**National Assembly**

**Question No 1322**

**Ms B Mathulelwa (EFF) to ask the Minister of Transport:**

In light of the high volume of trucks operating and damaging the roads, what steps has she taken to rebuild the railway system that has been ruined? NW1487E

**REPLY**

The approval of the White Paper on National Rail Policy (NRP) by Cabinet on 22 March 2022, assured a new and vibrant future for the rail industry in South Africa. The NRP contains specific policy direction on rail infrastructure, access, economic regulation and the market structure geared to dramatically change rail transportation in South Africa and intends to re-establish rail as the backbone of freight transportation and urban commuter mobility.

Transnet and PRASA, both wholly owned by the Government, has been experiencing significant performance problems over several years (massive capital investment backlog, inadequate funding, obsolete and ageing infrastructure, deteriorating rolling stock, and outdated technologies and insufficient specialised technical skills) that has contributed to rail’s generally declining state.

The implementation of the NRP has wider strategic implications for rail infrastructure management, ownership and access control. The NRP opens up opportunities for new players to participate in the investment and delivery of rail services. These opportunities, if implemented successfully, will draw rail friendly freight back to rail.