**National Assembly**

**Question No: 1336**

**Mr D W Bryant (DA) to ask the Minister of Transport:**

(1) Whether he intends to lower the costs associated with obtaining a skippers licence, considering that many fisherfolk are currently struggling to make ends meet due to the uncertainty regarding fishing permits, multiple administrative requirements and a difficult economic climate; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) whether he intends to relax certain seaworthy requirements that may be deemed unnecessary in order to reduce costs for fisherfolk; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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**REPLY**

1. The South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) received a 0% increase for the 2022-2023 financial year. All fees for Skipper Licences still the same as the 2021-2022 financial year and should assist fisher in the current economic climate. The 0% increase applies to all the services that the South African Maritime Authority (SAMSA) provide and include the cost of safety surveys for fishing vessels. Should an increase be approved, due consideration will be given to the impact that any increase may have on fishers.
2. The challenge with lowering the current safety standards will lead to unseaworthy ships going to sea, which will not only endanger fishers but also other users of the sea. Reducing the safety standards will lead to unnecessary deaths amongst fishers and in turn impact on the fishing communities when a bread winner is lost. It must be noted that unseaworthy vessels lead to expensive Search and Rescue operations due to the number and type of sea and air assets that need to be mobilised to rescue a casualty at sea. Lowering Safety Standards which is meant to save both people and property at sea, or prevent pollution of the marine environment is not the solution.