

**MINISTRY: PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**DATE: 4 MARCH 2022**

**QUESTION NO.: 668**

**Dr L A Schreiber (DA) to ask the Minister of Public Service and Administration:**

(1) What has she found to be the key difference that enabled the Western Cape Government to implement lifestyle audits on all members of the provincial Cabinet within months of announcing the audits during the 2019 State of the Province Address, while the national government is still failing to implement lifestyle audits over three years after it announced the same for the national Cabinet;

(2) whether she has taken any steps to approach the Western Cape Provincial Government so that it can teach the national government how to implement lifestyle audits for members of the national Cabinet; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW806E**

**REPLY:**

1. The key difference between the Western Cape and Public Service is that the Western Cape appointed a service provider to conduct lifestyle audits and the DPSA opted to prepare policies and to develop its own system so that lifestyle audits can sustainably be conducted as part of an integrated departmental ethics management process.

In order for the Public Service to be able to conduct lifestyle audits, it had to prepare the legislative environment and adopt the required policies and systems that would make lifestyle audits effective. This included the following:

* The setting of clear behavioural standards outlined in a Code of Conduct.
* The adoption of conflict of interest laws for public service employees.
* The adoption of ethics infrastructure at departmental level to support ethics management.
* The adoption of whistle blowing reporting structures and policies and assurance that those who report corruption and unethical conduct will be protected under the law.
* The compulsory disclosure of financial status for public service employees.

The above elements were provided for in the Public Service Regulations that were amended in 2016 and is regarded as essential for an effective lifestyle audit regime.

After amendment of the Public Service Regulations, 2016, the necessary systems and processes had to be developed and implemented, with some requiring the adoption of directives, determinations and guides.

The proclamation of the Public Administration Ethics, Integrity and Disciplinary Technical Assistance Unit (PAEIDTAU) by the President in 2019 provided the necessary structure to coordinate, monitor and support the implementation of lifestyle audits on national and provincial level. With structures, systems and policies in place, the next step was to prioritise the training of role players. This required the development of training material. With that completed, the actual training of Ethics Officers started in 2021, with the assistance of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Bank and the Canadian Government funded Strengthening of Ethics and Integrity Project (SEIP). Training will continue for Ethics Officers and departmental investigators.

All of the above activities required time, and as such the Public Service became ready to implement lifestyle audits from April 2021, when the *Guide on implementing lifestyle audits in the public service* was adopted and implementation of lifestyle audits became compulsory.

As the system and processes are integrated in the management of ethics, lifestyle audits will become a normal part of the work of departments.

1. No, for reasons discussed under par (1) above.

End