**National Assembly**

**Question Number: 2297**

**Mrs A M Dreyer (DA) to ask the Minister of Transport:**

With regard to the proposed high-speed train that will go through Kempton Park, has the bridge near Birchleigh station that goes over Elgin Road been tested for structural stability and strength; if not, when will such a test be conducted; if so, (a) when was the test conducted and (b) what were the results of the test?

**NW2474E**

**REPLY:**

It is understood that the high-speed train refers to the new generation Electric Multiple Units to be rolled out by PRASA over the next 10 years in the commuter rail network. The bridge near Birchleigh Station that goes over Elgin Road, has not been tested for these trains.

1. The bridge was inspected in December 2017 and February 2018. The inspection conducted indicates that the bridge is structurally sound for the current traffic. Tests will be conducted in November 2018 which will take the high-speed traffic design into consideration.
2. The results of the inspection were as follows:
* Structural damage to the bottom flange of the beams near the middle of the beam span.
* Damage to the warning sign on the bottom flange of the northern outer bridge beam by the vehicles exceeding height restriction.
* Corrosion of the deck soffit structural steel components was found in most cases.
* Drainage of the bridge road pavement was ineffective or non-existent.
* “No advance allowable vehicle height warning structures” mounted on either approach of the bridge.

The bridge is part of the planned bridges to be rehabilitated by PRASA in the 2018/2019 financial year.