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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 974**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 22 MAY 2020**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NUMBER: 17 - 2020**

**974. Ms B S Masango (DA) to ask the Minister of Social Development:**

(1) What is the breakdown of the costs incurred by Government through the SA Social Security Agency for (a) procuring and (b) having the system operational to receive applications for social relief grant;

(2) whether a new system was developed to process payments for the special social relief grant; if not, what is the position in this regard, if so, what is the breakdown of the costs involved;

 (3) what (a) business is a certain company (name furnished) doing with her department and (b) are the details of the costs involved in all business deals concluded with the specified company;

 (4) what are the reasons that her department decided to have a different WhatsApp number for applications which is now 082 046 8553, rather than continuing with the previous number used for the trial of the social relief grant applications? NW1263E

**National Assembly written Reply: 974 of 2020**

**REPLY:**

1. The costs in terms of procurement to have the system operation are:

(a) The USSD application platform was procured through the National Treasury RT 15 Transversal Contract with an estimated usage value of R15m.

SASSA has used an existing contract and service provider, Prosense Technology, to leverage and expand on existing capabilities to create and effect payments. The same contractor also effected the development of a website to receive applications and for the secure upload of banking details for the special Covid 19 SRD grant. This also included the building of Applications Programme Interface (APIs) to interface with other government datasets for the purposes of validation. It also includes API’s and other interface mechanisms to do account verification and payments. The services was procured through the variation of this existing contract with Prosense Technologies to the value of R2.9 million which includes the development work as well as monthly support and maintenance of the environment till 31 March 2021.

(b) No other costs were incurred to have the system operational to receive applications.

1. SASSA has used an existing contract and service provider, Prosense Technology, to leverage and expand on existing capabilities to create and effect payments. The same contractor also effected the development of a website to receive applications and for the secure upload of banking details for the special Covid 19 SRD grant. This also included the building of Applications Programme Interface (APIs) to interface with other government datasets for the purposes of validation. It also includes API’s and other interface mechanisms to do account verification and payments. The services was procured through the variation of this existing contract with Prosense Technologies to the value of R2 967 000.00 which includes the development work as well as monthly support and maintenance of the environment till 31 March 2021.
2. SASSA has no contract with the company Capital Appreciation and therefor there is also no costs involved.
3. The initial number was used for test/pilot purposes. It became apparent that the anticipated numbers of applications would burden and overwhelm the Covid 19 Department of Health WhatsApp Hotline. SASSA was advised to apply for its own WhatsApp line which would have taken anything between 6 weeks and possibly several months to obtain. SASSA was then offered a free WhatsApp platform by GovChat.