**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 1995**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 26 MAY 2023**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 19 – 2023**

**1995. Ms L H Arries (EFF) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

What measures has she put in place to bring an end to fraud in the child support grant and to ensure that the parents who receive grants are the lawful parents and/or guardians of the recipients? NW2252E

**REPLY:**

We are committed to preventing, detecting and eliminating fraud and corruption in the social assistance programme. In this regard, we have taken full advantage of new technologies to strengthen anti-corruption measures, starting with the digitisation of our service offering. These include interfaces with the databases of other government departments, including Home Affairs (Population Register) to validate information on identity, life status, employment status, as well as PERSAL and Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF).

In addition to measures alluded to above, SASSA implements the following internal anti-corruption controls:

* Validation of applicants’ information through interfaces with systems from other entities.
* Conditional approval of a grant-pending bank account verification. Payment is extracted only if the bank account details match those of the approved beneficiary.
* Local offices perform daily verification of transactions as a process for ensuring that all transactions processed on SOCPEN are supported by the relevant documents.
* Biometric validation of all transactions will be implemented as from 01 June 2023. This serves as a non-repudiation of all transactions performed on the system.
* Confirm and validate all large amounts, and where there is suspicion of fraud, the payment of grants must be immediately stopped through Post Bank, or a bank recall is done through the South African Reserve Bank.
* Monthly run of the Oracle list of personnel against SOCPEN, immediately before cut-off for payment extraction on a monthly basis. Any records found added, except for FCG, must be held over for confirmation of eligibility before payment is released, even if this only happens the following month.
* Run an Oracle list of SASSA personnel against SOCPEN before grant payment extraction to identify staff on SOCPEN.
* System prohibition of one staff member using the credentials of another staff member to log onto the system.

Another method of combating Child Support Grant (CSG) fraud has to do with the implementation of the whistleblowing mechanism wherein SASSA employees and members of the public are able to report allegations of Fraud.

These allegations are investigated internally, since SASSA has an internal investigation unit which is well capacitated and works in conjunction with the Law Enforcement Agencies.