



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE
COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND
TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MINISTRY

Ms Barbara Mgutshini

The Secretary
Kwazulu-Natal Legislature
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**RE: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS FROM MR C PAPPAS (DA) TO THE MEC FOR
COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS (PQ 01/2021)**

QUESTION

How much (in rand value) is required to meet the infrastructure maintenance backlog demands of municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal?

DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE

Recognizing the dire state of service infrastructure, CoGTA, under leadership of the Provincial Executive, undertook an assessment of existing water, sanitation and electricity infrastructure in all ten districts of KwaZulu-Natal, excluding Ethekwini. Msunduzi electricity infrastructure was also not assessed. Roads infrastructure was *not* included in the assessment. These apparent omissions related to the extent of the networks and limitations in the funding available for assessment.

KwaZulu-Natal is the first Province to undertake such an assessment (and has been lauded accordingly)

The purpose was two-fold:

- **Restoration and sustainability**
 - Identification of dysfunctional infrastructure or deficiencies in the operation and maintenance of existing infrastructure.
 - Addressing these is aimed at restoration or enhancement of services. The assessment will inform remedial action plans and has produced scope and cost of required actions.
- **Influence National fiscal policy**
 - Creation of a business case to source funding for the replacement and / or refurbishment and / or O & M of existing infrastructure through the existing National



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Grants (RBIG, MIG, WSIG, INEP) by amending grant conditions, ring fenced funding for the operations and maintenance or, potentially, a new national grant

- Improve current financial models

Assessments were conducted per Water Service Authority and Municipal Licensed Electricity Distributors i.e. excluding areas supplied by Eskom.

In execution of the intensive infrastructure conditional assessment, a "prioritisation rating", "time to action" and cost analysis was applied to each installation, its components (elements) and sub-elements component assessed.

The total estimated cost to restore infrastructure is R 10,83 billion.

This is broken down per service and per municipality in Annexure A, attached hereto.

QUESTION 2

What strategy is the department putting in place to help to meet the demands above?

DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE

As alluded to above, the initial step has been to identify the extent of the maintenance challenges.

Primarily, the strategy now, which is still being developed, revolves around planning, enhance revenue collection and securing financial and human resources.

The condition assessment and the maintenance dilemma has already been presented to the National and Provincial Treasuries as well as Salga. Proposals have been made regarding use of existing grant mechanisms and measures to improve municipal budgetary allocations to Repairs and Maintenance.

The KZN Provincial Water Master Planning process under the leadership of COGTA, several stakeholders, including KZN Provincial Planning Commission, Department of Water and Sanitation and Umgeni Water, and KZN Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) joined forces and pooled expertise in formulating the KZN Provincial Water Master Plan (PWMP) that is akin to a comprehensive audit of existing water resources, distribution networks and water challenges up to ward level but also outlines workable short, medium and long term solutions to the province's water needs through the construction of new infrastructure, the refurbishment of the degenerated existing infrastructure and ongoing operation and maintenance to ensure sustainability.

Similarly, in respect of electricity, CoGTA has embarked on a collaboration exercise, led by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE), to develop a KZN



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Provincial Electrification Master Plan that will, amongst other things, identify electricity infrastructure maintenance gaps and associated budgetary requirements.

The KZN Electrification Master Plan is envisaged to be complete by November 2021.

QUESTION 3

How will the District Development Model help resolve the backlog challenges?

DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE

The District Development Model (DDM) is a new integrated planning model for co-operative governance which seeks to be a new integrated, district-based, service delivery approach aimed at fast-tracking service delivery and ensure that municipalities are adequately supported and resourced to carry out their mandate.

The model brings the necessary focus and integrates the efforts of the relevant sector stakeholders in each discipline.

The DDM has been approved by government structures, including Cabinet to integrate service delivery that will be more practical, achievable, implementable, measurable and clearly aligned to the key priorities of the government.

