

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO. 2683

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## INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 29 OF 2018

**2683. Mrs H O Mkhaliphi (EFF) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

(a) What number of applications for (i) passport, (ii) citizenship, (iii) birth certificate, (iv) refugee status and (v) identity document is his department in possession of, which it has not processed yet, (b) why have the applications not been processed in each instance and (c) on what date was each application submitted? NW2974E

**REPLY:**

**(i)** 1 079 Passport applications from abroad

(b) Special Investigation

Citizenship Verification

Manual Fingerprint Verification

HANIS Investigation

Manual record retrieval

(c) 2017 – Tourist Passport (Adult) 417

Travel Document (Minor) 9

426

2018 – Tourist Passport (Adult) 78

Maxi Passport 2

Travel Document (Adult) 567

Travel Document (Minor) 6

653

Total 1 079

**(ii)** 3 931 Citizenship applications

(b) Manual verification of permanent residence permits.

(c) A few of the applications date back to 2006. They were transferred in October 2011 to Head Office when centralisation of decisions on such applications was effected. Prior to this period, applications for citizenship were processed by office managers.

**(iii)** According to the National Population Register (NPR), there are 233 461 birth certificates applications that have not been processed yet. This information is derived from the NPR report dated 14/9/2018. Of these applications, 96 053 are No records cases. The department has already effected Function 170 on 96 053 applications requesting client to reconstruct a records which could not be found in the repositories. To date, these records have not been reconstructed, or are slowly being reconstructed. There is additional 10 215 missing records for clients who are already deceased and the reconstructed records have not been furnished. The remaining work in progress is 127 193 birth certificate applications.

(b) Except for the unavailable/missing/misfiled records, the department continues to retrieve available records to modify certificates for backlog applications, as well as new Birth certificate application cases. Some of these applications could not be processed as there are no records. Some birth records are either missing or hard to find. In some instances where these records are available, such records have faded to a point that it would be difficult to read the little available information. The Records Management Centre is mainly paper based. These records are susceptible to heat (fade) and are often misfiled (misfiling) due to human errors. The unit does not have sufficient human capacity to retrieve these records. The majority of officials responsible for records retrieval are old.

(c) The report on Birth Certificates applications not finalised dates from

2002/03/04 to 2018/09/14

**(v)** There are approximately 10,000 Smart ID card applications for documents which have not been processed at Front Offices and 12,484 applications pended by Back Office.

(b) Applications which are pended at Front Offices are due to incomplete supporting documents having been submitted by the applicants. In these instances, the Department has implemented an SMS functionality which will indicate to the applicant which outstanding documents are requested from him / her in order to process the application further and enable it to be finalised.

At Back Office, applications are pended due to slow manual retrieval of birth records for verification purposes. The Department is in the process of improving the birth record retrieval system by means of a digitization programme in conjunction with Stats SA, which will create one central, digitized source for all records.

(c) The applications which are pended at Back office dates from 2015 until 2018. There are three (03) cases in 2015, twenty-five (25) in 2016, three thousand one hundred and eighty-two (3 182) in 2017 and eight thousand six hundred and nine (8 609) in 2018. For front offices three (03) SMSs will be sent to the client of which after the third SMS an application will be cancelled and client will need to re-submit a new application.

**(iv)** There are 641 active cases as extracted from the National Immigration Information System on 10 September 2018.

* Firstly, four hundred and eighty nine (489) applications from various Refugee Reception Offices are awaiting finalisation by Refugee Status Determination Officers (RSDO). The RSDO is expected to finalise these within 180 days and the delay is as the result of no shows by applicants for interviews by RSDO, and RSDO conducting further research on country of origin conditions.

* Secondly, one hundred and fifty two (152) are applications of applicants who are now resurfacing and who approached the Cape Town Refugee Reception Office as a result of the court order in the matter between Ntumba Guella Nbaya & Others v Minister of Home Affairs case no: 6534/15 which forced the Department to extend permits of asylum seekers who applied in Refugee Reception Offices other than Cape Town. Their permits are being extended to allow officials to request their files from those offices.