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| **PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA****NATIONAL ASSEMBLY** |

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 2410**

**DATE OF QUESTION: 23 OCTOBER 2020**

**DATE OF SUBMISSION: 06 NOVEMBER 2020**

**Prof C T Msimang (IFP) to ask the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services:**

(1) Whether, given that a Department of Correctional Services official at St Albans Correctional Centre in the Eastern Cape was caught last week trying to smuggle contraband (narcotics, cell phones and cellular accessories) into the specified facility, the Department of Correctional Services has any mechanisms in place to counteract the common practice whereby prison staff throughout the Republic smuggle packages for inmates in exchange for money; if not, why not; if so, what are the full, relevant details of such mechanisms;

(2) What has the Department of Corrections found to be at the core of the specified trend?

(3) What total number of cases of this nature involving the practice have been recorded in the past 12 months in each province? **NW3018E**

**REPLY:**

**(1)** In response to these challenges, the Department has reviewed the Vetting policy to include continuous screening and integrity testing of personnel through the implementation of the Voice Stress Analysis.

The Voice Stress Analysis (VSA) is considered as a professional non-invasive investigation system tool used in various risk management processes for emotion detection, personality and risk assessment and investigations. It is also a security investigation tool utilised to gather information in identifying internal fraud, smuggling activities, stop theft of merchandise (Stores), equipment and company funds.

In addition, the Department has a Gang management strategy in place and is currently reviewing the strategy into a Gang Combating Strategy which will be accompanied by implementation plan to counter strategies and new techniques used by the gangs. Amongst the interventions, there is consultation and collaboration with Law Enforcement Agencies under the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) Cluster.

This effective collaboration has shown success in combating gangsterism in our facilities and has yielded positive results in management areas with high numbers of incarcerated gang members such as the St Albans Management Area.

Our Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are in place which include conducting searches in correctional facilities. Confiscated Contraband such as sim-cards and cellular phones are handed over to Crime Intelligence for further operationalization. Through this collaborative initiatives, numerous officials were arrested for being linked to gangs. We are also in the process of reviewing DCS Security Protocol through the review of B-Order and enhancing such protocol.

Therefore in addressing the challenge at hand, officials are sensitized to comply with Security policies and procedures by ensuring that proper and regular searches of inmates, officials, visitors and services providers are conducted at Access Control points. For any non-compliance, consequence management must be undertaken and criminal cases opened with the SAPS.

The Department is in a process of implementation of Body Scanners in the identified Correctional Facilities within six (6) Management Areas. The aim of the Scanners in question is a threat detection solution which combines ultra-low radiation with maximum visibility, therefore addressing the challenges of smuggling of contrabands i.e. cell phones and drugs among others. It will detect any hidden metals, weapons and drugs in a body of a person. The scanner will be able to search all body cavities without compromising the privacy of individuals and reduce the time taken to manually search inmates, officials and visitors.

Body Scanners have been installed across big facilities, this include:

1. Gauteng: (Kgosi Mampuru II, Local CC and Johannesburg Med A and B);
2. Western Cape: (Pollsmoor Max and access control);
3. Free State: (Groenpunt Max and access control);
4. Eastern Cape: (St. Albans Max and Medium A);
5. KwaZulu-Natal (Durban Med A and B); and
6. Mpumalanga (Barberton Max).

**(2)** Non adherence to policies and Standard Operating Procedures

**(3)** The total number of cases of this nature involving the practice recorded in the past 12 months in each province are as follows:

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| **REGION** | **TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES** |
| **EC** | **17** |
| **LMN** | **9** |
| **KZN** | **14** |
| **GP** | **121** |
| **WC** | **13** |
| **FSNC** | **7** |
| **NATIONAL** | **181** |

**END**

The deployment of the use of VSA will aid as a force multiplier and a deterrent to criminal activities and misconduct by officials and would be perpetrators which will ultimately results in the eradication of contrabands in DCS Correctional Centers. It will further more ensure a security competent workforce and the integrity of the Department and State.

**END.**