



GAUTENG PROVINCE

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ms LN Mekgwe, MPL

Speaker

Gauteng Provincial Legislature

Private Bag X52

Johannesburg

2000

Dear Madam Speaker

RESPONSE TO LEGISLATURE QUESTION 5. PR037 TABLED BY MEMBER S T MSIMANGA OF THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE (DA)

With regard to the water crisis in Gauteng, would the Premier please respond to the following:

- (i) what plans are currently in place to ensure Gauteng residents have reliable access to water;**

Response

At the height of Cape Town's drought crisis, the province recognised the need to have an integrated water plan for Gauteng residents. On 23 March 2018, Premier's Coordination Forum (PCF) resolved to adopt an integrated approach (Water War Room) coordinated by the Infrastructure Unit in the Office of the Premier. The purpose of the war room was to gather all stakeholders to work together towards developing a comprehensive water strategy for Gauteng. The stakeholders that took part in the Water War

Room includes, but were not limited to:

- Local government
- National government
- State owned enterprises (e.g. Rand Water)
- Water Specialists
- Water Experts
- Academics (e.g. GCRO)

The Following are key elements of the strategy:

- Reduce water demand – Water use per person needs to be reduced. To achieve this, available water must be allocated between municipalities, and other users and programmes put in place to keep consumption within globally accepted limits.
- Manage variability to prepare for drought and/or water scarcity – Preparation of a drought preparedness and management plan. There will be periods of water shortage which may require additional measures. To prepare for these, operating rules and plans for managing water during periods of water scarcity need to be put in place and agreed to by all water institutions, before they are needed.
- Invest in alternative water sources and water conservation – Identified alternative water sources includes ground water, rain water, stormwater, reuse of waste water and treated acid mine drainage.
- Manage water quality to limit pollution and achieve environmental goals – poor water quality affects water availability. Updated water quality modelling is required to guide policy interventions as well as to guide waste water disposal strategies to increase the volume of reusable water.
- Effective institutions for water security – Strong institutions are needed for water security. Existing cooperative governance structures, notably the Premier's Coordinating Forum, provide an appropriate overall structure for provincial level coordination with municipalities and other local organisations.

The water security interventions that have been or are in the process of being implemented are attached as **Annexure A**.

- (ii) **given the current situation with load-shedding, which has now impacted the water supply, are there any plans to establish an inter-governmental task team;**

Response

Many of the challenges to creating water security in the GCR relate to the performance and capability of the complex set of institutions with water related mandates. Strong institutions are needed to ensure water security. In the area of water resource management, some institutional review is needed.

- Catchment Management Agencies (CMAs) are to be established to devolve many resource management functions from national to regional level and increase user participation in water decision making.
- Currently, the CMAs are defined by river basin boundaries which split the GCR and its users between the Upper Vaal, Crocodile-Marico West and Olifants catchments. Which makes coordination and cooperation difficult.

- It is proposed that a Vaal CMA should cover the areas supported by the IVRS so that major water users can participate in the development of strategy and systems operation. This would strengthen water resource management in the region and contribute significantly to water security in the GCR.
- In March 2021 the Minister of DWAS combined the Vaal and Orange CMAs into a single Vaal-Orange CMA. This will have implications for water security.

A water secure GCR requires strong coordination across government.

- Existing cooperative governance structures, notably the Premier's Coordinating Forum, provide an appropriate overall structure for provincial level coordination with municipalities and other local organisations.
- Given the risks facing the province, it may be appropriate for the Provincial Disaster Management function to coordinate water security activities

(iii) has the Gauteng Government engaged with Rand Water to upgrade its infrastructure; and


Response

The province needs to respect the principle of separation of powers across the three spheres of government. Rand Water is a state owned enterprise that reports to national government. It will be highly inappropriate for the province to directly engage Rand Water on upgrading its infrastructure. Water infrastructures challenges are well understood at national and local government level. The province will continue to influence policy through participation at relevant and appropriate IGR forums.

(iv) what assistance has been given to municipalities who are spending money on buying generators and new water pumps so that their infrastructure is not damaged?

Response

The province will continue to support Rand Water's WCDM Strategy as a plan to support municipalities that are experiencing challenges.


Mr Andrek (Panyaza) Lesufi, MPL
PREMIER
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