**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 3182**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 28/08/2015**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 34/2015**

**3182. Dr P J Groenewald (FF Plus) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:†**

(1) What precautions has her department taken with the writing of the record examinations and final examinations of this year’s matriculants in case load shedding takes place at the schools and/or examination halls during this time;

(2) whether she will make a statement on the matter? NW3780E

**RESPONSE**

1. Load shedding, will in the main, affect the writing of Computer Application Technology (CAT) and Information Technology (IT) practical examinations, where computers are used. In the management of examinations in previous years, power outages have been factored into the planning so as to ensure that no candidate is affected. The Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) have established contact with the regional managers of Eskom, and a request has been made for load shedding to be suspended on the days on which these practical examinations are administered during the Trial Examinations and the Final November examinations. In addition, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) will communicate with the Acting Chief Executive Officer of Eskom, to impress on him the need to suspend load shedding on the two days on which the Final Practical Examinations are written in CAT and IT. However, should load shedding occur, the Department has a protocol in place to cater for power outages which entails the following:
2. Candidates must be quarantined for the duration of the load shedding and the examination may resume when the electricity is restored;
3. Should the electricity not be restored in a period of two hours, the examination session is terminated and the examination must be re-scheduled; and
4. The DBE has set a back-up paper for these two practical examinations, and the examination will be re-scheduled for schools that may experience load shedding.

2. All schools are aware of the protocol relating to load shedding or power outages. This has been communicated via an official circular to all schools. In addition, the Department will convene a media briefing prior to the commencement of the final examination and this will be reiterated at this briefing.