###### National Assembly

###### Question Number: 67

**Mr G R Krumbock (DA) to ask the Minister of Transport:**

(1) Whether the new N3 route between Van Reenen Pass in KwaZulu-Natal and Warden in the Free State has been (a) decided upon and (b) duly authorised yet; if not, why not in each case; if so, what are the (a) details of the route that has been authorised, (b) budgeted costs for construction, (c) proposed funding sources for the construction, (d) details of any proposed (i) additional and/or (ii) increased tolls payable by motorists using the route and (e) details of the construction timelines, including all preparation work such as the supply-chain processes;

(2) has a cost-benefit analysis been conducted for the proposed new route; if not (a) why not and (b) by what date will such an analysis be conducted; if so, what are the relevant details? NW71E

**REPLY**

1. (a) At its meeting of 5 October 2016, the Political Heads of the PICC’s SIP 2 Committee endorsed the recommendation tabled for the selection of a preferred alternative for the improvement of the N3 Van Reenen Pass. It was also at this meeting where the Minister of Transport confirmed her decision to return to the drawing board the De Beers Pass project, in view of the serious concerns raised by various stakeholders in the Free State province. As such going forward the new project will be called the N3 Van Reenen Development.

(b) (a) (b) The Department is finalising an official instruction to SANRAL in this regard. SANRAL will be required to conduct a detailed investigation and costing of this preferred option along with its variations. The output of this process will be submitted to the Minister of Transport and the PICC for consideration.

(c) The existing concession contract was structured to make provision for the development of the De Beers Pass. This financial provision will now be made available to fund the new preferred option. In the event that the costing in (b)above exceeds this financial provision within the Concession contract, the Minister of Transport working in conjunction with the PICC, National Treasury and the Free State Province will determine the best funding model to cover the funding shortfall. This is imperative as neither the concession contract nor SANRAL will be able to carry the additional costs.

(d) (i)(ii) This process will be informed by the process stipulated in (b) above, and will be communicated in due course. It must be noted that the De Beers Pass was modelled not to result in additional toll tariffs.

(e) This is dependent on (b) above, which is envisaged to take a minimum of 12 months. It also depends on the environmental requirements of the preferred option, the resolution of any funding shortfall that may arise, securing the necessary licenses for water use and quarrying and the bidding process. Nonetheless, actual construction is not expected to start before 2020.

1. This will be covered in above. The timelines are as stipulated in (e) above.