



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Newly appointed DWS DG takes office

22 October 2014

The newly appointed Director-General (DG) of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), Mrs Margaret-Ann Diedricks, is a hardworking, dedicated technocrat who is committed to whatever project put on her plate.

Barely two days into her new job, has DG Diedricks come across as a person most suitable to lead the DWS towards attaining the promises of government services to the people, as per the objectives of the department. Her appointment at DWS follows on the one she held as Director-General of the Gauteng Province. She brings a wealth of public service experience and aptly describes herself as “a career public servant”.

In our interview with the nearly 50-year-old Diedricks at her offices in DWS Head Office during her second day on the job, the bubbly and eloquent DG pledged her passion for human development. “Nothing makes me happier than to work, motivate and up-skill staff to realise their potential.”

She said she noticed that DWS’s officials are not only enthusiastic but are equally committed to their work. “The commitment I have observed is encouraging, because it will make our work towards attaining the department’s objectives very easy.”

DG Diedricks is happy that she has managed to succeed and prove herself at various high-level positions in the three spheres of government and the academia. “Working hard and committing to achieving your goals is a turning point for attaining success,” said Diedricks.

Diedricks has 18 years of public service experience. She is former Director-General of the Gauteng Provincial Government and has also been Chief Operating Officer at Ekurhuleni Metro. Before then she held the position of Head of Department at Gauteng Community Safety. “I am a public servant and will remain so for my entire life,” she added.

Her public service record dates back to her period as Research Manager for the Gauteng Legislature in 1997. Prior to that, she was active in the education sector, spending almost a decade in the world of academia. She has also published numerous academic journals.

DG Diedricks holds a master's degree in psychology and an advanced executive programme certificate from the University of South Africa.

Her knowledge of legislature processes and her experience at local government level will certainly help strengthen inter-governmental relations with strategic stakeholders and thus propel DWS towards a capable service delivery oriented government department. “I believe I have developed a wide array of management, administrative and financial management skills through different positions I have held over the years. That will help me add tangible value to the work of DWS,” DG Diedricks pointed out.



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The new DG is married, “and happily so,” she said, flashing a grin. She also noted that she joins the department at a period where she will be turning 50 years on 31 October 2014. “Personally, I feel my appointment as DWS DG is a great milestone,” she said.

One important factor that she raised is that she comes from a poor family and from a dusty background as she was born in Grasmere, near Soweto, south of Johannesburg.

DG Diedricks prides herself in having struggled to climb the ladder of success. She urged DWS officials to follow in her footsteps, adding that “nothing beats hard work when you want to grow.”

“I grew up under hardship and a very testing background. My family struggled like any other family in terms of accessing water and sanitation. We have had to use plastic drums to collect water and use a bucket toilet system,” she said.

The new DG also called on public servants to commit to doing the basics right – “do what you have been employed to do”. She said as a leader she puts it upon herself to ensure that communities have access to water and sanitation. Appealing to staff to always do their best, she committed to helping them grow by tackling challenges they face towards adding value in the water and sanitation value chain.

She concluded that she was happy to be working at DWS, where she will be working hard with the support of officials and Minister Nomvula Mokonyane, whom she described as knowledgeable and hard working, “I will be taking some lessons from her on how we, as a team, take the work ahead of us forward in realising what the department wants to achieve. This also adds value to the overall DWS value chain,” she said.

The DWS family takes great pleasure in welcoming DG Diedricks, the newly appointed Director-General of the Department of Water and Sanitation.

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