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Department:  
Trade, Industry and Competition  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

### QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

#### QUESTION NO. 1312

**Mr S Thambo (EFF) to ask the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition:**

- 1) Given that the National Consumer Commission has recently announced the recall of 25 000 VW Polo vehicles due to brakes-related technical issues, how often does his department receive reports from players in the automotive industry in the Republic regarding compliance with manufacturing regulations;
- 2) whether his department was aware of the technical difficulties with VW Polo vehicles before the recall pronounced by the National Consumer Commission; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW1467E

#### REPLY:

I have been advised by the National Consumer Commission as follows:

- 1) Product recalls in South Africa must be reported to the National Consumer Commission (NCC) in line with the Consumer Protection Act No.68 of 2008 (CPA). Manufacturers or importers of motor vehicles are required to report any safety related concerns to the NCC. In addition, manufacturers or importers of motor vehicles are required to comply with compulsory specifications prescribed by the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications. These are in the main the prescribed regulatory mechanisms through which manufacturers or importers of motor vehicles are required to report on compliance related matters.



- 2) No **the dtic** was not aware of the recall before it was pronounced by the NCC. On 4 March 2026, Volkswagen Group Africa (Pty) Ltd (VW) notified the NCC about the recall of VW Polo Vivo vehicles. The recall affected 25 729 (twenty-five thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine) vehicles, which were made available for sale from February 2025 to February 2026 nationally. After an assessment of the recall notification, the NCC notified the public on 5 March 2026. There were no other recently reported technical difficulties with VW Polo vehicles before this recall.

Furthermore, I have been advised by the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS) as follows:

The mandate of the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS) includes the implementation of a regulatory and compliance system for compulsory specifications (technical regulations), in accordance with the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications Act, 2008 (Act No. 5 of 2008), applicable to motor vehicles and specific automotive safety critical components. Furthermore, the NRCS derives powers to function as an inspectorate of Manufacturers, Importers and Builders of Motor Vehicles (MIBs) in the administration of the relevant Regulations of the National Road Traffic Act, 1995 (Act No. 93 of 1995), under the Department of Transport (DoT).

In terms of the NRCS mandate, the MIBs must submit compliance documentation to the NRCS prior to a new vehicle model or variant being made available for sale to demonstrate that vehicles comply with the relevant compulsory specifications before an approval is granted for registration and sale in the Republic. The MIBs must also submit continual compliance declarations in respect of motor vehicles manufactured, imported and/or built in the Republic, in-line with the relevant standards and compulsory specifications. In addition to the pre-market approval processes, manufacturers, importers and/or builders must notify the NRCS of safety-related defects identified after vehicles have entered the in-service or operational stage.

- 1) The NRCS on average receives between 1 and 2 (1,45) in-scope recall notifications



per month. Although there are other notifications that are received, these are excluded as they fall outside of NRCS mandate.

- 2) The NRCS and the National Consumer Commission (NCC) were notified by VWSA about the technical defect on 4 March 2026. According to the notification, the defect relates to a rivet component in respect of the height specification within the parking brake lever mechanism that may, under certain conditions, affect the parking brakes holding performance when the vehicle is stationary or on a gradient (upward or downward slope), which may cause potential safety risks.

At the time the vehicle model in question was approved, the parking brake system complied with the applicable brake performance requirements, as outlined in the South African National Standards - SANS 20013-H:2005. The proof of compliance was based on the test report from an accredited test laboratory and submitted by VWSA.

Recall issues of this nature are typically identified through operational or in-service data once vehicles are in-use. As such, the issue of the parking brake lever mechanism defect only became known to the NRCS and the NCC on 4 March 2026 when VWSA instituted a voluntary corrective action.

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