**National Assembly**

**Question No 1617**

**Ms B M van Minnen (DA) to ask the Minister of Transport:**

With reference to the briefing at the meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts on 29 March 2022, wherein the committee was briefed on the sharp decline in income and the number of commuters making use of the railways, what (a) was the total number of commuters making use of the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa) network in the past five years and (b) was the income generated in the specified period versus the capital grants from the State used to support the operational costs of Prasa? NW1943E

**REPLY**

(a)

Table 1: Passenger Volumes: 2017/18 – 2021/22

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PERIOD** | **COMMUTER NUMBERS** |
| 2017/18 | 269,925,897 |
| 2018/19 | 208,888,587 |
| 2019/20 | 115,417,417 |
| 2020/21 | 8,147,180 |
| 2021/22 | 16,699,332 |

(b) Income Generated during the last 5 years as a % of Opex

Table 2: Income Generated versus Opex and Subsidy



Table 2 above proves the reply given earlier that the income generated through fare revenue during the last five years only covered a portion (or 10%) of operational costs. The rest has been covered through subsidy which indicates a heavy reliance on state support to operate commuter rail operations.

The major cause for this decline is the vandalism and theft of our Rolling Stock and Network Infrastructure impacting significantly on the optimal operations and in turn revenue collection. This was as a result of the lack of security to protect our infrastructure and network. The level 5 lockdown regulations imposed to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020-2021 completely halted the operations, easing to levels 3 and 2 into 2021-2022 with limited operations also contributed to revenue loss.