**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 1094**

**DATE OF QUESTION: 05 JUNE 2020**

**DATE OF SUBMISSION: 22 JUNE 2020**

**Adv G Breytenbach (DA) to ask the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services:**

1. What number of cases that emanate from the lockdown regulations since the inception of the lockdown have been referred to the National Prosecuting Authority for decision;
2. what number of the referred cases have been (a) withdrawn and (b) returned for further investigation;
3. (a) what number of the referred cases have been placed on a court roll and (b) on which court rolls were the cases placed?

**NW1390E**

**REPLY:**

1. The NPA, in line with the modernization approach enunciated by the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, monitored the enrolment of all Covid-19 cases from the integrated electronic case management dataset. During the lockdown period up to 9 June 2020 (date of response), the courts dealt with 18 355 first appearance cases related to Covid-19 contraventions, with 39 089 accused.

(2)(a) A total of 776 cases were withdrawn during the said period, which represents 4% of the total first appearance cases.

(2)(b) A total of 12 354 (67.3%) cases are still open and postponed for future date. Further investigation is directed by the prosecutors to ensure that the case may be finalised on the next court appearance date.

3(a) A total of 18 355 first appearance cases were enrolled. The integrated system only includes cases enrolled. Cases referred for decision are not yet electronically recorded but this model is being developed. The data relating to decision dockets is therefore not yet available from the said integrated system.

However, during the Lockdown Alert Level 5 period (27 March 2020 – 30 April 2020), a manual collation process of information pertaining to Covid-19 contraventions indicated that almost 25% of first appearance cases were not enrolled, due to insufficient evidence. These dockets were referred for decision and further investigation, where applicable.

3(b) The majority of Covid-19 related cases (99%) were enrolled in the district courts and only one percent was directly enrolled in the regional courts.