

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO. 1427

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## INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 15 OF 2018

**1427. Mr D W Macpherson (DA) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

(1) With reference to the Minister of Trade and Industry’s reply to question 1137 on 25 April 2018, why are there instances of different identity numbers registered for one person on the National Population Register;

(2) what number of instances of different identity numbers were found on his department’s databases against the name of one person;

(3) by what date will his department’s databases be cleaned up? NW1529E

**REPLY:**

1. In terms of the Identification Act, 1997, (Act No.68 of 1997) all citizens and permanent residents shall have a unique identity number which shall not be shared with any other person. However the department has identified that there are persons who share identity numbers and those who have multiple identity numbers.

Duplicated identity numbers emanated from the amalgamation of homelands including Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) states. Prior to 1994, South Africa had different population registers with different enabling documents (e.g. birth certificates, reference books, book of life). The same applies to processes that were applied when taking fingerprints, coupling of identity numbers with reference number and safekeeping of records. After 1994, the department took a decision to centralize all fingerprints and other records from TBVC states in order to have one National Population Register and one Home Affairs National Identification System (HANIS).

With reference to this question, different identity numbers registered for one person falls within the category of one person having multiple identity numbers, and may possibly have been caused by one of the following:

* Reference books cases where an applicant was automatically issued with an identity number without their knowledge.
* Previously identity numbers were allocated or issued without taking fingerprints and/or verification thereof.
* During birth registration period (The child may have been registered by a guardian or informant while the parents were not staying with the children).

Accordingly, all those identity numbers which are associated with duplicate identity numbers will be cancelled and removed from the National Population Register.

1. The total number of multiple identity numbers on the department’s database is 155 679.

1. Cleaning up the database is a continuous process as and when citizens present themselves. Meanwhile, to stop further occurrences of duplication, the Department:

* During October 2013, in pursuance of its overall objective of helping address the challenges created by duplicate IDs, made an announcement of a process to invalidate duplicate IDs. The implication of invalidation is that such identity numbers will no longer be valid.
* has embarked on enforcing legislation on parents to register children’s birth within 30 days of birth, hence DHA working close with hospitals by stationing DHA officials at connected hospitals to register newly born children before they leave the hospital.
* tasked CSIR to research the possibility of taking fingerprints of newly born children to secure their identity from birth
* recently launched the Automated Biometric Identification System that should assist with the elimination of duplicate identity numbers henceforth.