



forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 334 {CW361E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 15 of 2022

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Ms C Labuschagne (Western Cape: DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

- (1) How many observational networks such as (a) weather stations, (b) rainfall stations, (c) automatic rainfall stations, (d) sea surface temperature stations and (e) weather buoys are in the south (i) Atlantic Ocean and (ii) Indian Ocean;
- (2) (a) how many of such stations are not functioning at the moment, (b) what are the reasons for not functioning and (c) what is the impact thereof on South Africans?

334. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

- (1)
 - a) Automatic weather stations (AWSs) and 11 upper air sounding stations/sites.
 - b) 1 051 manual rainfall stations
 - c) 178 automatic rainfall stations (ARSs)
 - d) 13 sea surface temperature stations (SSTs)
 - e) 53 drifting weather buoys still reporting data, as follows:
 - (i) Atlantic Ocean: 35 drifting buoys; and
 - (ii) Indian Ocean: 18 drifting buoys.

(2) Two upper air stations (Marion and Gough Islands), four AWSs and 11 ARSs

- a) The Marion Island Hydrogen Generator had configuration challenges, which were resolved on Friday, 20 May 2022. The South African Weather Service (SAWS) will be engaging one of the vessels that will go either to or past the island to transport the instrument to the island and bring the hydrogen generator online again.

The upper air station on Gough Island has been non-operational since 10 April 2022 due to a malfunctioning part. The replacement part has been received. The SAWS is waiting for it to be transported to the island during the next voyage (August 2022).

Four AWSs are non-operational due to communication failure and 3G non-availability in their locations. One AWS was struck by lightning. Interventions to bring these stations online again are as follows:

- Regarding the three non-operational AWSs, the SAWS has appointed a service provider to supply LTE modems that will be used as an upgrade for the 3G networks. It is expected that the supplier will deliver during the second week of July 2022.
- Regarding the AWS that was struck by lightning, this is a commercial station and belongs to ACSA. It is however also part of the SAWS network, as the SAWS utilises data received from this station. ACSA is currently busy with a process for obtaining quotations for the repair of this station.

Eleven ARSs are non-operational due to communication challenges/no network connection in their location. SAWS appointed a service provider for LTE communication modems that will resolve the issue of network failure. They are awaiting delivery.

- b) There has been no noticeable impact on the ability of SAWS to continue its forecasts. However, an increase in the number of weather stations, both inland and in the oceans, will contribute to higher numerical weather prediction model resolution, which will in turn lead to more accurate forecasts.

Regards



MS B D CREECY, MP

MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 31/05/2022