

**MINISTRY**

**PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2125 [NO.** **NW2412E]**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO.: 20 of 2021**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 03 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**DATE OF REPLY: 18 OCTOBER 2021**

**2125. Mrs M B Hicklin (DA) asked the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure:**

(1) What (a) measures have been put in place to stabilise the leadership deficit at the Council for the Built Environment (CBE) which is the umbrella body for six councils governing and leading professionals in the built environment (details furnished) and (b) are the reasons that there is a continuous exodus of senior personnel from the CBE dating back a decade ago with no intervention from either the former Minister and/or her to address the root causes of the dissatisfaction within the body;

(2) whether failure for members of the CBE to register with their respective councils will render them unemployable; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

(3) what steps has she taken to encourage the councils to facilitate compliance and encourage built environment partnerships to register with their respective councils.

**NW2412E**

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**REPLY:**

**The Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure**

(1) (a) I have been informed by the Department that the Council for the Built Environment’s (CBE) succession plan and other relevant HR polices are being reviewed and updated to assist with staff retention. Regarding the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Operations Officer (COO) positions that were vacated at the end of June 2021, the CBE has advertised them. Shortlisting and interviews have been held in a bid to fast-track the filling of the posts.

(b) The CEOs that have been leaving the CBE mid-term were grounded on the following.

* CEO 1 – A 3-year contract (10 February 2004 – 09 February 2007) – Suspended on 22 August 2006 until end of contract
* CEO 2 - 4-year contract (1 August 2007 – 31 July 2011) – Requested and received approval for early release on 2 June for 30th June 2011
* CEO 3 - 5-year contract (1 May 2012 – 30 April 2017) – Suspended and dismissed on 29 August 2016
* CEO 4 – 5-year contract (01 October 2017 – 30 September 2022) – Requested to be released citing the reason for leaving being to further her studies; and
* The COO left due to a job offer in another entity.
* The Manager: Legal and Regulations, was suspended on 17 November 2020 after it came to Council’s attention that he allegedly tried to interfere with the investigation in which he was implicated through the Whistle Blower allegations of the 4th Term Council and the dismissal of the former CEO, Ms. Gugu Mazibuko. The decision to suspend the manager was taken as an administrative precaution to protect the integrity of the investigation process and to ensure that the investigation into the alleged misconduct is undertaken independently. An acting Manager was appointed into the position and his contract is renewable until the investigations are concluded.

(2) For the purposes of getting contracts from the public sector, failure to register with the Councils for the Built Environment Professions (CBEP) can make individuals unemployable. For the private sector however, the restrictions are less, although exposes companies or individuals to higher risk when deciding to use the services of persons that are not professionally registered. Mainly so, because the CBEP only regulate the conduct of registered professionals. There would be very little room for recourse for a company or individual to utilize the services of an unregistered person, because the CBEP would not be able to act against such a person should their work not conform to the required standard or endanger the public. In fact, the client would be liable should the project result in the lives of the public being put in danger as a result of the work of unregistered persons.

This is partly the reason that the policy on the Identification of Work (IDoW) has been mooted. This would assist in ensuring that people work in the areas that they are most proficient in and avoid people taking on work that is classified in the higher classes of work, for which normal professional registration would be required.

Understandably, there would be persons that have gained sufficient experience and proficiency in performing different classes of work, and an opportunity exists to be professionally registered through the path of Recognized Prior Learning (RPL). Once each of the CBEP have published their IDOW policy persons will be accorded a specific time-frame to get professionally registered. However, the challenge of enforcing this in the private sector will still remain as the Acts that established the CBEP, are mainly targeted at regulating the conduct of registered professionals only.

(3) The CBE in collaboration with the DPWI, has several initiatives to promote professional registration. Quarterly forums are convened to monitor progress on candidacy programmes and to address the bottlenecks identified. The CBE further coordinates professional registration workshops wherein, amongst other things, all Councils for the Built Environment Professions (CBEP) engage on how to simplify their professional registration processes and use uniform standards where applicable. Another initiative is the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) which is being incorporated by Councils in route for registration process.