



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### MEDIA STATEMENT

#### **DWS Minister Nkwinti took time to engage with Bloemwater and Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality**

09 June 2018

**Bloemfontein:** The Minister of Water and Sanitation Hon. Gugile Nkwinti engaged with Bloemwater, a water board located in Mangaung, as well as the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality today, with the ideal of understanding the challenges faced by both in terms of executing their mandates, as well as the work emanating from previous Ministerial Directives.

Minister Nkwinti was briefed by the CEO of Bloemwater, Dr Moorosi and officials on their operations and challenges. These included issues of Operations and Maintenance for sustainable infrastructure and security of water supply, managing finances within availability, sustaining resources, aligning Bloemwater ideals with DWS outcomes, as well as relations with the Malawi Water Board for at least 20 years now.

There were also opportunities for growth which were identified as:

- Servicing of Mangaung, Kopanong and Mantsopa Local Municipalities (which municipalities are mainly rural and lack revenue);
- Suggested that there be an extension to Bloemwater's operational area, with a mind that there was a directive to assist in Masilonyana;
- Work on the Xhariep pipeline can also be a source of growth, and that
- The regional utility concept should be finalised urgently and that this could also bring stability in terms of operations.

The kinds of challenges that Bloemwater identified include:

- Non-payment by municipalities, leading to non-servicing of infrastructure,
- Sedimentation of the Orange River, which results in actual capacity of the river being compromised,
- The reality of Climate Change and drought, as well as
- The reality of low tariffs remains a challenge and impacts on the operational costs.

On matters regarding the Bucket Eradication Programme it was reiterated that the programme is one of the key concerns of government, to address a lack of dignified sanitation to the previously disadvantaged. There was a TROIKA put in place in this regard comprising of the Departments of Human Settlements, COGTA and DWS.

Challenges of bulk infrastructure during the course of the work resulted in stumbling blocks. Other challenges include inadequate maintenance, unrests due to non- or late payments, and contractors leaving sites, as well as delays in the sign over of structures to the rightful identifiable owners.

This work will continue particularly following on Minister's articulation during his Budget Vote presentation.

Bloemwater also took the Minister on a walkabout at their Hydropower plant located on their premises. The plant is able to produce 96 kilowatt of electricity and provides 70% of Bloemwater offices' power needs. The plant also uses a changeover panel specifically



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designed to sense when a dip in electricity supply occurs and changes over automatically to the grid. If all power fails then the changeover panel will automatically activate a diesel generator also on the premises. The Minister expressed his appreciation for such technologies and encouraged more innovations of this nature from within the DWS and its entities.

Minister Nkwinti also met with the Executive Mayor of Mangaung, Mme Ollie Mlaleli and the MEC of COGTA in the Free State, Mr Oupa Khoabane. Out of the meeting a decision was taken that there needs to be a common drive to resolve the issues that have continued to be a bugbear for the Metro and its surrounds.

As Mayor Mlaleli said, “We need to ensure there is a need to use complementary skills amongst the officials, as well as ensure mutual accountability. The priorities of Metro have already been articulated through the Council budget. Now is the time to move service delivery forward, especially on matters affecting the Bucket Eradication Programme, and the need to upgrade the informal settlements. What we need is an Action Plan that is smart and implementable”.

Minister Nkwinti emphasised that “Priorities of the province must be decided by the province; DWS will be an active partner and will be guided as such. There will be quarterly updates following the next meeting to show the plan. The IMTT led by Minister Mkhize that includes SALGA, NT, DWS, Energy, COGTA and others is meant for planning together to look into municipal difficulties so far as payment for bulk services are looked into and resolved”.

**END.**

**Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation**

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