



HOME AFFAIRS

A HOME AFFAIRS PERSPECTIVE ON THE 2009 STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

The 2009 State of the Nation Address outlined the following key priorities that have an impact on the Department of Home Affairs.¹ These include:

- Improving services when applying for Identity Documents (IDs).
- Intensify efforts against identity theft.
- Intensify the fight against corruption.
- Improving public services.
- Strengthening the skills and human resources base.
- Putting systems in place for the 2010 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup.

IMPACT ON HOME AFFAIRS

Improving Services when Applying for Identity Documents (IDs)

Application for IDs, as highlighted in the 2009 State of the Nation Address involves improved turnaround time for enabling documents, for the 2009/10 financial year. This includes setting new targets of correctly processing and issuing IDs within 45 days for a first issue, and 30 days for re-issues.² For the Department to achieve this target, it will involve the extension of the Online Fingerprint Verification equipment to other additional service points.³ It is reported that currently the system is operational in only 215 offices.⁴ The system reduces the turnaround time for of re-issuing ID applications to under 30 days.⁵ It also reduces identity fraud related to temporary identity certificates and re-issue of ID's as it authenticates and verifies applications before the Department implements with key transactions.⁶ Moreover, the Department needs to accelerate the process of establishing 13 additional permanent service output points to increase service delivery.⁷

The issuing of a Refugee ID document within 3 months⁸ depends on the operationalisation of the National Immigration Information System (NIIS). To date, the system has been implemented in the five permanent Refugee Reception Centres. The Department should accelerate the pilot project to refine the functionality of this system currently underway at the Refugee Reception Centre in Crown

¹ Zuma, J. (2009).

² Department of Home Affairs (2009a).

³ Moosa, R (2009).

⁴ National Treasury (2009).

⁵ Department of Home Affairs (2009b).

⁶ Department of Home Affairs (2009c).

⁷ Department of Home Affairs (2009a).

⁸ Ibid.



Mines Reference. Once finalised, all five Centres will be connected and able to work from one central database. This system will prevent multiple applications as it fingerprints and photographs applicants.⁹

Intensify Efforts Against Identity Theft

The fight against identity theft involves the issuing of a smart identity card with a memory chip. Accordingly, the Department of Home Affairs intends to pilot 50 000 smart cards during the quarter of 2009/10. However the Department does not provide the exact time-frame¹⁰ The smart card allows three levels of verification, namely visual inspection, off-line verification and online-verification to ensure that the person is who he/she claims to be. This verification service will be used whenever a government grant service is required by an individual. Moreover, this card will ensure proper governance within the social grant and pension payment system.¹¹

The Department intends to launch campaigns to promote the value of all identity documents and ensure that every verified citizen who has not been issued with a birth certificate or an ID acquires one.¹²

The Department should accelerate on its plans for a more secure travelling document during 2009 Reference. Currently, the new state of the art printing machine is being tested at the Government Printing Works. This machine prints passports on polycarbonate paper that is regarded to enhance the security aspect of the document.¹³

Intensify the Fight against Corruption

As with the previous year, the fight against corruption is one of the key priorities of the 2009 State of the Nation Address. In this regard, the Department needs to accelerate and allocate more resources in strengthening the capacity of the Inspectorate Unit that is tasked with detecting, analysing and fighting corruption.¹⁴ It also intends to implement the anti-corruption plan that will ensure that every manager's performance agreement has an anti-corruption target, based on the implementation of a coherent plan.¹⁵ The Department initiatives are a step in the right direction, however it should provide time-frames for the implementation of these initiatives.

On the system level, the Department needs to accelerate efforts to update and maintain the National Population Register. This intervention will significantly contribute towards the fight against corruption as it will prevent officials from fraudulently entering individuals' details on the Register.¹⁶

⁹ Department of Home Affairs (2009b).

¹⁰ National Treasury (2009).

¹¹ Department of Home Affairs (2004).

¹² Department of Home Affairs (2009a).

¹³ Department of Home Affairs (2009b).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Department of Home Affairs (2009a).

¹⁶ National Treasury (2009).



Furthermore, the Online Verification system will be rolled out to 23 offices, 117 mobile units, as well as the OR Tambo International Airport and the Durban International Airport in an effort to improve security at key ports of entry.¹⁷

The implementation of the Counter-Corruption Plan and vetting of employees¹⁸ are still outstanding and both are crucial in fighting fraud and corruption involving the Department's employees.

