**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 3042**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 21/08/2015**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 32/2015**

**3042. Ms A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

(1) (a) What investigations have been completed by the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) since its formation in 2009 and (b) for each investigation, when (i) did she receive and/or (ii) does she expect the relevant report;

(2) (a) when did she make each specified report public and (b) why were other reports not made public;

(3) what are the details of investigations currently being conducted or planned by NEEDU, including the time frames;

(4) (a) why was the contract of a certain person (name furnished) not renewed and (b) who is currently leading NEEDU;

(5) whether she intends to have NEEDU established as a statutory entity; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW3582E

**RESPONSE**

**Question 1**

* The 2012 NEEDU Report on Foundation Phase (Grades 1-3) was submitted to the Ministry in May 2013 and was launched in May 2013;
* The 2013 NEEDU Report (similar to the 2013 Report) on Intermediate Phase (Grades 4-6) was submitted to the Ministry in November 2013 and was released in May 2014; and
* The 2014 NEEDU Report on Further Education and Training Phase (Grades 10-12) is being finalised by NEEDU.

**Question 2**

Section 7(1) (g) of the *Regulations for the Establishment of the Office of Standards and Compliance for Basic Education (OSCBE),* currently known as NEEDU, provides that NEEDU must “prepare and submit to the Minister reports on the state of the education system.” These Regulations, which must still be approved by the Council of Education Ministers (CEM) before they are finalised, do not obligate the Minister to publish NEEDU reports.

As contemplated in Section 7(1) (g) of the OSCBE Regulations*,* NEEDU prepares its annual reports and presents them to the Minister. The Minister publishes these reports at her discretion. The Minister published the first two NEEDU reports, as noted in Response 1 above. NEEDU is currently finalising its third annual report (the 2014 Report) and it will be submitted to the Minister on completion.

**Question 3**

The following is the NEEDU plan:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Semester | Location | School Phase | Provinces | Districts | Schools |
| 2012 | 2nd | Urban | Foundation | 9 | 15 | 134 |
| 2013 | 1st | Rural monograde | Intermediate | 9 | 16 | 99 |
| 2nd | Rural multigrade | Multi-grade FP/ IP | 9 | 18 | 120 |
| 2014 | 1st | Urban / rural | FET (G10-12) | 9 | 12 | 93 |
| 2nd | Urban / rural | Senior (G7-9) | 9 | 13 | 90 |
| 2015 | 1st | Urban and rural | Follow up | 9 | 26 | 158 |
| 2nd | Urban and rural | SNE | 9 | 29 | 180 |
| **2016** | 1st | Urban and rural | SNE |  |  |  |

[FP = Foundation Phase; IP = Intermediate Phase; FET = Further Education and Training; SNE = Special Needs Education (incl. special and full service schools]

**Question 4**

Dr Taylor, the third Chief Executive Officer (CEO), left when his contract expired because of his desire to join his former employer, the JET Services. He had not resigned from the JET Services but was seconded to NEEDU.

Dr. Sibusiso Sithole, who has been the Chief Operational Officer and Deputy CEO since 2010, is currently the acting CEO. He is supported by the staff that was appointed in NEEDU since 2009, who played a vital role in assisting the former CEOs.

**Question 5**

The Minister supports the independence of NEEDU without any reservation, as follows:

* On 14 April 2014, the Minister wrote to the former Minister of Public Service and Administration, Minister Sisulu, MP, and the former Minister of Finance, Minister Gordhan, MP, requesting their written consent on the corporate form and funding requirements of the proposed government component so that OSCBE could be legally established in keeping with the requirements of the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation No. 103 of 1994 as amended by Act 20 of 2007).
* On 14 April 2014, the Minister also approved that the relevant Government Notice containing Regulations for the establishment, governance and functions of the OSCBE be published, once consent has been obtained from the Ministers of Finance and the Public Service and Administration.
* Ministers Sisulu and Gordhan had not responded to the Minister’s request by the time they were deployed to other portfolios after the General Elections in 2014. With the change of political leadership in the Departments of Public Service and Administration and Finance, on 23 July 2014, the Minister again wrote to the new Ministers of Public Service and Administration and Finance, Ministers Chabane, MP and Nene, MP, respectively requesting their support in the establishment of an independent NEEDU.
* Following the Minister’s correspondence with the Ministers of Finance and the Public Service and Administration, certain developments have transpired. These are as follows:
  + - Consultations with the National Treasury and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) to establish NEEDU as an independent government component, under the title of Office of Standards and Compliance for Basic Education (OSCBE);
    - The formulation of the relevant documents with the support of the DPSA and the preparation of a business case with the support of the National Treasury;
    - The preparation of the Regulations for the establishment of the OSCBE for consideration and approval by the Minister;
    - The approval of the Regulations for the establishment of the OSCBE after close examination and scrutiny by the Chief State Law Advisor, who finally declared that “the draft Regulations are consistent with section 11 of the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996)” in May 2015; and
    - The approval of the Regulations for the establishment of the OSCBE by the Minister in May 2015, after they were endorsed by the Chief State Law Advisor.
* What remains to be done includes the following activities:
  + - Approving the Regulations for the establishment of the OSCBE [by the CEM];
    - Declaring the establishment of the OSCBE through the promulgation of the Regulations (via the Government Notice) [by the Minister];
    - Submitting the updated business case and promulgated Regulations and Government Notice to the DPSA [by NEEDU];
    - Arranging a meeting of the Interdepartmental Assessment Committee to make recommendations on the organisational form for the OSCBE—with the Department of Basic Education (DBE) (NEEDU) participating as a member in the Committee and making a presentation to the members [by DPSA];
    - Preparing a submission to inform the Minister for Public Service and Administration and the Minister of Finance of the Committee's recommendation and to obtain the concurrence of the said Ministers for the establishment of the OSCBE as a government component [by DPSA]; and
    - Preparing (following concurrence from said Ministers) a Presidential Proclamation to list the OSCBE in Schedule 3 of the Public Service Act, so as to establish the OSCBE as a government component [by DPSA]. NW3582E