



MEDIA STATEMENT

DWS presents the 2017/18 Quarter 2 performance to the Portfolio Committee

15 November 2017

Cape Town: The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) led by the Acting Director-General, Mr. Sifiso Mkhize, this morning presented the second quarter performance to the Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation. The presentation was meant to allow oversight by the committee members on the performance of the department against the Annual Performance Plan as presented to and signed off by Parliament. The presentation included both the Financials and Non-financials.

The main issues were for the DWS to explain how far it was progressing in terms of its achievements on both the Main Account, currently at 60% of achieving its targets, and the Water Trading Entity currently standing at 75%. It was also important to explain how the non-achievement gets to be defined, that being un-achieved targets as per impact of a number of influences, including budget cuts, late appointment of service providers, unforeseen technical or geographical impediments, non-payment of DWS debt by water service authorities, water users, and even other sister government departments.

There were suggestions to the DWS by members of the Portfolio Committee on debt recovery particularly with regards the municipalities. Part of the advice included for the DWS to engage both COGTA and National Treasury to ensure the withholding of owing municipalities' equitable share. This action would result in a particular municipality signing a Memorandum of Understanding agreeing to pay the department the amount owed from the equitable share. The municipality would then stand the chance of forfeiting the share if it defaulted. The municipality would also be obliged to prove to COGTA and National treasury that the said debt had been paid. National treasury would only then release the balance of the equitable share to the municipality.

The department was also advised to re-negotiate the terms of the repayment of the Water Trading Entity overdraft, that it should be over a longer term. It is suggested that this could be one way of releasing some of the funding to continue work on the planned infrastructure projects that stand a chance of either being stopped, or not even started.



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Members of the Portfolio Committee showed a keen interest in the engagements and agreements with neighbouring countries. It was important for an explanation to be given of the necessity of such engagements and agreements, considering the number of shared water courses between South Africa and most of its neighbours.

The matter regarding the Bucket Eradication Programme also took centre stage; particularly as it was evidenced that due to a lack of funding, the March 2018 deadline for completion would be missed. It was decided that there needs to be close collaboration with the Department of Human Settlements. This is meant to ensure that in any new housing developments, no new bucket toilet systems would arise.

The Portfolio Committee members encouraged the DWS to do an on-going, preferably quarterly, analysis of compliance to the Public Finance Management Act and National Treasury prescripts. This would assist the department to actively see what challenges it faces and timeously attend to these, reducing any possible negative outcomes.

END.

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

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