

**Ref:02/1/5/2**

**MINISTER**

**QUESTION NO. 3057 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

A draft reply to **Mr S Esau (DA)** to the above-mentioned question is enclosed for your consideration.

**MS NOSIPHO NGCABA**

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

**DATE:**

**DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED**

**MRS B E E MOLEWA, MP**

**MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**DATE:**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**(For written reply)**

**QUESTION NO. 3057 {NW3597E}**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 32 of 2015**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 21 August 2015**

**Mr S Esau (DA) to ask the Minister of Environmental Affairs:**

(a) How does her Department define red tape and (b) what (i) specific interventions and/or (ii) systems have been implemented to (aa) identify and (bb) reduce red tape in (aaa) her Department and (bbb) the entities reporting to her?

**3057. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPLIES:**

1. Red tape is considered to be an excessive regulation or rigid conformity to formal rules that are considered redundant or bureaucratic and hinders or prevent decision-making.
2. (i) (aa) (aaa) The Department is always mindful of the impact of unnecessary bureaucracy on the economy and the service delivery to the public. The Department, on a continuous basis, reconsider processes and make them more efficient and effective in its day to day operations. The socio-economic impact assessments that government needs to conduct as part of the process when new policies and legislation are developed will also ensure that unnecessary red tape is avoided.

(bb) (aaa) The Department developed norms and standards to replace the requirement to apply for licenses for certain activities. It also develops other environmental management instruments that will have the effect that the environmental impact assessment process is shortened, be more cost effective, that fewer studies would be required and that decision-making would be based on better and standardised information. The setting of minimum information requirements for certain applications will ensure that the applicant will know up-front what information the competent authority will need to make a decision, and it would be the same whether the competent authority is the national Department or provincial Department. The thresholds for activities listed under the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, are periodically reconsidered as information on their impacts on the environment becomes known.

(bbb) The Department believes that the entities also have their own systems for addressing any red tapes that might be there.

(ii) (aa) (aaa) The Department is currently reviewing its business processes to ensure that the processes are effective and that delays are avoided or minimized. The reviewing and mapping processes identify bottlenecks, which can then be eliminated. Existing mapped processes are monitored and improved.

(bb) (aaa) The Department introduced electronic systems, such as National Environmental Authorisation System, Livelink Opentext and Waste information system; and it is busy developing an electronic licensing system called Integrated Permit Management System that will be rolled out in the near future. The Department is also developing a screening tool that would upfront identify the feasibility of a particular project for which an environmental authorization is applied.

(bbb) South African Weather Service implemented the National Air Quality Information System Phase I.

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