# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 3848**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 42)**

**Prof N M Khubisa (NFP) to ask the Minister of Health:**

(1) In light of the recent incidents where paramedics, doctors and nurses have been harassed or killed whilst in the course of duty (details furnished), what measures is he implementing to ensure that his department works with the SA Police Service and other stakeholders to solve the specified problem;

(2) whether there are specific incidents where (a) medical officers and (b) paramedics were victims of the specified incidents whilst in the course of duty in the 2014-15 financial year; if so, what are the relevant details?

###### NW4610E

**REPLY:**

(1) The Department of Health has worked and continues to work with the SAPS, State Security Agency (SSA), South African National Defence Force, PSIRA and various stakeholders when such incidents occur. These interventions include, entering highly volatile areas with SAPS escorts, having safe pick-up points for members of the public and engaging with the applicable communities through their community leaders advising on the role of Emergency Management Services (EMS) and the need for their safety while serving the community. EMS personnel are taught and advised to withdraw immediately if there are any signs of danger. In this regard, there are safety and security coordinators (senior police officers) in all Provinces at Cluster level, Police Stations and at Sector level to coordinate safety and security related challenges in the public health sector

Emergency Medical Services Management has also engaged with ward councillors and the communities in an attempt to address attacks on EMS personnel.

A Security Services Ministerial Task Team was established in 2011 after first reported incident which works with the departmental heads of security for the nine provincial departments. The Ministerial Task Team will continue working with the national security cluster in ensuring that the occurrence of such incidences are minimised.

(2) Details of specific incidents where (a) medical officers and (b) paramedics were victims of the specified incidents whilst in the course of duty in the 2014 - 15 financial year are as follows:

**KWA ZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DATE** | **AREA** | **DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT** |
| 26/10/2014 | KwaMakutha  Ethekwini | 13h45 PPT Unit was hijacked whilst undertaking a transfer from KwaMakutha clinic to Prince Mshiyeni Memorial Hospital. The driver escaped while the ambulance assistant together with the 2 patients and one escort was abducted. The vehicle was abandoned 30 minutes later and the patients, the attendant and escort was not harmed however the vehicle keys were taken by the hijackers. |
| 25/03/2015 | Eshowe  Mbongolwane  Uthungulu District | During the labour unrest in EMS 2 calls were logged at the call centre and ambulances were dispatched to two different locations which were Eshowe and Mbongolwane – Uthungulu District. The staffs from both ambulances were met by the so called guides and were led away. They later realised that they were being hijacked. The perpetrators removed the personal belonging and released the staff unharmed. Both ambulances were burnt completely. |

**WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE (CAPE TOWN)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | DISTRICT | DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT |
| 3/4/2014 | Tafelsig Southern Div | While loading a patient into the ambulance a member of the community opened the passenger door, and stole a cell phone of the crew member, the man had a long knife. |
| 4/5/2014 | Mannenberg Southern Div | While the crew were inside the house treating the patient, members of the community broke into the ambulance and stole medical equipment. |
| 05/5/2014 | MPDH Southern Div | While collecting a patient at the day hospital, the father of the patient became verbally abusive to the crew when they explained that a minor cannot be transported without adult supervision. |
| 14/8/2015 | Khayelitsha Eastern Div | A crew responded to a call in Khayelitsha and upon arrival, the crew were ambushed by a group of men. Both staff members were robbed of their personal belongings, were physically assaulted and sustained head injuries. |
| 15/8/2014 | Khayelitsha Eastern DIV | While attending to a child on scene, 4 males entered the back of the ambulance and produced various weapons (guns and knives) and robbed the staff of their belongings |
| 14/9/2014 | Tafelsig Southern Div | While treating a patient on scene in Tafelsig Mitchells Plain the crew member was stabbed in the back by one of the gang members. Mr Labuschagne had a bullet proof vest on at the time of the incident and did not sustain any injuries. |
| 14/9/2014 | Mannenberg Southern Div | While the crew were waiting for the escort to show them where the patient was, two men approached the crew exposing their firearms to the crew. Before the men could gain entry to the vehicle, the driver managed to drive away. |
| 30/9/2014 | R300 | While the crew were returning from the AMS base they drove into a group of people on the R300 who were throwing stones - vehicle damaged |
| 23/9/2014 | Heideveld Southern Div | A crew had loaded a patient into the ambulance, and as they drove off two gunmen approached the ambulance and held a gun to the drivers head and tried to force the ambulance door open. No one was injured during the incident |
| 5/10/2014 | Browns Farm - Western Div | While attending to a call, the vehicle was stoned, sudden violence broke out and police drew their firearms and began chasing an unknown male. |
| 21/10/2014 | Langa Western Div | While driving to a call, a group of people started throwing stones and bricks at the ambulance. The brick entered through the driver's side window and struck the driver above the right eye. |
| 3/3/2015 | Tafelsig Southern Div | Staff were held at gunpoint and robbed of personal possessions ie wallets and GPS. |
| 7/3/2015 | Macassar Eastern Division | Staff member was physically assaulted. |
| 28/3/2015 | Du Noon Western Div | Staff were threatened by a large crowd of people. SAPS assistance was requested but none arrived. |
| 31/3/2015 | Capricorn Western Div | Staff member was robbed of her bag while attending to a patient. |

**NORTH WEST PROVINCE:**

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| DATE | DISTRICT | DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT |
| 1/10/2014 | Matlosana klerksdorp DKK | Two ambulances were dispatched to a call. When the ambulances arrived the crews were assaulted |
| 1/10/2015 | Matlosana klerksdorp  DKK | Staff assaulted. As above |

**EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE: (PORT ELIZABETH)**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | DISTRICT | DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT |
| 3/2/2014 | PE | Ambulance was stoned |
| 5/2/2014 | PE | Ambulance was stoned |
| 6/2/2014 | PE | Ambulance was stoned |
| 15/2/2014 | PE | Ambulance tyres slashed |
| 12/4/2014 | PE | Crew threatened and robbed |
| 7/10/2014 | PE | Ambulance was stoned |
| 17/10/2014 | PE | Ambulance side mirror damaged |
| 26/10/2014 | PE | Ambulance was stoned |
| 11/1/2015 | PE | Attempted high jacking of ambulance |
| 12/4/2015 | PE | The crew were threatened and assailants threatened to burn the ambulance |

**Provinces with no incidences:**

Limpopo, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape Province

END.