

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO. 3229

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## INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 34 OF 2015

**3229. Mr A M Figlan (DA) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

(1) How many visa processing centres does his department have on the (a) European, (b) Asian and (c) South American continents?

(2) What is being done to address the shortage of visa facilitation service centres in terms of the Medium Term Strategic Framework target to import economically important but scarce skills from abroad;

(3) (a) What level of training have staff or officials of the (i) visa facilitation service centres and (ii) Home Affairs received on the implementation of the new Immigration Regulations of 2014 and (b) at what frequency has this training taken place since 1 June 2014?

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**REPLY**

(1)(a) European continent: 3

(1)(b) Asian continent: 13

(1)(c) South American continent: 0

(2) The Department is in the process of developing an ePermit system with an intention to roll it out in all South African Missions abroad and also extend the visas facilitation services (VFS) centres in countries where we receive mostly skilled persons for our economy.

(3)(a)(i-ii) VFS staff and officials received training in March 2014 before the publishing of the amended Immigration Regulations. Another training session took place in February 2015. Another training workshop has been scheduled for September 2015. At VFS centre level, there is regular refresher training conducted as and when there are new developments or departmental directives on the interpretation and application of the Immigration Act and the Regulations.

(3)(b) Home Affairs Officials receive regular training on operations, interpretation and application of the Immigration Act. Officials were trained by the Department’s Learning Academy on the new changes in the Act and its Regulations. Regular on-the-job training also takes place during staff meetings where officials share good practices and interpretation and application of the Immigration Act and the Regulations.