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**MINISTRY**

**JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 61**

**DATE OF QUESTION: 09 FEBRUARY 2023**

**DATE OF SUBMISSION: 23 FEBRUARY 2023**

**Adv G Breytenbach (DA) to ask the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services:**

1. What is the ratio of qualified interpreters (a) for each language and (b) in both (i) official and (ii) foreign capacity in each court in the Republic;
2. What total number of qualified sign language interpreters are currently available to courts in the Republic?

**NW61EREPLY:**

1. The DOJ&CD has a total of 2000 Court Interpreters at different levels and also at different Language proficiency levels. 65% of the total number has post matric qualifications, and the remainder of 35% still has Matric only, but are however being afforded various opportunities to up-skill themselves and be professionalized through the on-going programs that are underway.

(a)(i) 95% of the Court Interpreters in all the Courts are offering Interpretation with the Official Language of Record (English) and the two Indigenous Languages of their respective Provinces. In one particular instances, it is required that the junior court interpreters of experience less than 5 years can be limited to the Lower courts, while Senior Court Interpreters and above ranks should be deployed to the Regional Courts.

(b)(ii) There are 36 Court Interpreters permanently employed by the DOJ&CD who are offering foreign Languages Interpreting services.

They offer the following Languages:

(i) Shona;

(ii) Nyanja;

(iii) Chichewa;

(iv) Kiswahili;

(v) Zimbabwe Ndebele;

(vi) Mozambican Shangaan;

(vii) Portuguese; and

(viii) Isindau

(c) Over and above the above, there are over 250 casual Foreign Language Interpreters on the DoJ&CD Central database which can be easily accessed from the departmental Intranet.

(d) There are also 6 Service Providers who are offering Foreign Language Services with sufficient capacity to meet the DoJ&CD demand for the service.

(e) This therefore puts the DoJ&CD in a better position to deal with the challenge brought about by the current influx of foreign nationals in the country and in our courts.

2. (a) There are currently 11 qualified South African Sign Language Interpreters, who are permanently employed by the DoJ&CD.

(b) Over and above that, there are several legal entities on the central Database of the DoJ&CD, who offer SASL Interpreting.

(c) The imminent promulgation of SASL as the 12th Official Language, has urged the DoJ&CD to embark on the reskilling the current crop of Court Interpreters in SASL, and the DOJ&CD HRD has put aside funds for the SASL Training as part of the 2023/2024 programs.