

**MINISTRY**

**PUBLIC WORKS**

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1671 [NW1883E]**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO.: No. 20 of 2016**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 19 AUGUST 2016**

**DATE OF REPLY: 12 SEPTEMBER 2016**

**1671**. **Ms D Kohler (DA) asked the Minister of Public Works:**

(1) (a) How many properties are listed as located in the North Atlantic Ocean on his department’s Immovable Asset Register, (b) why are the specified properties listed on the system as being located in the ocean, (c) who listed the specified properties and (d) what actions has he taken to correct the wrongful listings;

(2) whether the specified properties form part of the 1 200 properties which were lost by his department; if not, what are the relevant details? **NW1883E**

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**REPLY:**

**The Minister of Public Works**

(1) (a)

There are no properties under the custodianship of the National Department of Public Works (NDPW) as captured in the Immovable Asset Register (IAR) that are located in the North Atlantic Ocean.

(b)

The management of State land and property is confronted by a number of key systemic legacy challenges, which must be adequately appreciated in order to successfully compile a complete, accurate and fully Generally Recognised Accounting Practice (GRAP) compliant IAR. For instance, registered State land is recorded in the Deeds office under a multitude of legacy custodians’ and former Government Departments’ names, hence it is often difficult to clearly assign or “deem” custodianship to the correct custodian. Also, there are a multitude of land parcels that have been surveyed, but not yet registered. These have previously not been recorded by custodians, however it is required that they are recorded with effect from the year ending 31 March 2014 in terms of the National Treasury Immovable Asset Guide.

Through the Asset Register Enhancement programme, the NDPW has been able to disclose over 100,000 properties and over 31,000 land parcels. The Department made use of electronic data collection tools and Geographical Information System (GIS) software in the compilation of the IAR. Properties were subdivided into Regions and matched to GIS layers. However, there were inadvertent errors made in a minority of cases in terms of linking properties to the GIS with correct geographical coordinates. Errors such as missing digits on coordinates and assigning positive (+) and negative (-) latitude values incorrectly were made. As South Africa lies in the southern hemisphere, starting with positive (+) latitude values when locating properties can have the effect of giving the wrong impression that properties are located in the northern hemisphere. One can deduce therefore, that the incorrect impression of properties being located in the North Atlantic Ocean is as a result of the errors made in the inputting of the coordinates.

As pointed out earlier, many properties that were found through the IAR Enhancement Programme had not be surveyed and thus had missing cadastral information, which would indicate the Erf numbers and details of whether they are farms, holdings, etc.

(c) and (d)

The IAR enhancement project was previously administered by NDPW’s Asset Register Management Unit. As part of the Department’s Turnaround Strategy the newly formed Real Estate Information and Registry Services Division (REIRS) bears overall responsibility for the Asset Register Enhancement Programme. REIRS has requested the Chief Surveyor General (CSG) to provide spatial geo-referenced cadastral data for approximately 1200 properties that could not be linked to the GIS due to the absence of the cadastral layer. Out of the 1200 properties, about 200 properties were successfully matched to the GIS and can now undergo the asset verification process. Further investigations are being conducted on the remaining properties in order to get the required cadastral data to link them to the GIS.

(2) As noted above the 1200 land parcels were not lost by the NDPW as alluded to by the Honourable Member, but rather “un-locatable” on the Geographical Information System due to the unavailability of the cadastral layer. The Department is in the process of verifying about 200 of those properties, which have now been linked to the GIS using the spatial geo-referenced cadastral data and is conducting tests for the linking of the remaining properties.