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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2239**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 03 JUNE 2022**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 22 - 2022**

**2239. Ms L L van der Merwe (IFP) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

(1) Whether, in light of the recent media reports of between 16 and 28 October 2021 that nearly R89,5 million was stolen from the SA Social Security Agency (SASSA) accounts from the Postbank by either Postbank employees or contractors, and considering the alarming nature of the breach, (a) the Postbank officials and/or (b) contractors working with SASSA accounts undergo security vetting; if not, why not; if so, to what extent;

(2) whether any criminal investigation has been opened against any officials of the Postbank; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what is the status of the criminal investigations? NW2655E

**REPLY:**

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(1)      (a) **Postbank Officials**

As part of the recruitment and selection process within Postbank, all candidates are vetted before making appointment. This practice is in alignment with Postbank’s HR Recruitment and Selection policy. The vetting of candidates includes:

1) Criminal checks,

2) Credit checks,

3) Qualification verifications,

4) ID checks,

5) SA Citizenship checks

 (b) **Contractors**

**Postbank has two types of contractors:**

* **Fixed-term contractors** : These contractors undergo the same Recruitment and Selection process described in (1)(a) above
* **Contractors provided by Service Provider**: All Postbank Service Provider contracts includes a standard clause stating that contractors must be security vetted and approved before working on Postbank IT systems.

(2)      A formal criminal case was opened soon after discovery of the incident. The case was opened with the Specialised unit of the Organised Crime unit of the SAPS. The case is currently being investigated by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI/Hawks). Over 600 pages of information gathered by the Postbank internal investigation unit was handed over to the Hawks.  
  
The Hawks criminal investigation is currently ongoing and includes all leads available. Postbank is cooperating fully with the investigators to try and apprehend the suspects. Postbank has a zero tolerance to any fraud or theft and will act against any staff member or any other party found guilty to the full extent of the law.

No specific Postbank, SAPO or SASSA staff member is separately investigated. However, all staff that were close to the environment where the incident took place are treated as suspects and are included in the list of staff being investigated by the Hawks. No arrest have been made at this point in time