

**MINISTRY: PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.: 3920**

**Ms A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Public Service and Administration:**

Whether the Public Service is subject to any requirement to employ (a) students and/or (b) graduate interns; if not, what is his department’s position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details in terms of the specified requirement (i)(aa) in the (aaa) 2013-14 and (bbb) 2014-15 financial years and (bb) from 1 April 2015 up to the latest specified date for which information is available and (ii) what are the actual achievements for the (aa) specified financial years and (bb) period?

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**REPLY**

Yes. The Human Resource Development Strategic Framework Vision 2015 and the Skills Development Act, 1998, provide for the placement of young people in Learnership and Internship programmes in the national and provincial departments. The intention is to establish an effective and efficient internship programme aimed at bridging the gap between academic study and competent performance in the workplace by offering structured internship opportunities to students and unemployed youths. The intended outcome of this internship programme is to enable school leavers and unemployed graduates to gain practical work experience over a maximum period of 12 months.

In 2009, the Minister for the Public Service and Administration issued a Determination on the Internship Programmes and Implementation Guidelines for Public Service.

Flowing from the signing of the National Skills Accord in October 2011 and a Youth Employment Accord in April 2013, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) issued a Circular directing the scaling up of internship, learnership and apprenticeship programmes in the public service. Through the same Circular, the scope of internship programmes in the public service was expanded to include graduates, learners seeking work-integrated learning (experiential learners), graduates seeking to meet statutory requirements for professional registration and those seeking minimum work experience for employment purposes both within the public service and other sectors.

The annual target for internship, learnership and apprenticeship programmes is five (5) percent of the departments’ fixed staff establishment on an annual basis.

During 2009-2012, annual target for the public service was 25 000 for each financial years. The following numbers were reported:

(a) 4002 in 2009/10;

(b) 19 278 in 2010/11; and

(c) 20 370 in 2011/12.

For the 2012-2015 period, the target was revised to 50 000. The target for 2012/13 and 2013/14 was 15 000 and 20 000 for the 2014/15 financial year. The following numbers were reported:

1. 17 820 in 2012/2013;
2. 27 351 in 2013/14; and
3. 40 891 in 2014/15.

As at 30 September 2015, a total of 9 320 interns, learners and apprentices have been reported to have been recruited since 1 April 2015.

For the period since January 2012 to 30 September 2015 a total of 50 988 candidates who had been recruited as either interns, learners or apprentices have been absorbed into departments on a permanent or contract employment.

The DPSA has initiated a review of the Determination issued in 2009 to address concerns raised by departments regarding amongst others, the duration of the internship programme, especially for individuals involved in regulated programmes, and to facilitate recruitment and retention of scarce skills.

The outcome of a feasibility study on the development and piloting of a graduate recruitment scheme as recommended by the National Development Plan is currently underway and consultation is also taking place with the national and provincial departments.

Proposals have been made to amend the Public Service Regulations to accommodate the retention of individuals recruited into the public service via internship, learnership and apprenticeship programmes when filling entry levels posts.