NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

# QUESTION NO. 381

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## INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 7 OF 2019

**381. Mr A C Roos (DA)) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

(a) What actions were taken by his department to provide services in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape since it stopped sending mobile units to those areas, (b) why do mobile units no longer operate in these areas and (c) what steps will his department take to address this issue as a matter of urgency? NW1353E

**REPLY:**

1. The Department adopted a multi-channel strategy in order to meet the service delivery needs of the citizens. This includes physical offices, mobile units and online services. The Department also has partnerships with the Department of Health for registration of birth in the hospitals. In the Eastern Cape rural areas, the Department has a total of 43 offices of which 15 are modernised to issue Smart ID cards and new passports. Over and above the 43 offices, the Department has service points in 37 health facilities for registration of birth and death located in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape. The mobile units serve as a complementary channel not as the main channel.
2. The mobile units are not operating nationwide, not just in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape. The reason for halting of the mobile units programmes is that, with the old mobile fleet being over seven (7) years on the roads, and about 54 of the units being economically irreparable, the Department is in the process of refurbishing the existing 61 trucks, and has procured additional 38 trucks to add to the total fleet. The Mobile solution was designed and tested during 2018/19 financial year and declared successful after testing and the units are used for outreach programmes while awaiting the contract for uninterruptable network solution to be finalised. The mobile units will be deployed in the hard to reach areas across the country; including the Eastern Cape once the modernisation process is concluded.
3. As indicated above, mobile units are in the process of being modernised and refurbished, and will be deployed once they are ready. However, the population of Eastern Cape has 59 physical offices located in various parts of the province to service the needs of population.

**END**