**NA QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1230**

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**1230. Mr Jabulani L Mahlangu to ask the Minister of Mineral Resources:**

With regards to the evaluation of safety at Lily Mine in Mpumalanga South Africa, the world and the community members of Mpumalanga were shocked with the incident that occurred in Lilly Mine in Nkomazi Mpumalanga where 3 mine workers went down 80m into a sink hole.

The communities across the country shared a hope and anxiety of the families and miners at Lily Mine that are distraught.

In your recent media and public announcement you made the point that it will take between 6 to 8 months for the rescue team to reach the container.

Up to the date “The families of Mnisi, Mazibuko and Nyerende are still in our prayers and we trust that the emotional and psychological support they are receiving will assist them to cope with the traumatic experience.

The question is:-

1. Whether the department was aware that the container office was actually located in such a dangerous location.

**A formal investigation is underway in terms of the legal provisions and will assist in identifying the underlying causes of the accident. On completion of investigation, recommendations will be made to prevent similar accidents.**

1. Is it your expectation the mine would have known that the container is in a dangerous location.

**The above-mentioned formal investigation will assist in identifying the underlying causes of the accident.**

1. Has your department conducted assessment on other mines in the country to determine that no such dangers await other mineworkers?

**The mine inspections and audits are continuously being conducted with the aim of preventing harm on the mineworkers.**

**In a case where sub-standard condition, act or non compliance to the provisions of the Mine Health and Safety Act is observed during a mine inspection or audit, appropriate actions are immediately taken to remedy such conditions.**

1. If yes which mines? If not why not?

**The mine inspections and audits are conducted at all the operating mines.**

1. Do we have assurance that such or similar accident will not revisit the country

**We endeavor to prevent mine accidents from occurring and lessons learnt from the above-mentioned investigation will be used to improve safety in the mining sector.**

1. Does the country have requisite skills to deal with disasters of this nature?

**South Africa has the requisite skills to deal with disasters at mines and our country’s Mine Rescues Services (MRS) assisted in the Chile Mine disaster in which 33 trapped mine workers were rescued successful after 69 days.**

1. If yes where is it located, and why do we find ourselves in this situation like it is at Lily Mine where it will take close to a year to reach the container where miners are trapped?

**At the Mine Rescue Services of South Africa. The rescue operations have not been abandoned but options which will ensure safe rescue operations are being pursued. This is as a result of the deterioration of ground conditions at the mine.**

1. If not why don’t we have such capacity?

**South Africa has the requisite skills and capacity.**

1. Who is thus responsible for the situation that we find ourselves in?

**The accident investigation will assist in identifying the underlying causes of the accident.**

Approved/not approved

**Mr MJ Zwane, MP**

**Minister of Mineral Resources**

**Date Submitted:-**………………/………………/2016