Improve Public Services

In this regard, the Department should focus on expanding and continuing initiatives that have taken place since April 2008. These initiatives include: the training of new immigration recruits, training of staff and management in customer service and rolling out of an induction training course for all new staff.¹⁹ Currently, 156 new immigration recruits have already graduated from the South African National Academy of Intelligence after undergoing an intensive three month training course, and 2 500 staff members have undergone change resilience training.²⁰ The Department also intends to increase the number of agents in the Customer Service Centre due to the high demand for the services provided by the Centre.²¹

Plans to improve the front office experience for customers, includes the Department's intention to refurbish all its offices. The refurbishment includes rolling-out of smart new signage, poster frames, uniform colour scheme, aluminium window blinds, green backgrounds for all lettering and standardising light cherry veneer counter tops. The refurbishment is expected to enhance customer satisfaction, while at the same time providing staff with a professional-looking environment. Eight of the 15 offices piloted have been completed.²² Furthermore, waiting areas will be remodelled to include modern stainless steel seating and proper queue management.²³

Regarding work-related business permits, the Department intends to expand the Large Account Unit (LAU) pilot project, aimed at providing tailor-made solutions to big companies needing to import large numbers of skilled workers from other countries. On average the Department is able to issue business-related permit in five days through the LAU. The LAU was launched in 2008 with only four corporate clients²⁴ and currently Phase 2 of the project has added 23 companies. More than 100 companies will be part of the project once Phase 3 is added in the near future.²⁵

¹⁷ Department of Home Affairs (2009a).

¹⁸ Department of Home Affairs: Annual Report 2007-2008.

¹⁹ Department of Home Affairs (2009c).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ National Treasury (2009).

²² Department of Home Affairs (2009c).

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.



Strengthen the Skills and Human Resources Base

In this regard, the Department intends to put into place a project that will support national development goals by streamlining existing processes to allow persons with scarce skills to be recruited to work or to settle in South Africa. The Department should provide detailed information on this project.

Putting Systems in Place for the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup

In this regard, the Department indicated that it will strengthen the security at ports of entry and foreign offices. Furthermore, it intends to complete and implement the law enforcement strategy that will provide for professional law enforcement capacity within immigration services.²⁶

On the system level, the Department intends to pilot the first phase of the *Who Am I* Online project, which will enable the secure movement of persons during the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup and beyond. It also intends to develop analysts, special investigators, fraud detection unit and visible operations units that will ensure that immigration transgressors are managed effectively.²⁷

IMPLICATION FOR PARLIAMENT

The following are some of the implications for Parliament arising from the key focus areas for 2009 outlined in the State of the Nation Address:

- Parliament should closely monitor progress on the implementation and the roll-out of the following initiatives as they play a fundamental role in the fight against fraud and corruption, namely:
 - The ID Smart Card.
 - Issuing of secure travelling passport.
 - Roll-out of Online Verification equipment.
 - Vetting of officials is a thorough and diligent review of a prospective person prior to the decision to hire them. This process would ensure that only trustworthy officials are employed and assigned sensitive in the Department.²⁸
 - Deployment of Airline Liaison Officers, this process would ensure that airlines are provided with accurate advice and guidance on the passenger's documents prior to boarding to reduce the number of improperly documented passengers arriving at ports of entry.²⁹
 - National Immigration Information System.
- Parliament should request an update on the mechanism that intends to streamline existing process to allow persons with scarce skills to be recruited to work or to settle in the country.

²⁶ National Treasury (2009).

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Minister of Safety and Security (2008).

²⁹ Department of Home Affairs (2009c).



- Parliament should request an exact time-frames from the Department regarding the roll-out of the Identity Smart Card and the strengthening of capacity of the Inspectorate Unit tasked with detecting, analysing and fighting corruption.
- Parliament should request clarity on the Border Management Agency, as it is not clear whether the Agency will be a coordinating body of the Border Control Operational Co-ordinating Committee or part of it and on whether the Agency will have its own management capabilities.
- Parliament should monitor progress of the Large Account Unit which is a form of a work permit aimed at providing tailor-made solutions to big companies needing to import large numbers of skilled workers from other countries. This work permit plays a crucial role in importing much needed skills into the country.
- Parliament should closely monitor the Turnaround Strategy, especially the envisaged implementation of Phase 3 in 2010/11, which is aimed at consolidating all the changes implemented by the Department.³⁰
- Parliament should request a progress report on e-government. The e-government intends to reduce the duplication of expensive identification systems across government departments.³¹

PROGRESS ON ISSUES RAISED IN THE 2008 STATE OF THE NATION

The 2008 State of the Nation Address identified the following objectives as the key focus arrears for the Department of Home Affairs in 2008:³²

- To implement the Turnaround Strategy approved by the Cabinet.
- To improve information technology systems and train staff on the new system.
- To pilot the new smart identification (ID) card.
- To address corruption.
- To improve strategies aimed at boarder control and security.

Implementation of the Turnaround Strategy

The implementation of the Turnaround Strategy was divided into two phases. Phase 1 focused on quick wins and design, and has since been completed. Phase 2 places greater emphases on the implementation of the new operating model and 55 key improvement initiatives. The second phase is still underway. The following are some of the noticeable achievements of phase 1 of the Turnaround Strategy:³³

ID Production Time

There is much improvement in ID production time. At the beginning of 2008 the ID production time stood at between 90 -180 days. However, currently the average time for ID production is only 40 days.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Department of Home Affairs (2009a).

³² Mbeki, T. (2008).

³³ Department of Home Affairs (2009c).



