**REPORT ON DELAYED REPLIES TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS**

1. **Introduction**
2. The questions process is an important mechanism for holding the executive accountable and overseeing its exercise of national executive authority including the implementation of legislation.
3. The Rules of the National Assembly require Ministers to answer a parliamentary question within 10 working days (Rule 145(5) and 146(1) and (3)).
4. Rule 145(5)(a) provides a Minister with the option of requesting an extension from the Speaker within which to reply to a question.
5. Such an extension, if approved by the Speaker, offers a Minister an additional 10 working days within which to reply to a question.
6. **Communication to Ministers**
7. On 14 June 2021, the Speaker wrote to 24 Ministers whose replies to questions were delayed.
8. The Ministers concerned were informed of the number of questions against them to which replies were outstanding, and were asked to provide an explanation for the delayed replies.
9. The Ministers were – **a**. Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (6); **b.** Minister of Basic Education (3); **c.** Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies (10); **d.** Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (29); **e.** Minister of Defence and Military Veterans (9); **f.** Minister of Employment and Labour (4); **g.** Minister of Finance (10); **h.** Minister of Health (At the time the Acting Minister) (14); **i.** Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation (2); **j.** Minister of Home Affairs (11); **k.** Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation (As the portfolio was then known) (23); **l.** Minister of Justice and Correctional Services (21); **m**. Minister of Police (26); **n.** Minister of Public Enterprises (28); **o**. Minister of Public Service and Administration (10); **p.** Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure (6); **q.** Minister of Small Business Development (6); **r.** Minister of Social Development (20) **s.** Minister of State Security (2); **t**. Minister of Tourism (0); **u.** Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition (4); **v.** Minister of Transport (9); **w.** Minister in The Presidency (At the time Acting) (9); **x.** Minister in The Presidency of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities(9).
10. **Responses by Ministers**

1. As at Friday, 6 August 2021 at 16:40, the following Ministers responded to the Speaker’s letter:
   1. **Minister MT Kubayi** - letter dated 22 June 2021
      1. She informed the Speaker that she replied to the question concerned.
      2. This was verified to be correct.
   2. **Minister LN Sisulu** – letter dated 22 June 2021
      1. The Minister provided the following reasons for delayed replies:
         * 1. Questions to both departments are of a technical nature;
           2. Questions relate to projects and services at local and provincial government level;
           3. The departments have to rely on information from local and provincial spheres;
           4. Covid-19 impacted on staff becoming unavailable and being reassigned to deal with service delivery
   3. **Minister NN Mapisa-Nqakula** – letter dated 30 June 2021
      1. The Minister provided the following reasons: The delay occurred in the sign-off of replies by the Chief of the SANDF following the change in command at the beginning of June 2021.
   4. **Minister of Health (Acting) MT Kubayi** – letter dated 5 July 2021
      1. The Minister provided the following reasons:
         * 1. The department of Health relies on provinces for inputs;
           2. Matters are under investigation;
           3. Awaiting a report from a member that was referenced in the question;
           4. Transition from Minister Mkhize to Minister Kubayi resulted in delays with replies.
   5. **Minister AT Didiza** – letter dated 6 July 2021
      1. The Minister provided the following reasons:
         * 1. Relied on information from the provinces;
           2. Accessing apartheid era information takes time;
           3. CFO had to verify accuracy of figures;
           4. Information had to be verified with relevant individuals to ensure accuracy;
2. In addition to the reasons given, the Ministers expressed regret for the delayed replies and committed to put measures in place to ensure the departments complied with Parliamentary Rules.
3. The rest of the Ministers did not reply to the Speaker’s letter. Some Ministers have since submitted the replies, albeit many weeks and in some instances months after the deadline.
4. **The Current Status:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **QUESTIONS REPORT ON CABINET AS AT 16:40 ON FRIDAY, 6 AUGUST 2021** | | | | | |
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| **EXECUTIVE** | **TOTAL QUESTIONS** | **REPLIED TO** | **NOT REPLIED TO** | **REPLIED TO LATE RULE 145(5)** | **WITHDRAWN OR REMOVED** |
| **The President of the Republic** | **13** | **12** | **1** | **9** | **0** |
| **The Deputy President** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** |
| **Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development** | **65** | **65** | **0** | **53** | **0** |
| **Minister of Basic Education** | **88** | **88** | **0** | **37** | **0** |
| **Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies** | **31** | **28** | **3** | **22** | **0** |
| **Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs** | **99** | **95** | **3** | **85** | **1** |
| **Minister of Defence and Military Veterans** | **49** | **44** | **5** | **25** | **0** |
| **Minister of Employment and Labour** | **51** | **51** | **0** | **19** | **0** |
| **Minister of Finance** | **67** | **66** | **0** | **49** | **1** |
| **Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment** | **81** | **81** | **0** | **4** | **0** |
| **Minister of Health (ACTING)** | **123** | **122** | **1** | **84** | **0** |
| **Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation** | **66** | **65** | **0** | **29** | **1** |
| **Minister of Home Affairs** | **57** | **56** | **1** | **46** | **0** |
| **Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation** | **95** | **89** | **5** | **81** | **1** |
| **Minister of International Relations and Cooperation** | **18** | **18** | **0** | **6** | **0** |
| **Minister of Justice and Correctional Services** | **47** | **41** | **6** | **40** | **0** |
| **Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy** | **52** | **51** | **1** | **27** | **0** |
| **Minister of Police** | **161** | **152** | **9** | **141** | **0** |
| **Minister of Public Enterprises** | **76** | **64** | **11** | **64** | **1** |
| **Minister of Public Service and Administration** | **51** | **44** | **7** | **44** | **0** |
| **Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure** | **64** | **63** | **0** | **46** | **1** |
| **Minister of Small Business Development** | **16** | **16** | **0** | **16** | **0** |
| **Minister of Social Development** | **97** | **97** | **0** | **86** | **0** |
| **Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture** | **94** | **94** | **0** | **67** | **0** |
| **Minister of State Security** | **8** | **8** | **0** | **7** | **0** |
| **Minister of Tourism** | **60** | **59** | **0** | **26** | **1** |
| **Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition** | **40** | **39** | **0** | **37 (0)** | **1** |
| **Minister of Transport** | **41** | **37** | **4** | **26** | **0** |
| **Minister in The Presidency (ACTING)** | **23** | **23** | **0** | **23** | **0** |
| **Minister in The Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities** | **34** | **33** | **1** | **24 (4)** | **0** |
| **TOTAL** | **1767** | **1701** | **58** | **1223** | **8** |