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 **Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 970**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 5/05/2017**

**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 15 OF 2017)**

**Mr D America (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education and Training:**

(1) What steps should public technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges take to attract and retain competent lecturers in fields where the current remuneration levels available for lecturing staff are significantly below comparable salaries and service conditions in the private sector;

(2) has his department taken any steps to allocate posts to TVET colleges at post levels that will allow public colleges to attract staff with scarce skills that are also in high demand in the private sector as lecturers; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) whether his department (a) intends or (b) has already allocated financial support to public TVET colleges to improve the skills base of existing college lecturers, similar to the development grants that are made available to universities; if not, in each case, why not; if so, what are the relevant details in each case? **NW1098E**

**REPLY:**

1. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) is currently the main employer of the lecturing staff in the public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college sector. The Department implements remuneration levels and conditions of service determined in the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) and relevant sectoral bargaining councils. Together, the Department and TVET colleges take steps that create conducive environments that would attract and enhance the retention of competent lecturers. Such conditions include amongst others, job stability and satisfaction, housing, pension, medical aid benefits, salary/pay progression, 13th cheques, bursaries to further their studies and other development funds that are applicable within the public service sectors. The Department will soon start exploring an Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) unique to TVET college lecturers intended to introduce improved service conditions and remuneration packages that can be catered for within the current and future voted budgets. Currently, TVET college lecturers are allowed to partake in teaching self-sustainable, part-time classes within the sector. Lecturers are also remunerated for participating in setting of examination question papers and marking of these external examination papers. Some TVET colleges recognise the good performance of their lecturing staff and award them incentives and/or tokens of appreciation in terms of their policies and availability of financial resources.
2. No, the Department has not yet taken steps to allocate posts to TVET colleges at post levels that will allow public colleges to attract staff with scarce skills that are also in high demand in private sector. It should be noted that since the Department was established in 2009 and started operating on 1 April 2010, the public TVET colleges were employers and remunerated the larger portion of their staff from their own payroll systems, whereas the Provinces maintained salary payments for staff that were already in colleges prior to 1 January 2006 as a result of the implementation of the Further Education and Training Act 16 of 2006 (now the CET Act 16 of 2006 as amended). Staff members in all colleges were only transferred to the Department on 1 April 2015. The Department took over approximately 18 000 staff members and a host of liabilities. Since April 2010, the Department has been hard at work to bring parity and standardisation of systems throughout the sector and amongst staff members within the sector. Remuneration of staff members is guided by the current Public Service legislation and resolutions taken in the bargaining councils. However, in terms of the CET Act 16 of 2006 as amended, College Councils are allowed to appoint and remunerate additional college staff and subject them to conditions of service that are not lower than what is offered by the Department. This implies that colleges are allowed to give additional incentives to staff providing scarce skills in order to attract and retain them.
3. The Department has on 28 March 2017, transferred a total amount of R31.899 million of the skills levy to the 50 TVET colleges within the country, for the 2016/17 financial year. This allocation was in support of the colleges’ skills development plans, which were approved through the 2016 Medium Term Expenditure Framework planning process. The allocation has further been earmarked as a national priority project, which will address the critical skills shortage in the TVET sector.

It is expected that colleges must submit to the Department, skills development plans processed through their Academic Boards before they are authorised to spend the funds. This practice of transferring skills development levy funds to colleges will be sustained annually pending proper reporting to account for the utilisation of such funds.

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DIRECTOR – GENERAL

STATUS:

DATE:

QUESTION 970 APPROVED/NOT APPROVED/AMENDED

Dr BE NZIMANDE, MP

MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

STATUS:

DATE: