

**PARLIAMENTOF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 1399**

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**DATE OF REPLY:**

**Mr C MacKenzie (DA) to ask the Minister of Communications:**

1.What arrangements are in place during the Republic’s national lockdown to move mail and parcels to and from international destinations?

2. Whether there is any mail backlog at the (a) Johannesburg, (b) Durban and/or (c) Cape Town international receiving centres of the SA Post Office; if so, (i) what is the total number of (aa) parcels and (bb) letters at each specified location, inbound and outbound and (ii) by what date(s) are the mail backlogs expected to be cleared;

3. Whether there are any international destinations that are closed to mail due to the outbreak of Covid-19; if so, what are the (a) names of such international destinations and (b) envisaged reopening dates in each case? NW1770E

**REPLY**

**I have been advised by SAPO as follows:**

1. The South African Post Office is currently dispatching and receiving mail from the following countries: Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Dubai, Great Britain, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Japan, London (UK), Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, USA, Botswana, ESwatini, Lesotho and Mozambique. Swisscargo is currently utilised as the dispatching and receiving airline.

2. At the time of drafting of the response,theDurban office of exchange was the only centre without mail on hand. As for Johannesburg and Cape Town offices of exchange there has been a backlog from the time that SAPO was allowed to reopen the Office of Exchange. Due to the regulatory requirements to maintain social distancing and at some point that only a third of the workforce could be in attendance, the working off the backlog is not as fast as it would usually take.

The volumes were as depicted in the table below represents in the two centres:

**2.1 Johannesburg Office of Exchange (JIMC)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Product** | **Mail Bag** | **Mail items** | **Inbound** | **Outbound** | **Total** |
| EMS | 101 | 568 | 568 | 0 | 568 |
| Small packets | 5900 | 997320 | 997320 | 0 | 997320 |
| Parcels | 173 | 4697 | 4697 | 168 | 4865 |
| Registers | 3088 | 3220 | 3220 | 1687 | 4907 |
| **TOTAL** | **9262** | **1005805** | **1005805** | **1855** | **1007660** |

**2.2 Cape Town Office of Exchange**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Product** | **Mail Bags** | **Mail Items** | **Inbound** | **Outbound** | **Total** |
| EMS | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Small packets | 0 | 4654 | 4654 | 0 | 4654 |
| Parcels | 0 | 168 | 168 | 0 | 168 |
| Registers | 17 | 1745 | 1745 | 0 | 1745 |
| **TOTAL** | **17** | **6567** | **6567** | **0** | **6567** |

(3)(a) The designated postal operators of Namibia, Singapore and Australia are international postal destinations that are closed to mail due to the outbreak of Covid-19.

(3)(b) Namibia mail is affected by air transportation which is not yet operational. SAPO is looking at the option of transporting Namibia mail to Gaborone in Botswana, and Namibia Post can collect from there. SAPO’s plan has been communicated to Namibia and SAPO is waiting for the response from Namibia Post whether the proposed arrangement is suitable.

The designated postal operators of Singapore and Australia have opted for the alternative of sending mail by road or sea to South Africa. The mail will be received at the Durban Office of Exchange. This will include transit mail into Africa. With regards to other international postal destinations, SAPO’s capacity to dispatch still remains dependent of the availability of flights. SAPO continue to observe the situation and as more flights become available the list of countries where dispatch is possible will be updated and the public informed.

**MS. STELLA NDABENI-ABRAHAMS, MP**

**MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES**