**National Assembly**

**Question No: 1111**

**Mr C H H Hunsinger (DA) to ask the Minister of Transport:**

Whether any of the staff of his department have been overseas since the period of the lockdown was instituted to curb the spread of the coronavirus; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, (a) have any of them had difficulty in returning to the Republic, (b) in which countries were they, (c) for how long did they travel, (d) who are the staff members, (e) at what cost did they travel and (f) what is their current status? NW1298E

**REPLY**

**THE international maritime organization SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME: MR TERRENCE MABUELA**

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) International Maritime Law Institute [IMLI] was established in 1988 under an agreement concluded between the IMO and the Government of Malta with the purpose to train officers principally from developing countries in International Maritime Law. Its mission is to enhance capacity-building in all States, to contribute to the fulfilment of the IMO objectives thereby promoting safe, secure, environmentally sound and sustainable shipping through international cooperation.;

Mr. Terrence Mabuela: Deputy Director for Maritime Environment Protection was admitted and offered a scholarship by the International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI) on the 20 July 2020 to study a Master’s of Humanities in International Maritime Legislation at Malta, Sweden. Mr. Mabuela was therefore released by the Minister of Transport on a full-time study leave of nine (09) months i.e from October 2020 to June 2021 with full pay in line with the provisions of the Public Service Regulations, 2016.

Due to the impact of Covid-19 and attempts by all states including South Africa to curb the spread of the virus, Mr. Mabuela was allowed to commence his studies online from October to December 2020. However, the online studies were a temporary measure until the pandemic is controlled in which students were expected to report to the Maritime Institute in Malta on a full-time basis in January 2021.

**THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The International Maritime Organization Scholarship covers tuition fees, accommodation costs, Insurance costs (Fire, theft public liability and repatriation in cases of emergency) and monthly stipend of 315 Euro. The scholarship does not cover travel cost to and from Malta.

The Department spent an amount of **R18 674.65** towards Mr. Mabuela’s travel to Malta in January 2021 and has already bought the return ticket for his return to South Africa in July 2021 to the value of **R18 674.65**.

In response to Covid-19 protocols, the International Maritime Law Institute required students to quarantine for 14 days at Turkey on their way to Malta which incurred additional cost of **R25 500.00** for accommodation to the department. **The total costs for travel and accommodation for Mr Mabuela is therefore R62 849.30.**