**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 4549**

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**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER 50 – 2022**

**4549. Ms L L van der Merwe (IFP) to ask the Minister of Home Affairs:**

Whether, in view of the large number of rural residents who have to walk long distances and take multiple forms of transport to reach the offices of his department and the modernisation of the Home Affairs systems such as the Branch Appointment Booking System (BABS), his department has any practical alternatives to those in rural areas who do not have access to smartphones, technology and/or consistent and reliable internet connection to secure themselves slots online; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details? NW5678E

**REPLY:**

The Department of Home Affairs’ Access Model has identified 778 mobile service points and the majority of them are in rural areas to service citizens; hence in the next financial year we will be buying additional mobile units to add to the current fleet and expand the footprint to ensure that citizens receive the services in their localities.

Secondly, all offices with BABS have been given tablets to assist citizens with booking and the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) is working on zero rating data requirements for government websites to enable citizens to access BABS on our website for free.

**END**