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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1767**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 12 MAY 2023**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 16 – 2022**

**1767. Ms L H Arries (EFF) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

Considering the problems experienced by beneficiaries of the SA Social Security Agency with grant payouts on a monthly basis, what plans have been put in place to (a) insource the service to ensure that grant beneficiaries receive their payments on time and (b) resolve the issue of loan sharks holding grant beneficiary’s cards?

 NW2022E

**REPLY:**

1. SASSA currently pays all social grants into the bank accounts of clients. This is inclusive of the payments made at Pay Points and SAPO branches which are first paid into bank accounts.

SASSA has already in-sourced the payment function since 2018.

Whether or not SASSA should become a bank or provide a full or partial banking service to its clients is a matter being considered. However, the SASSA’s mandate and scope of SASSA’s capabilities are based on the Social Assistance Act, 2004 as amended.

1. The holding of SASSA cards, or any bank card, is illegal. SASSA works with the National Credit Regulator (NCR) and law enforcement agencies in this regard. During May 2023, in the Province of the Eastern Cape, a multi-disciplinary team comprising of stakeholders focusing on loan sharks, led by the National Credit Regulator, involving SASSA, Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and South African Police Services (SAPS) conducted an operation targeting loan sharks, with the sole aim of preventing illegal withholding of banking cards and identity documents. The operation led to the arrest of 17 suspects and the seizing of 106 SASSA cards with cash of R401 800.00. Similar operations will be conducted nationally.