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| **MINISTRY: COMMUNICATIONS REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**  Private Bag X 745, Pretoria, 0001, Tel: +27 12 473 0164 Fax: +27 12 473 0585  Tshedimosetso House,1035 Francis Baard Street, Tshedimosetso House, Pretoria, 1000 |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1294**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: MARCH 2016**

**Mr B M Bhanga (DA) to ask the Minister of Communications:**

(1)(a) What is the current status of discussions about the requirement of households to have a current SA Broadcasting Corporation TV Licence in order to receive government-subsidised set-top boxes and (b) with whom are these discussions being held; (2) are amendments to (a) the Broadcasting Act, Act 4 of 1999 and/or (b) any other regulatory mechanism(s) being contemplated to alleviate the legal obligation of the specified households from requiring valid TV licences before receiving government-subsidised set-top boxes; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details in each case? NW1442E

**REPLY: MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS**

The qualifying criteria issued by the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa (USAASA) requires that for poor TV owning households to qualify for free set-top-boxes they must have a valid TV license. However, a TV license is not compulsory to purchase a STB. The license requirement is proving to be an obstacle in the registration of the qualifying TV households and ultimately on the distribution of set-top-boxes. Therefore, Department of Communications (DoC) sought to address this as a matter of urgency.

Resultantly, a decision was made, together with the SABC management, to delink TV license requirement from the Set-Top-Box registration process. It is my considered view that by delinking the TV license requirement, registration of the qualifying TV households and ultimately on the distribution of set-top-boxes will enable the indigent households in the SKA area to benefit from the government subsidy.

**MR NN MUNZHELELE**

**DIRECTOR GENERAL [ACTING]**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS**

**DATE:**

**MS AF MUTHAMBI (MP)**

**MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS**

**DATE:**