**National Assembly**

**Question No 3417**

**Mr S Tambo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Transport:**

Noting that the recent trucking accident has put into focus the need for a sustainable and working railway system to transport goods, in order to ease the congestion and accidents caused by trucks on the roads, what progress is being made in revitalising railway networks in the Republic? NW4219E

**REPLY**

In order to ease congestion and accidents caused by trucks on the road, a key development in revitalising railway networks is the approval of the White Paper on National Rail Policy (Rail Policy) by Cabinet on 23 March 2022. The Department of Transport is responsible for creating the enabling policy and legislative frameworks and co-ordinating the implementation of these initiatives for the transport sector.

To promote the movement of cargo from road to rail, the Rail Policy introduces reforms to open up the space for private sector investment and equitable third-party access on the primary and secondary rail network. This will open up the rail market for other operators to compete and improve operational efficiencies and service quality which will attract cargo from road to rail.

A key player in the implementation of these reforms is Transnet, which falls on the shareholding of the Department of Public Enterprises, as it owns, operates and maintains the majority of the rail freight network in the country. The Department of Public Enterprises as part of its responsibility for the implementation of the National Rail Policy, must ensure optimal restructuring of Transnet’s rail relates businesses to ensure operational effectiveness and efficiency to make rail an attractive alternative for the movement of cargo from road to rail.