**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2121**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 21/2018**

**2121. Ms E R Wilson (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

With reference to her reply to question 1347 on 23 May 2018, (a) on what specific date did the SA Council of Educators (SACE) write to the Directors-General of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development to request access to the National Register of Sex Offenders, (b) why did SACE not do so before the specified date as the register was established in 2007, (c) what was the response of the Directors-General of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development and (d) what number of teaching licences have been issued by SACE since the register was created, without checking the prospective teacher against the register as required by law of licensing authorities? NW2275E

**SACE RESPONSE:**

**(a)**  This has been done through the Director-General of the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in a letter dated the 07th December 2017, in order to have seamless processes between the employer organisations (9 Provincial Education Departments, School Governing Bodies, and Independent Schools) and SACE a professional Council in terms of section 46 and 47 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) as amended.

**(b)** The issue of screening the Registration Applicants against the National Register of Sexual Offenses is not explicit in the SACE Act. Hence SACE focused largely on registering the educators against the set Council approved criteria at the time.

With the ongoing clarification of the registration processes in relation to the Sexual Offenses Act, corrective measures and most importantly processes are being put in place. Hence the engagements between SACE, Department of Basic Education and Department of Justice and Constitutional Development; putting systems into place internally, and ensuring key messages and implementation processes, on this matter, are advocated and communicated broadly to all the teachers and stakeholders.

**(c)** A Deputy Director-General in the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development Department has been assigned a responsibility to work collaboratively with SACE and the Department of Basic Education in facilitating the process of screening the registration applicants against the National Register on Sexual Offenses.

**(d)** SACE deals with the registration of teachers and has therefore registered **305 087** teachers since July 2008 when the National Register became effective.