrete storage reservoir. Construction work is underway and is to be completed by 30 November 2013 funded by MIG and DBSA.
 - Phase 1(b) entails the Augmentation of the James Kleynhans Pump station. Detailed designs are complete and are due for tender soon funded by MIG and DBSA.
 - Phase 2 (Future or long-term) entails the augmentation of the James Kleynhans WTW. A feasibility study has commenced and is funded under the Department's Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) and is due for completion at the end of September 2013. The estimated costs for Phase 2 is R66 million and planned to be completed 2016.

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