



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

Minister Mokonyane moves swiftly to stabilize Umngeni Water

27 June 2017

On 09 May 2017, Minister of Water and Sanitation, Ms. Nomvula Mokonyane, withdrew an application to appeal a judgement of the Kwazulu-Natal High Court in the matter of **Makhanya vs The Minister of Water and Sanitation and Mhlathuze Water Board**.

The judgement in the above case had determined that the Minister did not possess the necessary legislative powers to extend the term of office of board members beyond the maximum prescribed period as per the National Water Services Act (Act 108 of 1997).

The above judgement has bearing on the current term of office of the Board of Umngeni Water, whose term expires on 30 June 2017, following a four year extension previously granted from 01 July 2013.

The Minister has since informed the Board that she will not be extending their term further and that a process to appoint a new Board for Umngeni Water will commence as a matter of urgency.

Minister Mokonyane has also been briefed on serious allegations that have been made against the now suspended Chief Executive of Umngeni Water, various Executives and members of the Board.

"I have initiated a forensic investigation into the serious allegations of financial mismanagement, tender irregularities and manipulation of recruitment processes made at Umngeni Water and will await the outcomes of this investigation and will be informed by its conclusions on what actions ought to be taken" said Minister Mokonyane.

"We are committed to good governance and as such we have moved swiftly to appoint current General Manager for Operations at Umngeni Water, Mr. Msizi Cele, as Acting Chief Executive and as the Accounting Authority, given the absence of a board to steer the ship during this transition" added Minister Mokonyane.



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The appointment of the Acting-Chief Executive (CE) as the Accounting Authority (Board) has been effected in line with Section 49(2)(b) of the Public Finance Management Act, as amended.

This appointment has been made with a stated proviso that the Acting-CE may not take any decisions pertaining to the business of the Board without consulting the Minister of Water and Sanitation as the Executive Authority until a new Board is appointed.

The Minister has since communicated her decisions in this regard to the outgoing Board and has thanked its members and Chairperson for their contribution and service to Umngeni Water and the Water sector at large.

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

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