

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE & MILITARY VETERANS**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTENREPLY**

**1972 Dr P J Groenewald (FF Plus) to ask the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans:**

(1) What are the details of the criminal complaint lodged against the Surgeon-general in terms of case number 275/5/2020 at the Temba Police Station;

(2) whether the Surgeon-general has already appeared in court in this regard; if so, (a) what number of times and (b) on which dates;

(3) whether the Surgeon-general is still in service; if not, what (a) type of leave has been granted to him and (b) are the starting and end dates of the specified leave;

(4) whether she will make a statement on the matter?

**REPLY:**

The Surgeon General was arrested and charged for possession of an unlicensed firearm and ammunition on 17 May 2020. It was later found that the firearm was licenced and belonged to his late father who had passed away four weeks prior the incident. Through his legal representative, the Surgeon General provided all the proof needed by the prosecuting authority which included the following:

The deceased licence of firearm.

His father’s death certificate.

Proof that he was nominated as the executor of his late father’s estate.

The above, and also the fact that all this occurred at a time during which there was a firearm amnesty for the handing over of any illegal firearms to the South African Police Service, prompted the Senior Prosecutor to withdraw the charges against the Surgeon General for lack of evidence to prosecute.

The Surgeon General appeared in court after the day of arrest and was due to appear again on the 7th of August 2020, but due to COVID-19, could not attend and the case was postponed to 20 August 2020. It was on this date that the charges against the Surgeon General were formally withdrawn.

The Surgeon General is currently on sick leave and he is still in full service and has never been put on special leave.