**PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 2330**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 28 October 2016**

**QUESTION PAPER NO: 33**

**DATE OF REPLY:**

**Mr A Figlan (DA) asked the Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services:**

1. Whether the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) has enough capacity and expertise to service the critical service level agreements it concluded with the Department of Home Affairs; if not, (a) why not and (b) what steps has his Department taken to ensure that the SITA’s capacity and expertise are improved to a satisfactory level; and
2. Whether SITA has put any (a) routine and /or (b) preventative maintenance procedures in place to ensure that the Department of Home Affairs network problems are solved before it adversely affects its services; if not, why not; if so, (i) what are the relevant details and (ii) what impact did the specified procedures have on the availability of the specified department’s services?

**REPLY**

**I have been informed by SITA as follows:**

1 (a) SITA currently has thirteen (13) Service Level Agreements (SLA Annexes) with the Department of Home Affairs. These services are delivered using both the SITA own personnel and external services from contracted suppliers.

These services are managed via Service Level Agreements with metrics. The service performance is regularly evaluated and monitored on a monthly basis between SITA and the Department of Home Affairs.

SITA has adequate capacity to service the SLA Annexes except that it uses Telkom to provide the last-mile for a dedicated VPN. This represents the only area of challenge since SITA does not own the infrastructure and depend on Telkom network for 92% of its connectivity. SITA is now working with Sentech to provide an additional alternative connectivity using satellite technology to minimise the challenges that have been experienced to date.

1 (b) The following actions have been implemented to increase capacity:

* Appointed a specialist resource to direct the stabilisation and modernisation of the Switching Centre, supported by internal resources and external service providers;
* Full assessment of the Switching Centre’s facility condition and fit for purpose assessment completed;
* Identified critical items for stabilisation and modernisation and we have initiated projects to address DHA requirements;
* Establishment of a full preventative maintenance contract to maintain the Switching Centre’s facility infrastructure.

2 (a) (b) Yes, SITA has routine and preventative maintenance procedures, managed through IT Service Management System.

1. (ii) SITA has regular monthly Service Level Meetings with the Department of Home Affairs and also with the Service Provider (Telkom). To minimise the causes of poor network connectivity SITA is working with the State Owned Companies such as Sentech to build additional alternative network that will be activated when terrestrial network is impacted. The satellite system will ensure that the DHA office has service as per the signed Service Level Agreements; therefore DHA does not need to close their offices when a network breakdown is experienced.