



the dtic

Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 1013

DATE PUBLISHED: 18 MARCH 2022

Inkosi R N Cebekhulu (IFP) to ask the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition:

Whether, with the implementation of the Fourth Industrial Revolution providing an opportunity for the clothing and textiles industry to digitalise the supply chain, he has found that manufacturing has been forced to transform itself digitally; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? [NW1259E]

REPLY

Given the nature of the clothing, textile, footwear and leather (CTFL) supply-chain, the adoption of 4IR technologies will profoundly shape and define the future of design, production and distribution.

In the 2019/20 financial year, **the dtic** conducted a first 4IR readiness and maturity assessment pilot in a footwear firm in the CSIR's Mechatronic Unit. The results and benchmarks highlighted the gaps in firm level digital strategies and occupational skills. An assessment of 15 Footwear & Leather manufacturers will be conducted by **the dtic** in 2022 to determine the 4IR readiness and maturity gaps at a sector level.

The South African Fast Fashion Quick Response model supported by local retail chains and CTFL industry requires high accuracy in design development, time efficient manufacturing processes and time efficient logistics.

The international brands, local brands and the larger regional retail chains that provide for 70% of CTFL distribution in South Africa have already embarked on the digital transformation pathway. The department supports the development of digitisation by the industry, through **the dtic's** Clothing Textile Footwear Leather Growth Programme (CTFLGP) incentives. Technological capabilities can be further enhanced by adopting Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) platforms and tools.

-END-