

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO. 2230

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## INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 23 OF 2018

**2230. Mr A M Figlan (DA) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

(1) Whether he has put any plans in place to reduce the long queues and waiting times at his department’s offices; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;

(2) what has he found to be the causes for the long queues and waiting times at his department’s offices? NW2404E

**REPLY:**

1. Yes, the Department has drafted a strategy and action plan to address and reduce the long queues including waiting times at its offices. The action plan would be rolled out with short, medium to long term interventions. The Department held a media briefing on 22 April 2018, to pronounce to the public the “War on Queues” campaign, as part of its plans to ensure that notwithstanding the high volumes experienced amidst inadequate physical infrastructure, unstable systems and general lack of resources, our clients are served at the shortest possible time.

The action plans put in place encompass the following critical components, namely:-

* Assessment report on immediate interventions at identified offices (Alexandra, Soweto, Pietermaritzburg and Umgeni) showing reductions in waiting times and what has been done in ensuring people are not waiting outside offices to be served.
* Categorising of offices based on performance in order provide interventions at such offices.
* The Department has introduced a steering committee that sits every two weeks to monitor all offices that are still experiencing long queues and make interventions where required.
* Some interventions include but is not limited to; a one-stop workstation that takes fingerprints and photographs, a streamline of processes and a reduction of time clients spend in Home Affairs offices.
* Revisiting the working hour arrangements negotiations with labour; to address the issue of unpredictable walk-in clients and inadequate resources.
* Proposals on how to measure customer experience and waiting times in offices, and on how to deal with structural challenges of long waiting times.

The Department, informed by the action plans, is finalising a customer satisfaction survey, it commissioned to get the client contact centre  
working optimally, find a solution for unpredictable walk-in clients and for  
front office space, explore possibilities of a new shift system, attend to the unstable system, scale-up unannounced visits by senior managers to offices, improve workflow and beef-up communication with clients.

1. Long enduring queues emanating from high client volumes caused by unpredictable walk-ins, discontinuation of Saturday working hours, inadequate footprint and front office space, unstable systems (networks and applications), inefficient work flow process and uncoordinated communication strategies.