

Previous Story

Next Story

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City beaches still serviced

IN LIGHT of the repeated and erroneous allegations made in the media by Rogerio Viana of Beach CleanSA, the City of Cape Town would like to once again reassure residents of its continued capability and commitment to cleaning the city's beaches.



All beaches continue to be serviced in accordance with seasonal demands and concomitant methodologies.

Services are currently being rendered manually and, as use increases with the onset of the festive season, will be carried out both manually and mechanically (on certain beaches).

The city's equipment is in working order and is undergoing a service as is the annual norm, ensuring readiness to meet the demands of the summer months.

While the city is not inclined to respond to each and every one of Viana's compulsive attacks on us via

the media, his apparently wilful misunderstanding of certain processes necessitates public correction for the benefit of residents.

Viana quotes a figure of R4.7 million being the original budget allocated, which he claims was subsequently reduced. This is not correct.

The amount was the estimated budget to cover the services envisaged to be rendered in terms of the tender – an estimated budget which the line department still had to apply for and be allocated in terms of the city's ordinary budget process.

The fact that this was an estimated figure and was subject to available budget was clearly stated in the tender.

The figure actually allocated for the top-up beach-cleaning service, such as the kind offered by Beach CleanSA, was in fact R750 000 for the current financial year, and this is the amount that was able to be utilised when it was awarded the tender.

The top-up service schedule has been compiled by the line department to utilise this available budget, and it translates into a tender worth R750 000 for this financial year for a work schedule of 47 days per year, for three hours per day.

The service does not include disposal of waste removed from the beaches during cleaning, as the city sees to the disposal costs associated with the service.

The city's priorities need to be taken into account when allocating budget and the priority of basic service delivery to disadvantaged communities needs to be of paramount importance.

Finally, in an effort to find common ground and lessen the adverse impact on the tenderer, the city obtained permission to extend Beach CleanSA's contract for an extra year until June 30, 2016. **Viana** has not accepted this offer.

He makes the claim that, in light of unacceptable levels of E.coli in the sea as recently reported by the city in certain areas, his machine is able to mitigate the effects of the bacteria.

This is a curious assertion, as levels of E.coli are largely contained in water and contamination was not measured in the sand.

Minuscule contamination could possibly result from dog faeces in beach sand.

To mitigate this, the city continues to appeal to members of the public, who walk their dogs on the beach, to ensure that they remove any waste generated by their animals.

Incidentally, while **Viana** has not been cleaning the beaches over the past two years in high season, the city has maintained the Blue Flag status – and, in fact, the number of Blue Flag beaches has increased from eight to nine for this season.

In addition, we have seen a reduction in the number of complaints received by the public.

An interrogation of the C3 complaint system over the past four years (the first two of which Beach CleanSA worked on and the following two of which the city performed the function alone) revealed the following: 2010/11: 41 complaints (Beach CleanSA). 2011/12: 43 complaints (Beach CleanSA). 2012/13: 43 complaints (city). 2013/14: 32 complaints (city). Cape Town prides itself on being a tourist destination and the city will continue to provide, and be proud of, its ability to deliver and uphold Cape Town's high level of cleanliness, which has always been appreciated by residents and visitors. COUNCILLOR ERNEST SONNENBERG Mayoral committee member for utility services City of Cape Town

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[Previous Story](#)

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