



the dtic

Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 1666

Dr M Q Ndlozi (EFF) to ask the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition:

Whether, in light of the growing phenomenon of poisoned goods in tuck shops, his department will consider establishing a multi-disciplinary unit with the SA Bureau of Standards, National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications and the National Metrology Institute of South Africa working with the Border Management Authority to address the scourge of fake and dangerous goods, especially food in the Republic; if not, (a) why not and (b) how will his department contribute to addressing the problem; if so, what are the relevant details? NW2048E

REPLY:

(a) and (b)

Given the increase in contaminated food consumed by communities that has led to fatalities and hospitalisation, **the dtic** has taken the initiative to provide solutions to the national food safety crisis in-line with its mandate. This is done in collaboration with other government departments and public entities within the economic cluster; and through the National Joint Operational and Intelligent Structure (NATJOINTS), which is led by the Department of Health.

Entities reporting to **the dtic** such the National Consumer Commission (NCC), the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS), South African Bureau of Standards (SABS), and the National Metrology Institute of South Africa (NMISA) also participate in the NATJOINTS dealing with food poisoning and safety. The Border

Management Authority (BMA) is also playing a critical role in amplifying cargo inspections at the ports of entry, particularly targeting fake and dangerous goods, especially food entering South Africa.

The above-mentioned regulatory institutions are equipped to render conformity assessment of food through inspections to detect the presence of pesticides (in liquid and solid format) and testing for bacteria in food items. The regulators scale up capacity in terms of equipment as well as the skilled personnel to carry out tests as and when it is required, including the provision of awareness and training for various stakeholders involved in the food value chain (from suppliers, distributors, sellers and consumers).

The work also includes collaboration with the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) and municipalities to ensure the implementation of municipal business registration, which will encompass relevant information on shop owners and the nature of their businesses.

Both **the dtic** and DSBD have established a joint fund to the value of R500 million to support small businesses, including spaza shops in the townships and rural areas. Businesses will be supported through the fund to improve their infrastructure, regulatory compliance and capacity building. Through the interventions, the government aims to mitigate the challenges in foodborne illnesses and fatalities in the country.

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