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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO 3202**

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**Dr M J Figg (DA) to ask the Minister of Economic Development:**

(1) Considering the usefulness of visiting other countries and learning lessons from their practices and experiences, (a) what is the total number of days that he has spent out of the country in (i) 2014 and (ii) from 1 January 2015 up to the latest date for which information is available, (b) which countries did he visit and (c) what useful lessons did he learn;

(2) has he put the lessons he has learnt into practice; if so,

(3) did the specified lessons yield positive results; if not, why not; if so, what were the results? NW3800E

**REPLY**

During the period from 1 January 2014 until 15 September 2015, a total of 18 days were spent outside the country (excluding travel time) on official trips to the United Kingdom, Indonesia, the United States and Switzerland, to meet investors or to showcase examples from South Africa to other policy-makers.

In the course of such engagement, both parties normally share national experiences. The observations of the experience of other countries help to shape the refinement and implementation of our policies. In none of these cases did we take an existing policy or practice from another country and simply implement it, which limits the assessment of their impact on our domestic economy.

Investor feedback has been helpful however in confirming the value of actions taken in respect of the export of scrap metal, the renewable energy programme and the shift of focus of skills training to technical and artisanal skills. In addition, valuable insights have been gained on the importance of infrastructure investment for economic development.

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