

**MINISTRY FOR COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER PQ2018/05**

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**Mr M G P Lekota (Cope) to ask the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs**

In view of the application from the Western Cape provincial government in November 2015 for the province to be declared a drought disaster area, (a) what has he found to have been the rationale behind and reasons provided for the initial refusal of the specified application and (b)(i) why was the Cape Town Metro excluded from the five municipal areas subsequently approved for drought disaster status in January 2016 and (ii) has he found this to be the correct decision? NW6E

**REPLY**

In terms of section 41(1) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No 57 of 2002) (the DM Act), the responsibility for the declaration of a provincial state of disaster lies with the Premier of a province, after consultation with the other Members of the Executive Council (MECs). In light of the above, it is important to indicate that the Minister of Cooperative Governance does not have the responsibility to consider applications for disaster declarations. Accordingly, no application for the declaration of a provincial state of disaster was submitted by the Western Cape Provincial Government to the Ministry of Cooperative Governance and as such, the Minister did not refuse the application from the Western Cape provincial government in November 2015.

(a) Not Applicable.

(b)(i) According to records at the disposal of my department, the Department of Cooperative Governance records, the City of Cape Town was not included in the drought report submitted by the Western Cape province for November 2015 to be considered in the classification process in terms of section 23 of the DM Act.

(b)(ii) Not applicable.

**Background Information**

Notable is that the focus for the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs is on Disaster Risk Reduction measures regardless of whether disaster declarations in provinces and municipalities are in place or not. The department coordinates Disaster Risk Reduction measures, particularly on anticipating future disaster risk, reducing existing exposure, hazard or vulnerability as well as improving resilience within the communities in line with the Disaster Management Act (Act 57 of 2002). In this case, the department is working closely with the relevant government departments and organs of state such as the South African weather Service (SAWS), Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) as well as the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) for the prediction of future risks and dissemination of early warnings and advisories to enable informed decision making and resilience within provinces and communities.

The department has appropriate institutional arrangements within the country for continuous engagements to enable inputs and feedback from the relevant stakeholders across the spheres of government for the enhancement of government programmes in line with the Batho Pele Principles.