



1 June 2020

DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY VETERANS FOURTH QUARTER REPORT: SELECTED FOCUS POINTS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Military Veterans (DMV) will, on 3 June 2020, present to the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans (PCDMV) with information on its Fourth Quarter performance. With limited information available prior to the meeting, this paper serves to highlight selected key issues which the Committee may wish to follow up on.

2. BRRR RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOW-UP

The following aspects were raised in the October 2019 Budgetary Review and Recommendations Report (BRRR) for follow-up on a quarterly basis and Members may request the Accounting Officer to supply these responses as requested:

- The Committee recommended that enhanced focus should be put on skills development to facilitate military veterans being less reliant on the Department and undertook to monitor the Department continuously in this regard.
- Although taking cognisance of the efforts of the Department to facilitate a new structure, the Committee stressed the importance of this process and recommended that the Committee be kept abreast of developments in this regard on a continuous basis.
- The Department indicated that the virements and shifts of funds were to cost pressure areas such as education. The Committee recommended that these should be limited in future and attention should rather be concentrated on improving the under-performing programmes, as these continuing movements may attest to poor planning.
- While the Department explained the developments around the Social Relief of Distress (SRD), the development of a SRD policy and the migration of certain of these activities to the DMV from Department of Social Development, the Committee recommended that this should be sped up given the relief it is providing to destitute military veterans. The Committee also committed to follow up on this issue on a regular basis.
- The Committee recommended that the DMV should explore means to ensure that payments to educational institutions are made timeously or that the Department reassure these institutions of these payments.
- It was indicated that no real progress has been made with the public transport benefit, except that the Department has engaged the Department of Transport on how to approach it and that it was engaging municipalities regarding transport subsidies. The Committee recommends that the Department should enhance its efforts in this regard and give feedback to the Committee on this benefit on a regular basis.



Members may consider the following follow-up questions:

- What are the latest developments in relation to skills development? How much was spent on this function in 2019/20?
- The Committee did receive a briefing on the DMV's plans to restructure, but Members may wish to re-emphasise the matter and ask for clarity on plans going forward.
- Members may ask the DMV to outline all major virement that were made in the last quarter of 2019/20. (This is based on the insistence of the Committee in 2019 that major virements to, for example, education be avoided and that underperforming programmes be appropriately funded).
- What is the status of the DMV's Social Relief of Distress (SRD) plans to divert this function from the Department of Social Development?
- Was the DMV able to pay educational institutions timeously in 2019/20?

3. ADDITIONAL MATTERS

Based on the submitted power-point presentation by the DMV to the PCDMV on 1 June 2020, the following matters require further information:

- The development of any Integrated **Database** Management System was not delivered by the State Information Technology Agency (SITA).
The PCDMV has pointed to the necessity of a high quality database on several occasions and reasons for non-delivery should be requested.
- During the Fourth Quarter, only 58.4% of legitimate **invoices** were paid within 30 days.
The speedy payment of legitimate invoices is essential to ensure the financial sustainability of, specifically, small businesses.
- The number of **bursaries** provided for military veterans and their dependants per year was 4 447 against an annual target of 7 466.
Members may wish to follow up on the noted backlog in outstanding documents which have delayed the finalisation of applications.
- Only six military veterans were provided with **compensation** payment against a target of 75 for the Fourth Quarter.
- Both the **Policy** on Veterans' Pension Benefits and Transport Benefits were not finalised by the end of the Fourth Quarter as planned.
- Only 351 military veterans and their dependents provided with approved funding for **skills development** programmes against a target of 1 500 for the Fourth Quarter.
- No **memorial sites** were erected in 2019/20 against a target of three for the year.

Members may note that the presentation submitted by the DMV contains **no information on financial performance**. It is thus unclear how the DMV spent its funds in the Fourth Quarter.