**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1328**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 13 – 2023**

**1328. Ms L L van der Merwe (IFP) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

(1) Whether he will furnish Ms L L van der Merwe with the full details of the qualifications and training provided to the permitting agents; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) whether he will furnish Ms L L van der Merwe with the full details of the process of quality control; if not, why not; if so, what is the extent of checking whether a marriage is valid;

(3) whether he will furnish Ms L L van der Merwe with the full details of the vetting process of documents; if not, why not; if so, is it policy that agents phone universities to check if a person is enrolled?

(4) what processes are in place to escalate queries with banks when they are reluctant to confirm the authenticity of bank statements? NW1528

**REPLY:**

1. Section 46 of The Immigration Act, No. 13 of 2002 giving recognition to Immigration Practitioners (Agents) was repealed by section 23 of Act No. 13 of 2011. There is therefore no legislation that recognises or regulates immigration agents. The Department does not provide any training to immigration / permitting agents.
2. The full details of the process of quality control on applications is available on request. It details the workflow of applications within the Visa Application System (VAS) and the various activities that are performed with regard to verification of supporting documents such as a marriage certificate to confirm whether such a marriage is valid. The validity of marriages, for instance is verified on the National Population Register (NPR).
3. Supporting documents to a visa or permanent residence application are verified, not vetted. Verification includes contacting the author of the supporting document to verify the authenticity of the document. Verification can be obtained orally through a telephone call or in writing through an email confirmation.
4. Most banks do have access to verification services. Some banks issue bank statements with QR codes that DHA officials can scan to verify without the need to contact the bank but it is ultimately the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that the author of any document in support of their application is verifiable.

**END**