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| **PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**  **NATIONAL ASSEMBLY** |

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 3490**

**Mr J Selfe (DA) to ask the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services:**

(1) How many persons who are sentenced to life imprisonment and who qualify for consideration for parole are still incarcerated;

(2) whether any case of the specified persons has not yet been considered by the National Council for Correctional Services (NCCS); if so, (a) why have the specified cases not been considered and (b) how many such persons are affected;

(3) whether the NCCS has put in place measures to deal with any backlogs that exist; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW4152E

**REPLY:**

1. As at 10 September 2015 there was a total of two thousand two hundred and fifty eight (2258) persons who are sentenced to life imprisonment and who qualify for consideration for parole.
2. Yes, at the outset it is important that the Honourable member takes note that members of the National Council for Correctional Services are professionals appointed by the Minister in terms of Section 83 of the Correctional Services Act, 1998 (Act 111 of 1998). They are not in full time employment of Correctional Services.

As a result of the backlog created by the Van Wyk Judgment (case nr: 40915/10 in the North Gauteng High Court Pretoria) the newly appointed NCCS meets on a regular basis; meetings have been scheduled on a two weekly basis.

The consideration of offenders for parole is not a matter that can be dealt with lightly. Considerable time and effort is put into the deliberation of individual cases before a recommendation is made to the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services. Approximately thirty (30) cases are considered during a one day meeting and fifty (50) during a two day meeting. As at 10 September 2015 a total of three hundred and eighty eight (388) of the specified persons has not yet been considered by the National Council for Correctional Services.

1. Yes; Regular meetings are scheduled in an attempt to deal with the backlog.