**MINISTRY OF ENERGY**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**National Assembly : 488**

Please find attached a response to Parliamentary Question for *written reply* asked by Mr K J Mileham (DA) to ask the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy.

Mr Zizamele Mbambo

Deputy\_ Director-General: Nuclear Energy
28/08/2019

Recommended *I* Not Recommended

Mr. Thabane Zulu

Director General: Department of Energy
28/08/2019

Approved

**Mr S.G Mantashe
28/08/2019**

**488. Mr K J Mileham (DA) to ask the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy:**

(1) What is the status of the Thyspunt site, in the Kouga Local Municipality, which was intended to be the site of the nuclear build programme;

(2) why are public participation processes around the specified site continuing;

(3) what is the status of the nuclear build programme? NW1481E

 **Reply:**1. Thyspunt remains one of Eskom's suitable sites to host a nuclear power plant. It has undergone extensive environmental studies in the form of environmental impact assessment and nuclear site safety review by independent consultants. Eskom has submitted nuclear site installation license (N ISL) applications for Thyspunt in order to get the site ready for any South African future nuclear power plans.

2. Site approvals for nuclear power plants, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) by the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) and Nuclear Installation Site License (N ISL) from National Nuclear Regulator (NNR) are long-lead items. Consequently, the NNR is continuing with Eskom's application for NISL. The public hearings are an integral part of this NISL process.

Since receipt and acceptance of the Nuclear Installation Site Licence applications, the National Nuclear Regulator (NNR) has been seized with its internal technical review process of the Thyspunt site application, which is a lengthy and thorough process focusing on technical, scientific and onsite assessments amongst others.

The reason for holding NNR public hearings around the Thyspunt during this time is that NNR has completed its internal review process of the Thyspunt site application and is now embarking on an external consultation process to listen to health, safety and environmental concerns related to the application from interested and affected parties. The NNR embarks on this process to ensure that its regulatory decision making is independent, robust and transparent.

3. In terms of the Nuclear Energy Policy for 2008, the new nuclear build programme is still part of the energy mix. The Nuclear Energy Policy provides the government vision for developing extensive nuclear energy programme and to become self-sufficient in all aspects of the nuclear value chain for peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The nuclear build programme is informed by the Integrated Resources Plan (IRP). NEDLAC is in the process of finalizing IRP. In September 2019, the Integrated Resource Plan will be tabled in Cabinet for approval. The Integrated Resource Plan considers a diversified energy mix that include cleaner coal, nuclear, gas, hydro, renewables and battery storage. The outcomes of the revised IRP, will determine how the nuclear new build programme becomes phased in future. Government policy position is that South Africa will acquire nuclear at the price, pace and scale that the country can afford.