**Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**Minister**

**NA question for Written Reply: 2380**

**Recommended / Not Recommended**

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**Mr. A Mahlangu**

**Acting CEO: SASSA**

**Recommended / Not Recommended**

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**Mr. M Toni**

**Acting Director-General: Department of Social Development**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 2380**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 24 August 2018**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 26 - 2018**

**. 2380. Ms N P Sonti (EFF) to ask the Minister of Social Development: [🟊103] [Question submitted for oral reply now placed for written reply because in excess of quota [Rule 137(8)]]**

Whether her department has put any measures in place to ensure that there will be no problems in the issuing of grants going forward, which may result in beneficiaries not receiving their grants; if not, what are the implications thereof on the welfare of grant beneficiaries; if so, what are the relevant details? NW2615E

**REPLY:**

SASSA is engaged in a transition project, to move the responsibility for the payment of social grants from Cash paymaster Services to the South African Post Office. This project is being managed according to an approved project plan. While every effort is made to ensure that there is no disruption to the payment of social grants, it is inevitable that the changes may result in some inconvenience or disruption to some beneficiaries.

The payment of social grants in the revised payment environment will take place in line with Regulation 21 to the Social Assistance Act, 2004. This means that beneficiaries have the choice to receive their grants directly into their personal bank accounts or through the new SASSA/SAPO card which is currently being rolled out.

The first focus area in the transition is to ensure that all those beneficiaries accessing their grants in cash at designated pay points have the new card and are able to access their grants, either through the National Payment System (NPS) infrastructure (merchants’ point of sale devices or bank ATMs); a post office outlet or at one of designated cash points which will remain. As part of the transition, a process of realignment of the cash pay points has taken place, and the number significantly reduced, since many of these have been in close proximity to NPS infrastructure. However, the commitment remains that beneficiaries will have an access point to receive their grants within a 5 kilometre radius.

In order to limit disruptions and mitigate the possibility of any grant beneficiary not being able to access his/her social grant, SASSA has developed a deployment strategy for staff at all levels within the organisation to man previously serviced pay points; large merchants and other areas where beneficiaries are found, to ensure that they are assisted in accessing their grants. Arrangements have also been made for the call centre to be available over the weekend of 1 and 2 September, which is the start of the payment cycle for September. These arrangements will remain in place until the end of this calendar year, to ensure that a smooth transition is achieved.

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**Approved by the Minister on**

**Date……………………….**