The model seeks to change the face of the rural and urban landscape by ensuring complementarity between urban and rural development, with a deliberate emphasis on local economic development. Each district plan ensures that national priorities such as economic growth and employment creation, improvements to living conditions, reduction of crime and corruption and better education outcomes are attended to in the locality concerned.

This development approach ensures that planning and spending across the three spheres of government is integrated and aligned and that each district or metro plan is developed with the interests and input of communities taken into account upfront.

The Provincial Water and Electricity Master Plans constitute integral components of the DDM. They also seek to re-visit and improve the balance between new capital infrastructure development and maintenance of existing infrastructure. The demand for "new build" can be reduced through the lower cost associated with looking after existing infrastructure.

The District Development Model is already in motion and relies upon a concerted collaborative effort, which has been fundamental to the success of the Water Master Plan.

The same consultative and collaboration approach should be adopted when operations and maintenance budgets become available so that funds can be spent optimally to benefit recipient communities.



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QUESTION 4

What plan is in place to ensure that municipalities meet their infrastructure maintenance requirements so as to stop any further ballooning of costs?

DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE

Following the above mentioned infrastructure conditional assessment study conducted by COGTA in 2019/2020, CoGTA attempted to complete the condition assessment of all water related infrastructure to ascertain whether they appeared on the current WSA asset registers or not.

Engagement and developing strategies is underway on several fronts, inter alia:

- Re-configuring existing grant mechanisms
- Enhancement of revenue collection through strict credit control
- Focussed channelling of limited funding
- Stricter monitoring of municipal budget allocations
- Improving human resource capacity (which also has to be funded)
- Improvements in planned and preventative maintenance programming
- Updating of municipal asset registers
- Review of municipal indigent registers
- Development of a generic Asset Management Framework

Through the condition assessment, a general finding was that little preventative maintenance activities were being undertaken on most of the water, electricity and sanitation infrastructure. Similarly, very few functional preventative maintenance plans, which would help reduce the risk of unplanned maintenance activities occurring were encountered. Most maintenance works carried out on infrastructure and equipment was unplanned (purely reactive) as the teams were reacting to breakdowns and failures only.

The consequence is that refurbishment was required across mostly all of the water infrastructure. Depending on the age of the infrastructure, so did the extent of the refurbishment requirements increase. There were some situations where consideration would need to be given as to whether it was financially viable to refurbish or rather replace the water infrastructure. In the execution of the condition assessments, a "prioritisation rating", "time to action" and cost analysis was applied to each sub-element component assessed.

QUESTION 5

What relief is in place for citizens, residents and businesses who are affected by prolonged infrastructure related problems (e.g. Power outages or water outages)?

DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE

Measures vary amongst service authorities, depending on available resources.



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In terms of electricity, power outages usually result from overly loaded networks where the demand exceeds the available capacity. Due to the current recurring network capacity issue the following mitigating initiatives still continue :

- Load-shedding schedules continue to be communicated in advance to eliminate the 'surprise element' of power outages and allow the public, especially businesses, to plan ahead to minimise negative impact on operations.
- Eskom still practices load reduction activities where power is deliberately cut in areas where there is a high prevalence of illegal connections (schedule is also communicated in advance) in order to secure reliability of supply in other areas (e.g. CBD during business hours).
- Eskom still continues with the Illegal Connection Normalisation Programme
- Media Campaigns are still in place to encourage consumers to use electricity wisely and utilise energy efficient technologies and systems to reduce demand on the networks.
- Businesses (that can afford to) are encouraged to use renewable energy systems as backup to the grid.

In terms of water, the usual immediate relief mechanism is delivery of water by tanker. Through its accelerated water intervention programme, which became more imperative upon the emergence of COVID-19, CoGTA purchased 3 000 static tanks and hired 22 tankers to assist. CoGTA still has a small fleet of its own which are assisting in priority areas.

The issue of attention to water loss has been raised on numerous platforms.

Yours faithfully

MR. S.E. HLOMUKA, MPL

MEC FOR COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS

17/1/21

DATE _____