



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

DWS presents an update on the War on Leaks and the Bucket Eradication Programmes at the Portfolio Committee

13 February 2019

A delegation of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) led by Minister Gugile Nkwinti and the Chief Operating Officer, Ms. Nthabiseng Fundakubi, today made presentations to the Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation on updates on the War on Leaks (WoL) and Bucket Eradication Programmes (BEP).

On the status quo regarding the War on Leaks, the DWS Programme Manager of WoL, Ms. Ndileka Mohapi, reflected on the rationale that led to the initiation of the programme, particularly the need to address the non-revenue water emanating from water losses through physical losses. One of the main objectives of the programme was to train & develop 15000 unemployed youth citizens, to become Water Agents, Artisans and Plumbers.

The roles of the Water Agents on completion would be:

- Water Conservation
- Pollution reduction
- Community and school advocacy
- Water wise household and gardening
- Advocacy and communication
- Basic Leak detection.

The joint roles for the Artisans and Plumbers include:

- Municipalities / Communities
- General repairs and maintenance
- Fixing leaks- household and municipalities
- Water losses reduction
- Savings from reduction of physical losses
- Inspect facilities, systems and their components to ensure safety, identify necessary repairs and provide an on-going programme of preventive maintenance.

The trainees would then be placed in the respective municipalities from whence they came. The implementation of the programme would be upon the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), Rand Water (RW) and the Electricity and Water SETA (EWSETA).

What was included in the presentation also referred to an acceptance of the fact that though the idea behind the programme remains noble and correct, there needed to have been a different way of bringing it into operation. Whilst a large sum of money has already been spent on the two initial phases of the WoL programme and a large number of trainees are at the point of registration in their chosen trades, i.e. Artisans and Plumbers, whilst the Water Agents are already operating.

What was agreed to between the DWS and the Portfolio Committee members is that there needs to be more cooperation between the DWS with its entities, i.e. Rand Water and EWSETA, and COGTA together with its particular entity, the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency (MISA), as well as the Department of Public Works.



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

During his response, Minister Nkwinti said that: “The matter of the WoL funding was discussed with the Director-General of National Treasury. We agreed with the DG that the DWS cannot utilise money for vacant posts to fund the programme. We cannot also drop the programme before it is completed because this would lead to wasteful expenditure.

“We have agreed to have a joint memorandum to Cabinet, i.e. by the DWS and National treasury, to formalize spending on the programme, to regularize the programme in the 2019/2020 Annual Performance Programme.

“I would also like to impress upon the members of the Committee that some of the issues being raised here today do not have a bearing on the programme itself but that these are issues that are in the domain of the Water Service Authorities; specifically District and Local Municipalities. We hope that the upcoming Interactive Session on Friday 15th February looking at the Transformation of the Water sector will also shed light on the separation of powers and responsibilities regarding bulk supply and reticulation.”

The DWS proposed that it might be desirable to not bring into play Phase 3 of the programme until all the ducks are in a row with regard the regularization of the programme and thus finality regarding its funding is also reached.

On the presentation of the Bucket Eradication Programme, there was a form of acceptance with regard to the progress reported. The major issues that impact on the progress towards the eradication of the bucket system in the formal settlements are operations and maintenance of infrastructure and the intermittent supply of water that impacts on the capacity to have flushing toilets.

The members of the Portfolio Committee showed appreciation of the use of the DWS Construction Unit in the delivery of services, especially through delivery of good quality infrastructure.

End

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

For more information contact: Sputnik Ratau on 082 874 2942

For media releases, speeches and news visit the Water & Sanitation portal at:

www.dwa.gov.za