**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1842 [NW2093E]**

**1842. Ms A L A Abrahams (DA) to ask the Minister of Employment and Labour:**

With reference to the local office of the Department of Labour located at 10 Molteno Street, Goodwood, Cape Town, what are the relevant details of the (a) contact details of the office manager, (b) queue management system in place, (c) booking system used, (d) mitigation plan to shield clients from load shedding, (e) date by which the office will be receiving an alternative power supply, (f) form of assistance provided to clients in the queue during load shedding, (g) total number of fixed to establishment personnel, versus actual personnel, (h) total number of vacancies and the job title of each specified vacancy and (i) total number of backlogged applications for each category? **NW2093E**

REPLY:

* Hon. Abrahams, the Department of Employment and Labour has 9 Provincial Offices, which are equivalent to the number of Provinces that the country has. This is so, even because this particular Portfolio does not have concurrence function when it comes to other spheres of government.
* Over and above that the Department of Employment and Labour has about 126 Labour Centres across the country. In this number please add about 30 Satellite Offices again country wide.

If you travel around the country, you will also notice that the Department of Labour is having 41 Thusong Services Centre as well as 447 Visiting Points in the Republic.

* This is the infrastructure or footprint if you like that the Department of Employment and Labour is having to ensure that citizens of this country have access to the services that we render. And I have not even spoken about one of the programmes that we have of Taking Services To the People or Road-Shows as others would prefer to call them. They normally take place outside of the cities like Cape Town, due to the fact that we need not to leave anyone behind, even those who are in the country-side must be provided with the decent public services that other fellow South Africans enjoy.
* The office that you are refereeing to at No. 10 Molteno Street, Goodwood, Cape Town is not even a Labour Centre. It is a Satellite Office, with the supervisor Mr Thembekile Hoza – thembekile.hoza@labour.gov.za. He is ably assisted by five (5) other officials. It is operating from 07h00 up until 16h00. Nearby Goodwood in Bellville the Department of Labour has the Labour Centre, which is more capacitated than the Satellite Office which is only having 6 personnel. There are no vacancies in there are no Labour Satellite Office, situated at No. 10 Molteno Street, Goodwood, Cape Town.

* In the private sector the booking system may work fairly well, due to a limited number they are dealing with, but in the public sector the same system may just be creating some mayhem, disorder, havoc, chaos and confusion, thereby defeating the same objective that you wanted to achieve. And again this is due to the number of people that public sector is dealing with, nature of the services they look from in as far as public facilities are concerned. So, for now, the Department find it better to serve people as they come and just find a way of managing the queues if they are there in a more orderly manner.
* And yes, forms get received, assessed and processed further to the payment of claims in the event where they meet all the required particulars. It may be confirmed that screening of applications, prioritisation of claims per benefit types maternity application, sick applications, elderly 60+, physically challenged are served first every morning.
* Sometimes, the Department remains not sure when one is asking about the backlog. Because this may mean so many things. As it is indicated above correctly filled out claim forms after received, assessed and processed further when they meet all the known and communicated requirements. In the event where those forms have outstanding information, then applicants have to furnish that which is still required.
* The Department is still exploring possible ways to mitigate challenges of load-shedding, with our sister Department of state assets, the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure. Thank you!