

**MINISTRY**

**PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1477 [NW2745E]**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO.: 25 (of 2019)**

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**DATE OF REPLY: 02 DECEMBER 2019**

**1477. Mr Z N Mbhele (DA) asked the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure:**

(1) What (a) measures has her department put in place to strengthen the oversight and regulatory role of the Council for Built Environment (CBE) over the Engineering Council of South Africa, (b) measures has the CBE put in place to ensure enforcement, alignment and adherence to transformation policies of the built environment professions and (c) incentives have been offered to private built environment companies to assist with internships and to make sure that the graduates are professionally registered;

(2) whether the CBE has a register or tracking instrument of the built environment graduates becoming registered professionals; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW2745E**

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**REPLY:**

**The Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure**

(1) (a) In 2013 the Department finalised the Policy Framework for Professional Registration, to ensure among others, that professional councils are consistent in the application of registration standards and policies and also to ensure transparency in the process of professional registration. The Council for the Built Environment (CBE) has been instrumental in enforcing the application of the Policy Framework. Part of the CBE’s oversight over the professional councils entails ensuring compliance to principles of good governance, as well as the consistent application of policies. The process followed by the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) of assessing applications of prospective professional registration applicants is based on Council approved policies and standards that have been benchmarked to policies and standards applied across the globe by countries that are members of the International Engineering Alliance (IEA). The latter conducts periodic reviews of ECSA processes to ensure that they are fair, ethical and transparent.

(b) With regard to transformation, the Department has got information through research conducted by the CBE that the manner in which the Built Environment Industry is configured currently is inimical to transformation objectives and perpetuates and entrenches the existing racial inequalities. For instance, through the tendering system black professionals compete with white professionals who have got more resources are thus more enabled to acquire work. The inaccessibility to work opportunities for black firms has a detrimental effect in the transformation of the Built Environment Industry in that even black candidates for professional registration more often than not tend to find opportunities for work and training in black-owned firms.

The CBE does work with the Construction Industry Education and Training Authority (CETA) to drive transformational objectives. Mentors are assigned to candidates and roadshows are conducted to provide a mature route to professional registration. But, the challenge is influencing the private sector. CETA funding is available to assist candidates. However, black candidates have difficulties in securing work and mentors in white owned companies, thus transformation becomes stagnant.

(c) The CBE has a Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programme and it entails supporting interns from the Universities of Technology (UoTs) to undertake WIL, to complete the practical training requirement of their tertiary qualifications. The CBE provides funding for stipends as incentives to private built environment companies to assist with placement in internships.

(2) The CBE has identified the gap of not having a centralised tool to manage, store, monitor, track and report on the applications and registration of different types of stakeholders including the Students, Candidates, Professional and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). CBE has initiated a project to develop an integrated system that will be used by all six professional councils. The target is to have this system by 31 March 2020 with the population thereof to take place afterwards. The Pilot of the system has been signed-off by the three councils for usage.