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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2537**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 23-2015)**

**2537. Ms D Carter (Cope) to ask the Minister of Police:**

Whether the police were using regional Facebook sites, WhatsApp and Instagram, amongst other social media applications, as necessary tools to obtain instant information on criminal activities and to give out instant alerts either to warn people of crime or to request people to be on the lookout for criminals who were fleeing from crime scenes at that time; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

NW2909E

**REPLY:**

Social media tools are active and being used within the SAPS. The following are the reasons SAPS has chosen to be active on social media platforms;

* To offer the organisation a way of interacting with the citizens on issues relating to crime, and various events/campaigns.
* To build a trustworthy relationship and a sense of community by engaging with each other thus improving the organization’s reputation with the community.
* To provide a forum for people to ask questions and report crime/successes.
* To spread knowledge quickly and with minimal effort that could protect your community, help catch suspects, find missing persons, etc.
* To place crime alerts warning the public of criminals using specific modus operandi, vehicles to look out for etc.
* Rapid exchange of information.
* To provide public education.