

MEDIA RELEASE



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Department of Water Affairs and Forestry - Chief Directorate: Communication
Services

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NEW BOARD FOR UMGENI WATER

Minister Ronnie Kasrils today announced the external members of the new Board for Umgeni Water which takes up office on 1st July 2001. The 14 member Board will continue to be chaired by Mr Omar Latiff. Five current members have been re-appointed and there will be nine new members.

The members of the new Board will be:

- 1 Mr Omar Latiff, chairman (current member)
Chartered Accountant, former Mayor of Greater Pietermaritzburg TLC,
chairman of Umgeni Water from 1997 to the present.
2. Ms Julie Bayat (current member)
Town Planner; planning and skills training consultant.
3. Ms Ruth Bhengu (current member)
Member of Parliament in the National Assembly.
4. Warwick Barnsley (current member)
Farmer in the upper Umgeni catchment from 1973 to date.
5. Mr Paulos Ngcobo (current member)
Member of Parliament for KwaZulu-Natal; Cosatu Provincial Secretary
from 1993 to 1999.
6. Ms Makhosi Khoza (new member)
Local Government Manager, Chief Executive Officer, KWANALOGA
(Kwazulu/Natal Local Government Association)

7. Mr Josias De Kock (new member)
Chartered Accountant and financial expert, head of credit and advances and specialist finance at BOE Bank.
8. Mr NA Gasa (new member)
Independent HR expert, previously Group HR Development Manager at Tongaat Hulett.
9. Ms R M Lesoma (new member)
Chairperson of Infrastructure, Transport, Culture and Recreation Committee in the Durban Metro Unicity Municipality
10. Mr M T Fitzsimons (new member)
Chartered Accountant, currently Managing Director of Pressure Die Casting Group
11. Mr GM Anderson (new member)
Currently Director: Group Administration with Kaymac Group Management Ltd, vice president of Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
12. Mr V Gounden (new member)
Lawyer, mediator and trainer, currently Executive Director and founder member of ACCORD (African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes)
13. Mr S Meyiwa (new member)
Mechanical engineer, Managing Director for Javlynn Engineering Services & Siyabonga Engineering
14. Mr Lawrence Sithole (new member)
Chief Director:KwaZulu-Natal, Department of Water Affairs and forestry (ex officio)

Given the problems faced by the organisation and the need for aggressive action to address them, the approach to the appointments was to achieve a balance between continuity and the need for an infusion of new blood and particular skills in the current phase. The appointments also reflect the need to establish sound relationships with local government who are Umgeni Water's main consumers. In addition, the Minister has stated that he is still consulting with organised labour to identify a further candidate with a strong labour background.

The appointments were based on the recommendations of a selection panel convened by the Minister. The panel was chaired by Mr JEL Potloane, Deputy Director General in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry and included KwaZulu/Natal Minister of Finance Mr P. Miller as well as Mr D. Hutton-Wilson of the Institute of Directors who has particular expertise in corporate governance, Ms NP Mjoli, chairperson of the National Water Advisory Council and Mr NC Molepo, the CEO of Umgeni Water.

Referring to the re-appointment of the chairman, the Minister said “I expect him to complete the transformation of Umgeni that he, together with his Chief Executive, have begun.”

It is hoped that the appointment of the new Board will help to address some of the problems which the organisation has been confronting and to make its operations more transparent to key stakeholders.

“I look forward to a successful working relationship with the new Board and am confident it will rise to meet the challenges we face in the water sector and ensure that Umgeni Water retains its position as a leading organisation not just in South Africa but in Africa and beyond” said Minister Kasrils.

Enquiries: **Mr Mike Muller**
Director-General
Cell no.: 082 807 3531