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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 221**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 10 FEBRUARY 2022**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 1 - 2021**

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

What (a) total number of (i) banks has her department engaged with to verify the financial details of the Social Relief of Distress Grant applicants appeals and (ii) appeals are still outstanding and (b) are the further relevant details in this regard?NW225E

**REPLY:**

1. SASSA engaged 7 banks for the first iteration of the Special COVID-19 SRD grant (May 2020 to April 2021). This was specifically for the purposes of means testing reconsideration of declined applicants.

1. ABSA; First National Bank, Nedbank, Standard Bank; Postbank; Tymebank and Capitec. The contracts expired on 31 July 2021, prior to the implementation of the new iteration of the SRD grant.

SASSA then followed a closed tender process to contract with banks again. To date, no contracts have been finalised with any bank. Currently, contracts are being finalised with ABSA, Nedbank, Standard Bank and Grindrod Bank for the provision of means testing and mobile money transfer services, as these banks passed through the tender process. Approval to negotiate with other banks who did not pass through the tender process for the means testing services, approval is being sought from the National Treasury.

1. No outstanding appeals for the first iteration of the SRD grant. With regards to the second iteration, the number of outstanding appeals are as follows:

2021:

August 984 702

September 711 017

October 570 111

November 416 234

December 302 302

2022:

January 141 010

(Please note that the window to request reconsideration is still open for January 2022, so these numbers may still increase. Reconsiderations must be lodged within 30 days of the applicant having received the outcome of their application.

1. The requirement to assess income on reconsideration is set in the Directions for the SRD grant. This is the only means through which SASSA can electronically validate the assertion by the applicant that he/she does not have financial support from any other source. Despite the delays in finalising contracts with the banks, all reconsiderations will be attended to. Once concluded, the contracts will remain in place until end of March 2023. This will enable SASSA to effectively deal with all backlogs.