

**Ref:02/1/5/2**

**MINISTER**

**QUESTION NO. 2948 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

A draft reply to **Mr T Z Hadebe (DA)** to the above-mentioned question is enclosed for your consideration.

**MS NOSIPHO NGCABA**

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

**DATE:**

**DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED**

**MRS B E E MOLEWA, MP**

**MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**DATE:**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**(For written reply)**

**QUESTION NO. 2948 {NW3452E}**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 30 of 2015**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 14 August 2015**

 **Mr T Z Hadebe (DA) to ask the Minister of Environmental Affairs:**

(1) What is her department’s position on ISO 17025 accreditation for air quality seeing that it is the internationally recognised tool for quality assured measurements;

(2) what is her department currently doing to obtain the specified accreditation;

(3) when can the specified accreditation be achieved;

(4) is the specified tool being used at a municipal level; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW3452E

**2948. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPLIES:**

(1) The South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) is a tool to support quality assurance of ambient monitoring stations in South Africa. The department has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with SANAS with the view to ensuring that emission monitoring measurements from all point sources and all ambient monitoring stations in the country are accredited in terms of ISO 17025.

The accreditation process entails the development of accreditation procedures such as guidelines, assessment protocols, as well as the capability of technical staff responsible for running the monitoring stations and associated equipment. The department’s officials are members of the Ambient and Emissions Monitoring SANAS Technical Committee (STC), a body that provides technical advice to the SANAS Chief Executive Officer on various matters regarding ambient and emission monitoring accreditation.

(2) The department has submitted an application to SANAS for ISO 17025 accreditation for its three Air Quality Monitoring Stations located in the Waterberg-Bojanala Priority Area and is currently awaiting the completion of the assessment of these stations by SANAS.

In the meantime, the South African Weather Service (SAWS) is in the processes of applying for SANAS accreditation for the monitoring stations in other Priority Areas (Vaal Triangle and Highveld) which it (SAWS) is managing on behalf of the department.

(3) It is envisaged that accreditation will be granted for all the stations in Waterberg, Highveld and Vaal Triangle networks by the end of 2015/16 financial year.

(4) With respect to other ambient monitoring networks nationwide, the department is providing technical support towards improved station and data management to all government-owned networks with the view to getting these networks to ultimately achieve SANAS accreditation into the future. To this end the department is working on the development of quality assurance (QA) systems to assist these government networks. These QA systems will form part of the Norms and Standards for Ambient Air Quality Monitoring and the standards are under development in the department.

Currently the City of Cape Town is ISO 17025 accredited for Sulphur Dioxide (SO2). There is a lack of expertise and resources at municipal level; hence the management of these stations is always outsourced to service providers. Furthermore, there are only few municipalities managing their stations in-house. The department is currently conducting a comprehensive Ambient Air Quality Monitoring course across all provinces (currently five provinces have been trained and those are; the Gauteng Province; the KwaZulu-Natal Province; the Northwest Province; the Northern Cape Province and the Free State Province).

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