

**PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 2357**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: OCTOBER 2020**

**QUESTION PAPER NO:**

**Ms SJ Graham (DA) to ask the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies:**

1. (a) What (i) provision has the Post Office made to meet the increase in the numbers of beneficiaries eligible for the Social Relief of Distress Grant payable at the Post Office and (ii) is being done to address the backlog where the Post Office in smaller towns does not have sufficient money to make the payments, (b) which beneficiaries get preference when the cash resources are low and (c) what are the time frames for addressing the backlog of beneficiaries who still have outstanding grants owed to them;
2. whether there is a record of which Post Offices have not been able to meet the demand; if not, why not; if so, what are the names of such Post Offices in each (a) town and (b) province? NW2931E

**REPLY:**

**I have been advised by the SAPO as follows:**

 (1)(a)(i) Available staff members within the SAPO Regions (even from other Business Units) are being utilised to assist with queue management, and the scanning of beneficiaries to ensure that they all have correct SMSes and proper identification documents to speed up the payment process.

(ii) There is no backlog in essence, as all validated beneficiaries (appropriate SMSes and Identification) and the allocated queue numbers (branch capacity) for that specific day are assisted. Cash ordering for payments at branches are done in accordance with predictive models of number of SASSA beneficiaries to collect their payments from the particular Branch on a daily basis. Many clients, however, arrive at Post Offices, having not yet applied for the SRD, not yet approved or prematurely on receipt of only their registration SMSes. The queue management is assisting in this regard and also to educate and inform beneficiaries on what to do.

 (b) With the screening of beneficiaries whilst in queue, preference is normally given to those who possess appropriate SMSes to collect their grants. Queue card number systems have also been introduced in Regions which has improved the operations and cash handling and have reduced the influx of beneficiaries without appropriate SMSes.

(c) SRD Grant payments are done continuously throughout the month, except during the first 3–4 days when regular social grants are being paid.

(2)(a)(b) SAPO Branches are generally able to deal with the demand for a specific day, taking into consideration the number of beneficiaries the branch is able to assist per day. Beneficiaries who are not assisted on the day are given a number to return and are then prioritised in the queue. Some SAPO Branches may have been closed due to operational or financial reasons and clients are then referred to the nearest alternative available branches.

**MS. STELLA NDABENI-ABRAHAMS, MP**

**MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES**