



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**28 January 2025**

### **WATER USE AUTHORISATION PROGRESS REPORT**

#### **1. Background and Purpose**

The Department receives and processes water use applications for water use authorization as contemplated in section 22 of the National Water Act 36 of 1998 “the Act”. In terms of section 151 of the Act, using water otherwise than permitted is a punishable offence.

In processing water use authorisation applications, the Department has set a target of 90 working days. The 90-days are reckoned by including the day of the submission of a complete application and all its supporting annexures as mentioned in the letter of information requirements given to the applicant by the Department and including the day of the signature of a decision made on the application by the Responsible Authority.

The purpose of this document is to provide the public with the Quarterly Report on the Processing of Water Use Applications (WUAs). The report also presents the extent and distribution of water use applications backlogs in the Department. Backlogs are defined as applications that have exceeded 90-days and are still being processed.

#### **2. Water Use Authorisation Performance**

##### **2.1 WUAs finalized within 90-days**

In quarter 3 (October to December 2024) the Department finalized 293 water use applications out of 389, which represents an achievement of 75.32%. Detailed statistics including historical data for the 2023/24 financial year are reported in Table 1 and 2.



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**Table 1: WUAs (Water Use Applications) Performance Stats for 2023/24 financial year**

REGION / CMA	Quarter 2023/24 (Apr-Jun 2023)			Quarter 2 (Jul-Sept 2023)			Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec 2023)			Quarter 4 (Jan-March 2024)		
	Target	Achieved	%	Target	Achieved	%	Target	Achieved	%	Target	Achieved	%
BGCMA (Western Cape)	8	5	63%	19	17	89%	38	25	66%	62	55	89%
Eastern Cape	9	4	44%	13	7	54%	24	21	88%	48	39	81%
Free State	10	4	40%	17	10	59%	23	13	57%	27	17	63%
Gauteng	13	2	15%	18	7	39%	26	19	73%	47	33	70%
IUCMA (Mpumalanga)	3	2	67%	12	11	92%	33	29	88%	67	61	91%
KZN	97	94	97%	41	32	78%	53	47	89%	67	48	72%
Limpopo	5	4	80%	16	8	50%	36	26	72%	59	45	76%
Mpumalanga	25	6	24%	21	10	48%	51	40	78%	53	37	70%
Northern Cape	14	8	57%	22	18	82%	33	25	76%	43	29	67%
North-West	26	8	31%	19	11	58%	32	19	59%	65	32	49%
Western Cape	18	3	17%	27	22	81%	31	22	71%	48	24	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>72%</b>



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**Table 2: WUAs (Water Use Applications) Performance Stats for the current financial year (2024/25)**

REGION / CMA	Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun 2024)			Quarter 2 (Jul-Sept 2024)			Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec 2024)		
	Target	Achieved	%	Target	Achieved	%	Target	Achieved	%
BGCMA (Western Cape)	18	9	50%	45	30	67%	18	17	94%
Eastern Cape	11	4	36%	41	19	46%	22	17	77%
Free State	22	11	50%	27	27	100%	20	15	75%
Gauteng	28	16	57%	46	31	67%	25	16	64%
IUCMA (Mpumalanga)	12	8	67%	66	61	92%	24	18	75%
KZN	38	22	58%	78	59	76%	79	65	82%
Limpopo	30	16	53%	35	25	71%	31	26	84%
Mpumalanga	35	22	63%	56	40	71%	53	43	81%
Northern Cape	30	13	43%	34	29	85%	26	21	81%
North-West	45	12	27%	62	41	66%	46	28	61%
Western Cape	21	14	67%	47	30	64%	45	27	60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>75%</b>

Table 2 indicates that the Department finalized 75% (293 out of 389 applications) of the water use applications within 90 days. Five Regions/CMAs performed above 80%, which is the benchmark for water use authorization set out the Department's annual performance plan. The Regions/CMAs that perform below 80% are being supported by the Head Office to ensure that there is performance improvement. Challenges with the functionality of e-WULAAS, which also contributed to delays receiving and processing water use licences are being addressed. The aim of the Department is to achieve at least 90% of the completion target post the restructuring process by the end of the 2026/27 performance year.



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### 2.2 Backlog WULAs

**Table 3: Backlog of Water Use Licence Applications (applications that have exceeded 90 days)**

REGION / CMA	2023	2024	Total
BOCMA (Western Cape)	0	0	0
Eastern Cape	2	4	6
Free State	2	3	5
Gauteng	6	10	16
IUCMA (Mpumalanga)	0	4	4
KZN	5	12	17
Limpopo	3	6	9
Mpumalanga	4	7	11
Northern Cape	3	3	6
Northwest	6	12	18
Western Cape	0	9	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>101</b>

As of 27 January 2025, the Department recorded 101 backlogs. This total figure is made of 31 applications that were submitted in 2023 whilst the 70 applications are new backlogs submitted in 2024. The Department is making concerted efforts to clear the backlogs to ensure that there is no accumulation. There is an improvement in minimizing or clearing backlogs as the Department used to record over 1000 applications in the backlogs at each reporting period.

### 3. Conclusions

Important strides have been made to meet the 90 days. However, the Department is not yet achieving the desired performance of above 80% efficiency. There is improvement also in that backlogs are maintained below 100 applications. More efforts are going to be put in place to ensure that performance is at 90% and the backlog is reduced to below 50 applications each time.

#### Enquiries:

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