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| MEMORANDUM FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE |

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 703**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 03/03/2023**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 6 OF 2023**

**Dr W J Boshoff (FF Plus) to ask the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation:**

(1) Whether (a) he will give a comprehensive update on the Aeroswift project at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research which ran into serious financial trouble and was the topic of a forensic report, specifically referring to any of the persons called out in the forensic report still involved with the specified project, (b) beneficiation of titanium is still the focus of the project and (c) the aviation industry is still the target market; if not, what is the position in this regard;

(2) what (a) is presently the key deliverable expected from the project, (b)(i) total amount has been spent on the project to date and (ii) additional amount is anticipated to have to be spent to achieve the key deliverable, (c) is the anticipated return on the investment and (d) steps will be taken to realise the goal? **NW780E**

**REPLY:**

**Question 1**

1. Despite the challenges experienced by the Aeroswift joint venture partner, the CSIR continued with the technology development and pre-commercialisation activities, which includes, amongst others, the establishment of an expanded team focused towards achieving these goals. There are no current financial challenges on the Aeroswift project.

There is no one “called out” in the forensic report that is currently a member of the Aeroswift project team.

1. Aeroswift is not only aimed at using titanium powder in the additive Manufacturing process.
2. The aviation industry is still one of the identified target markets.

**Question 2**

1. The key expected deliverables of the project are publications, support to post-graduate students, technology development packages, patents, pre-commercialisation of the Aeroswift technology, and pre-production machine.
   * 1. The DSI’s total investment over the last 14 years is in the order of R183,545 million
     2. The additional amount required for commercialisation and manufacturing of the pre-production machine is in the process of being determined.
2. The return on the RDI investment is beyond financial and cannot be quantified only in financial terms. The intent is to leverage the technology to position South Africa as a manufacturer of niche 3D printers/Additive manufacturing machines and to strengthen our local manufacturing sector.
3. All specific contractual goals have been met at this point for the pre-commercialisation of the Aeroswift technology.