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**MINISTRY**

**JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 1562**

**DATE OF QUESTION: 05 MAY 2023**

**DATE OF SUBMISSION: 19 MAY 2023**

**Mr W Horn (DA) to ask the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services:**

What are the reasons for the delay in the reconstruction and/or repair of the De Aar Magistrates Court building after the extensive damages caused to it by a fire in January 2020?

**NW1805E**

**REPLY:**

A portion of the building accommodating De Aar Magistrates Court was gutted by fire on 8 January 2020. The cause of the fire is unknown although it is believed to have been caused by arson. The South African Police Service (SAPS) and the De Aar fire Department has not been able to supply a fire damage report.

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) was on site within days to clean up and assess the damage caused in order to confirm structural integrity and habitability. Unfortunately, the structural integrity was compromised as well as electrical and other installations. Consequently, consulting engineers were appointed to compile an assessment report and cost estimate to execute the repairs.

Due to the high cost estimate of R35 208 465.00, the DPWI Regional Office in Kimberley had to seek approval and allocation of funds from DPWI National Office in Pretoria, and the funds were approved in April 2023.

Alternative rental offices were allocated as a temporary measure in order to alleviate overcrowding. Since only a portion of the facility was damaged by the fire, the front section of the building is still in use. Furthermore, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development placed a mobile temporary structure on the premises to serve as an additional court room.

In the main, the delays were caused by the outstanding fire damage report from the SAPS and Fire Chief.

**END**