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**Memorandum from the Parliamentary Office**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 426**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 23/02/2018**

**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 3 OF 2018)**

**Mr A P van der Westhuizen (DA) to ask the Minister of Higher Education and Training:**

(1) Whether her department has initiated or undertaken any investigations into the reported leaks of examination papers and memoranda during the November 2017 examinations at any technical and vocational education and training college; if so, (a) what corrective steps have been or will be taken to bring an end to the repeated leaks of examination papers and (b) which subjects were compromised by the leaks of examination papers during the November 2017 examinations;

(2) Were all the cases reported to the (a) relevant quality assurance bodies and/or (b) SA Police Service; if so, what are the case numbers allocated to the charges;

(3) Based on the spelling and other errors in the memoranda that were leaked, which steps in the examination process and/or sections within her department are currently under investigation as probable areas for the leaks;

(4) Why was the decision taken to (a) go ahead with the original examination paper and (b) issue marks for Mathematics N3 in the November 2017 examination, despite her department being informed before the scheduled examination that both the paper and memorandum have been leaked to some candidates;

(5) (a) How many (i) candidates and (ii) campuses were affected by the leaks and distribution of the paper and memorandum for the Mathematics N3 prior the set date for November 2017 examination and (b) what is the name of each person and/or body that decided to award marks to candidates of examination centres implicated in the leaks, but not to students who reported the leaks to the authorities? **NW443E**

**REPLY:**

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| (1) | (a) | 1. The Department has initiated and undertaken an investigation into the reported leakage of examination papers in November 2017 in some Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges. Forensic investigators were appointed by the Department and they have already uncovered some evidence related to the leakage of question papers and further investigation is underway. Depending on the findings and recommendations of the forensic investigations, the necessary corrective actions will be taken, e.g. if officials have been implicated, criminal and/or misconduct charges will be laid; where there is a breach in controls, these will be improved; senior managers who allowed ineffective controls will face consequence management, etc. | |
|  | (b) | The following 5 NATED Engineering question papers leaked during the November 2017 examination, i.e. Mathematics N2, Industrial Electronics N2, Mathematics N3, Engineering Science N3 and Mechanotechnology N3. | |
| (2) | (a) | The Chief Directorate: National Examinations and Assessment shared its irregularity report with the quality assurance body, Umalusi. | |
|  | (b) | All instances of question paper leakages were reported to the South African Police Service and the Directorate: Special Investigations.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Contact Person** | **Police Station** | **Case Number** | | Lt Col LL Zulu | Pretoria Central | CAS 54/8/2017 | | Esayidi Station | CAS 765/11/2017 | | Strand Station | CAS 283/11/2017 | | Capt FF Rangwashe | Sasolburg | CAS 85/2/2017 | | |
| (3) |  | The errors and spelling mistakes on the leaked memoranda implies that it was not the final version and possibly emanated from the section involved in the drafting stage of these examination papers. | |
| (4) | (a) | The leakage was brought to the attention of the Department shortly after the paper had been written and not before as alleged. The standard operating procedure in these instances is to withdraw and replace the paper where possible. | |
|  | (b) | Where a paper has been written, marks are released if the examiners and moderators report confirms that statistically there is no indication of the students having access to leaked papers. | |
| (5) | (a) | (i) | Three (3) candidates. |
|  |  | (ii) | Three (3) campuses. |
|  | (b) | The audit of all scripts for the implicated centres were conducted during the marking process and auditors (chief markers and experienced markers) used the following criteria to evaluate the candidates’ responses:   * Similar pattern of responses across scripts, where high marks were achieved in individual questions or across all questions, which suggests that candidates had prior knowledge and/or possession of the question paper. * Any other pattern that may suggest that candidates (individuals or groups) had prior knowledge and/or possession of the question paper. * Range of marks achieved across the candidates at a centre is unusually high when compared to the previous examination(s) cycle.   After an investigation or auditing of scripts, it was found that that leakage was limited to three candidates across three campuses. | |