These figures are well below the Department's 2008 target of 60 days. In addition to this significant improvement, 50 percent of all applicants now receive their ID books in less than 27 days. The Department of Home Affairs currently process 10 000 IDs per day, which constitute an average of about 200 000 IDs per month.³⁴

The entire ID production process has been transformed. In addition to the re-engineering of the production process, all bottlenecks have been cleared, and a single courier is handling all the ID pick-ups and deliveries. Furthermore, the proper monitoring of front office dispatch times has ensured that many Home Affairs offices reach the target of two days for an ID to be sent to National Population Register (NPR) for processing. The introduction of a front office checklist has improved the quality and completeness of application forms.³⁵

In addition, in order to facilitate the effectiveness of ID production, the Department introduced a Track and Trace service. This service allows the Department to effectively and efficiently monitor and track the progress of applications. This is one of the successes of the turnaround strategy and to date, 260 offices have been equipped with Track and Trace equipment. Through this electronic tracking system, the ID applicants are able to track the progress of their application at any given time by sending a query via short message service (sms) to a central number, or by logging onto the Department's website.³⁶

Information Technology Systems and training of staff on the new system

Improving information technology and the training of staff members on the new system, strongly featured in 2008 State of the Nation Address. Progress has been made to ensure the realisation of this objective. It is worth noting that the following progress has been made in this regard.³⁷

- Online Fingerprint Verification software and hardware were rolled out to more than 228 Home Affairs offices and mobile units throughout the country. To ensure that all the sectors of the public have access to this service, an Online Fingerprint Call Centre was established to assist outside offices with online enquiries.

The introduction of Online Fingerprint Verification has enabled the Department to further reduce the re-issue of ID applications to 30 days. Fingerprints are now verified immediately at the front offices. This is in contrast to the previous system whereby, fingerprints were sent to the head office in Pretoria for verification, which took more than four weeks for the process to be completed.

A further benefit of the Online Fingerprint Verification process is the fact that it enables Home Affairs offices to issue Temporary ID Certificates (TIC) immediately to those in need of ID books,

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.



instead of the 7 days as in the past. Due to Online Verification processes, which enables the authentication and verification of applicants before key transactions with the Department are initiated, there has been decline on identity fraud related cases.

- Moreover, the Home Affairs Identification System (HANIS) was upgraded with software capability to digitally capture the applicant's photographs, as well as improving the capturing of fingerprints. The upgrading of HANIS is in line with the preparation for the Identity Smart Card that the Department is currently exploring. Further, the Department's email, Internet and staff productivity applications have been upgraded and stabilised to improve staff performance, service delivery and the security of Home Affairs applications.³⁸

Piloting the New Identification Smart Card

In 2008 the President committed to piloting the new Identity Smart Card, but to date this pilot project has not yet commenced. However, the following progress has been made in this regard to ensure the full realisation of this objective:³⁹

- The identity Smart Card recommendations were approved on 30 April 2008.
- An invitation for bidder responses to the Smart ID Card tender was advertised by the State Information Technology Agency on behalf of the Department. The invitation for bidder response to the Identity Smart Card tender was advertised on 16 May 2008 in the Government Tender Bulletin. Tendering processes closed on 27 June 2008 with State Information Technology Agency (SITA) having received eight supplier bid responses. However, at the time of finalising this document, the Department has not received the outcome of the tender process in order to proceed with this process. Notwithstanding the abovementioned information, the ID Smart Card design was approved by the Department stakeholders during November 2008.

Improve Strategies Aimed at Border Control and Security

The Department's strategies are aligned with the National Integrated Border Management Strategy (NIMBS) of the Border Control Operational Coordinating Committee (BCOCC). One of the important objectives of the NIMBS is the implementation of Advanced Passenger Processing (APP). The Department leads the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster (JCPS) and it plays a crucial role in ensuring that there is proper coordination amongst the JCPS stakeholders. This initiative allows the relevant BCOCC departments to implement pre-departure passenger screening for all passengers and crew travelling by air to, from and through South Africa. Furthermore, this initiative will allow for boarding advice to be sent to airlines for passenger pre-screening purposes in order to prevent the entry of prohibited and undesirable persons through South Africa's ports of entry.⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.



The abovementioned initiative is an integral part of the Department's 3-5 year roll-out plan to be implemented at the country's borders, which would comprise the following:⁴¹

- Information Technology based and fully integrated Border Control, including re-designed Home Affairs Legacy systems, coupled with the deployment of intelligent devices, for instance, such as Travel Document Readers at ports of entry.
- Exported borderlines through the deployment of Airline Liaison Officers (ALOs) abroad and the implementation of APP in full.

The Department has made progress towards the planned deployment of its Airline Liaison Officer (ALO) network to a number of international airports. The following countries have been identified for this purpose: United Kingdom, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Kenya, the Netherlands, United Arab Emirates and Nigeria. This deployment was aimed at ensuring the fully functional network during the start of the 2009 FIFA Confederation Cup, which is currently underway in South Africa. This initiative was aimed at ensuring accurate advice and guidance to airlines on the acceptability of passengers' documents prior to boarding. In order to reduce the number of improperly documented passengers arriving at South Africa's ports of entry.⁴²

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⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.



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