**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1372 / NW1520E**

**MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES:**

**MS A STEYN (DA) ASKED TO THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES**

**QUESTION:**

1. With reference to his reply to question 4175 on 14 December 2015, (a) what criteria were used to establish which farmers would receive drought relief through the drought relief fund in each province, (b) how many farmers were assisted through the specified fund in each province and (c) what was the average amount of assistance provided to each of the specified farmers
2. Which provinces are still identified as drought disaster areas

3. Whether any additional funding has been requested from the National Treasury

 to assist his department in providing drought relief; if not, why not; if so, how much additional funding was (a) requested from and (b) granted by the National Treasury? **NW1520E**

**REPLY:**

1. a) The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) has developed a Framework meant to give direction to all provinces on the implementation of assistance being provided in the event of a disaster occurrence. In terms of that framework, farmers are classified into three categories namely **Small scale** (farmer who owns 30 or less LSU); **Subsistence** (farmer who owns 31 to 50 LSUs) and **Commercial** (farmer who owns 51 and more LSU). Due to the insufficiency of funds to cater for all farmers, they were prioritised by provinces based on the impact of the drought conditions.
2. According to records at our disposal, farmers assisted to date were as follows: Free State (FS) (3 418), KwaZulu Natal (KZN) (8 300), Limpopo (LP) (22 524), Mpumalanga (MP) (10 670,) North West (NW) (21 383), Northern Cape (NC) (2 108), Gauteng (GP) P (1150), Eastern Cape (EC) (8 025) and Western Cape (WC) (885).
3. The average amount of assistance differs because it depends on the provincial allocation and the number of farmers to be assisted as well as number of livestock affected.
4. The South African Weather services (SAWS) forecasted normal to below normal rainfall for winter season throughout the country and that indicates that all provinces are still experiencing dry conditions with declarations still in force in all six declared provinces and municipalities in the Eastern and Western Cape. It should also be noted that the recent showers received throughout the country were a relief to the farming communities**.**
5. No, DAFF has submitted the original requests to the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) for further processing to the National Treasury to assist farmers affected by drought throughout the country. While waiting for the response DAFF and provinces have prioritised funds for drought assistance further into the 2016/17 financial year from their grants and equitable share allocations.