



mineral resources & energy

Department:
Mineral Resources and Energy
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

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DAILY MAVERICK ARTICLE SHOWS MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE MINING REGULATORY PROCESSES

An article published by the Daily Maverick on 14 January 2024 titled *EXCLUSIVE — Mantashe reigns as the minister of no new mining as DMRE lacks admin capacity*, is inaccurate and shows a misunderstanding of the regulatory processes that must be undertaken in processing mining applications.

The article has since been referenced by many other publications, particularly broadcast media houses, perpetuating the unfortunate misunderstanding.

It is important to set outright that the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) is committed to process all mining related applications congruent with the requirements articulated in the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA), a regulatory framework for the country's mining sector.

In terms of the MPRDA, once an application for prospecting or mining right, permit or license has been accepted by the relevant regional manager, the applicant has to commence with the required environmental authorisation application. The environmental authorisation processes differ based on the right being applied for, and involve comprehensive consultation with interested and affected parties.

Although the legislation stipulates the timeframes within which these activities must be undertaken, in many instances, applicants generally request and would be granted extensions, depending on the nature of specialist environmental studies that may still need to be undertaken in that specific location.

The environmental studies must result in a Scoping Report and an Environmental Management Programme, both of which are required before an application is concluded. Given their extent and the financial resources needed, environmental studies can take more than 200 days to finalise, inclusive of requests for extensions. The number of days

is to a large degree influenced by the applicants. If approved, a further 20-day period is set aside for possible appeals by interested and affected parties.

A fair analysis of the mining application process would have included inputs from applicants, particularly the amount of time they spend on environmental authorisation and consultations. Such inputs would confirm that while the DMRE promotes efficiency in processing applications, it does so in a manner that does not compromise the legislated process.

In line with its role in enabling the country's economic development, the DMRE has finalised 2041 applications in the current financial year. The department is committed to being efficient and transparent in processing mining applications.

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