**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1542**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 15 – 2021**

**1542. Mrs L F Tito (EFF) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

What (a) has he found to be the cause for the long queues at Home Affairs offices throughout the Republic, (b) measures has his department put in place to deal with the specified long queues and (c) specific steps will his department take to prevent the spread of the coronavirus as a result of the long queues in these offices? NW1745E

**REPLY:**

1. All Citizens and Non-Citizens interact with the Department in order to access services rendered by the Department, which contributes to long queues in our Front Offices. There are several reasons that are found to be the cause of long queues at our Front Offices. These reasons include among other things:

* High client volumes and unpredictable walk-ins
* limited staff capacity to meet service demands
* inadequate office space
* concurrent of the manual and automated process
* system instability
* discontinuation of Saturday working hours

1. As part of the strategy to deal with long queues the Department has moved some of its services out of the front offices. These services are:

* Registration of Births and Deaths has been moved to Health Facilities.
* Mobile Trucks has been deployed to schools in order to capture First Time Applications in nine (9) Provinces.
* In collaboration with Banks through PPP, the Department has installed Live Capture System to twenty-six (26) bank branches in the Republic which has the capacity to capture Smart ID Card and Passport applications.

1. The Department has introduced queue marshalls / floor walkers in order to ensure that people visiting our offices adhere to the Disaster Management Act by keeping social distancing, wearing of masks and sanitizing as and when they enter our Front Offices.
   * When the Front Office reports a Covid-19 positive case, the Department closes the office temporarily and arrangements for the office be sanitized are done.
   * Provision and distribution of PPEs to our officials.
   * Staff capacity is deployed in line with the determined Covid-19 alert levels.
   * Temperature scanning and keeping of register containing clients details in case we receive positive Covid-19 case, we will be in the position to inform / contact the clients.

**END**