# QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

**QUESTION NO. 2784**

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**2784. Mr M Tshwaku (EFF) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

How will his department, through its newly formed Border Management Agency, ensure that (a) there is free trade between the Republic and other African countries and that it does not act as a restriction, (b) there will be no stampede of truck traffic and/or of persons going in and out of the Republic to Zimbabwe, Mozambique and vice versa at the border gates, especially Beitbridge and Lebombo, to avoid the incident that occurred in December 2020 and (c) the security is reinforced at the other ports of entry, such as public and private airports, especially at the Fire Blade private airport, to ensure that there is no smuggling of the goods? NW3302E

# REPLY:

1. Based on section 5 of the Border Management Authority Act, the Authority is required by law to ensure the effective management of the movement of people, goods and services across the country’s Ports of Entry (PoE). Therefore, the establishment of the Authority is intended to improve efficiencies in the facilitation of trade between South African and the rest of the African continent and the world. Further, the establishment of BMA seeks to ensure the integration of various functions (e.g. immigration, port health, agriculture, access control) which are currently implemented by individual government departments in a fragmented manner. Therefore, BMA’s establishment seeks to improve efficiencies in this regard by integrating all those functions into a single command and control. To this end, in executing its functions, the BMA will remain guided by the overall policy directives adopted by the respective parent departments and therefore will in no way work towards hindering any trade activities or market access between South Africa, African countries and the world.
2. The BMA, in collaboration with relevant government stakeholders, has prepared an operational plan for the border environment for the 2021/22 festive season wherein mitigation strategies have been developed for identified challenges such as traffic congestion and crowd control. The plan

has been endorsed by multiple stakeholders including the National Joint Operational Intelligence Structure (NATJOINTS), Provincial Joint Operational Intelligence Structures (PROVJOINTS) especially those of Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the Free State. Further, the Border Management Authority is leading discussions at the Joint Technical Committees with our respective neighbours to ensure the alignment of systems to ensure the smooth movement of cargo between our respective Ports of Entry. We have also finalised discussions to increase the operating hours and the deployment of additional human resources especially in the busiest ports such as Beit Bridge, Lebombo, and Maseru Bridge, amongst others.

1. Whilst the leadership of Border Management Authority is busy putting systems in place to operationalise the Authority and the ultimate deployment of the Border Guards, the Ports of Entry are currently secured by the South African Police Service (SAPS) in order to deter and intercept any illegal activities in the port environment. Regarding security at the private and public airports, the members of SAPS are working closely with the private security company to ensure that the port environment is fully secured and protected. These security arrangements also cover the Fire Blade private airport area as described in order to ensure that there is no smuggling taking place in the environment.

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