**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1984**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 19-2021 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]
DATE OF PUBLICATION: 27 AUGUST 2021**

**1984. Mr N P Masipa (DA) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

1. What is the (a) total number of veterinarians in her department based in the Free State and (b)(i) current vacancy rate and (ii) date on which her department intends to fill the vacant positions;
2. what is the total number of veterinarians in each livestock unit of her department based in the Free State;
3. whether her department has implemented the compulsory service in the Free State; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(4) what were the (a) prevailing animal diseases during the past financial year in the Free State and (b) interventions by her department to treat them? **NW2218E**

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

1. (a)The Free State Province has a total of fifteen (15) field veterinarian positions, ten (10) of these positions are filled.

(b)(i)There are five (5) positions that are currently vacant, and the department has advertised three (3) positions linked to the provincial budget.

(ii)The department plans to therefore to fill the three advertised positions as early as 1st October 2021.

1. The ratio of mature livestock unit is approximately 50000 livestock units to a veterinarian.
2. The Free State has implemented the compulsory community service with success, and the program has been running since inception in 2016. During 2021, the compulsory community service year the Free State Provincial Department is hosting 14 Veterinarians in the following eight (8) provincial clinics that are again distributed among the province’s five (5) Districts:
	1. Bloemfontein State Vet Clinic in Mangaung Metro;
	2. Thaba Nchu State Vet Clinic in Mangaung Metro;
	3. Qwa Qwa State Vet Clinic in Thabo Mofutsanyana;
	4. Kroonstad State Vet Clinic in Fezile Dabi;
	5. Ladybrand State Vet Clinic in Thabo Mofutsanyana;
	6. Fauresmith State Vet Clinic in Xhariep District;
	7. Welkom State Vet Clinic in Lejweleputswa District; and
	8. Heilbron State Vet Clinic in Fezile Dabi.

On average all the clinics are seeing an average 928 Clients per month. Each client brings to the clinics a minimum of two (2) animals. The clinics are providing assistance for both companion animals (dogs and cats) and farm animals (cattle sheep and goats). Primary animal health care remains the focus area of intervention at these clinics. Farmer extension services and farmer workshops are being offered to assist our rural emerging farmers to improve their livestock production.

1. (a) The Free State Province shares the same disease profile as the rest of the country. Bovine brucellosis, Bovine tuberculosis and Rabies continue to be recorded from time to time as a result of our field personnel performing routine disease surveillance function. The outbreaks of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and African Swine Fever also spread to the Free State Province, this being a result of movement of migratory wild water birds; as well as movement of pigs and pig products between different provinces (livestock auctions as possible route).
2. The veterinary and para-veterinary personnel continue to implement disease prevention and disease control interventions as part of their day-to-day functions linked to these diseases.