



**the dtic**

Department:  
Trade, Industry and Competition  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

### QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

#### QUESTION NO. 5166

#### **Mr V Zungula (ATM) to ask the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition:**

- (1) What laws and regulations are in place to combat illicit trade in the Republic;
- (2) what strategies and measures are in place within his department to detect and prevent illicit trade;
- (3) (a) what initiatives have been taken by his department to curb illicit trade and (b) how effective such initiatives have been in detecting and preventing illicit activities;
- (4) (a) how does his department monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its anti-illicit trade efforts and (b) what adjustments have been made to strategies and measures based on lessons learned? NW5764E

#### **REPLY:**

In terms of the configuration of **the dtic** vis-à-vis the combating of illicit trade, it has standard setting bodies / entities on the one hand which develop standards or criteria that goods supplied to SA consumers have to comply with. To this end, the SABS does so in terms of the Standards Act 8 of 2008 and various standards that it develops to which goods must comply. The National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications does the same in terms of the NRCS Act 5 of 2008 and various Compulsory Specifications. The National Consumer Commission (NCC) undertakes the same in relation to the CPA, which cross refer to a host of other prescripts with consumer protection mandates or slant. This deliberate link to other prescripts enables the NCC to act on its own, and also, to harness efforts with other regulators.

Through the Steel Master Plan (SMP), the social partners recognised and highlighted illicit trade as one of the key threats to the sustainability of the domestic steel industry and jobs

in the value chain. To this end, a number of interventions have been made to detect, prevent and reduce illicit activity across the steel and steel-products value chain in partnership with the South African Revenue Services (SARS) as a custodian of the various legislation provisions to address the illicit trade.

- 1) The Department works within the existing broader legislative and regulatory framework to combat illicit trade in the Republic of South Africa. The South African Revenue Services (SARS), under the National Treasury is the key agency governing the controls of illicit trade.

The existing laws – administered by various government departments and the agencies – to combat illicit trade in the Republic are summarised below:

<b>Law</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Illicit Trade Aspects Covered</b>
<b>Customs and Excise Act, 1964 (Act No. 91 of 1964)</b>	Controls import/export of goods, collection of duties and taxes	Prevents smuggling, allows seizure of illegal or undeclared goods, and regulates controlled goods
<b>Customs Control Act, 2014 (Act No. 31 of 2014)</b>	Modernises border and customs enforcement	Improves tracking and monitoring of goods and border movement
<b>Customs Duty Act, 2014 (Act No. 30 of 2014)</b>	Regulates the application and collection of customs duties	Targets under-invoicing, misdeclaration, and tax evasion in trade
<b>Counterfeit Goods Act, 1997 (Act No. 37 of 1997)</b>	Criminalises manufacture, possession, or sale of counterfeit goods	Specifically targets illicit trade in fake goods infringing intellectual property (e.g. brands, copyrights)  Enables seizure, detention, and destruction of counterfeit goods; empowers SAPS, Customs, and designated

Law	Purpose	Illicit Trade Aspects Covered
		inspectors to investigate and prosecute offenders.
<b>International Trade Administration Act, 2002</b>	Manages import/export permits and controls	Prevents trade in restricted/prohibited goods and helps enforce international trade standards
<b>Companies Act, 2008</b>	All companies must now record and file information about their beneficial owners—individuals who ultimately own or exercise effective control (5% or more of shares or voting rights)	Companies Amendment Act of 2022, enacted through the General Laws (Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Terrorism Financing) Amendment Act, is a direct response to illicit trade and financial crimes. The primary mechanism for combating this is the establishment of a Beneficial Ownership (BO) register to increase transparency and expose the ultimate human beneficiaries of companies.
<b>National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications Act, 2008</b>	Ensures that products made available for sale meet the minimum requirements. Imported and locally manufactured goods must comply with the minimum safety,	The NRCS scope covers all regulated products to which a compulsory specification applies. The compulsory specifications are within the following industries: a) Automotive

Law	Purpose	Illicit Trade Aspects Covered
	health, and environmental requirements	<p>b) Foods and Associated products where in the scope covers fish and fishery products, processed meats and canned meat</p> <p>c) Electro-technical</p> <p>d) Chemicals, Material and Mechanicals covering chemicals, detergents, fire producing devices, personal protective equipment and cement</p> <p>Section 13 of the NRCS Act provides the legal basis for the Minister to declare a compulsory specification</p> <p>Section 14 and 15 of the NRCS Act – provides for enforcement of the Compulsory Specifications:</p> <p>Section 14 of the NRCS Act:- No person may import, sell or supply a commodity, product or service to which a compulsory specification applies, except in</p>

Law	Purpose	Illicit Trade Aspects Covered
		<p>accordance with that specification.</p> <p>Section 15 of the NRCS Act:- If the National Regulator finds that a commodity or product referred does not conform to the compulsory specification concerned, the NRCS may (a) take action to ensure the recall commodity or product; (b) direct in writing that the importer returns it to its country of origin; or (c) direct in writing that the consignment or batch of the article concerned be confiscated, destroyed or dealt with in such other manner that the NRCS may deem fit</p>
<b>Consumer Protection Act, 2008</b>	The applicable legislation is the Consumer Protection Act, 2008 (Act No. 68 of 2008) (CPA). The purpose of the CPA is, amongst others to protect consumers from unconscionable, unfair, unreasonable, unjust or	Section 24 of the CPA requires importers, manufacturers and suppliers to apply trade description on goods so that consumers can be able to exercise their right to choose the type of goods that they are

Law	Purpose	Illicit Trade Aspects Covered
	otherwise improper trade practices. The NCC uses the CPA provisions together with other “public regulations” to ensure the combatting of illicit goods.	<p>buying. Regulation 6 of the CPA prohibits the importation of Clothing, Textile, Footwear and Leather (CTFL) goods that are non-compliant with section 24 of the CPA. Regulation 6 also clarify as to how trade description should be applied, and which goods are exempted from compliance with section 24 of the CPA.</p> <p>Section 55 of the CPA entrenches the rights of consumers to receive goods that are safe and of good quality. Any goods that do not comply with standards set out under the Standards Act 29 of 1993 are deemed not to be safe and or of good quality in terms of section 55 of the CPA.</p>
<b>Prevention of Organised Crime Act, 1998 (Act No. 121 of 1998)</b>	Addresses organised crime and criminal networks	Targets racketeering, smuggling syndicates, and money laundering linked to illicit trade.

Law	Purpose	Illicit Trade Aspects Covered
<b>General Laws (Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Terrorism Financing) Amendment Act, 2022</b>	Strengthens AML/CTF enforcement	Helps trace and stop financial flows that support illicit trade activities
<b>Trade Marks Act, 1993 (Act No. 194 of 1993)</b>	Provides civil and criminal remedies against unauthorised use of registered trademarks.	To provide for the registration and protection of trade marks, thereby enabling businesses to distinguish their goods or services in the market, secure exclusive rights to their brands, and prevent others from using identical or confusingly similar marks. The Act allows for the creation of registered intangible property, facilitates licensing and assignment, and provides legal grounds for action against infringement and counterfeiting, ultimately ensuring brand integrity and consumer trust.
<b>Copyright Act, 1978 (Act No. 98 of 1978)</b>	Criminalises unauthorised reproduction and distribution of creative works, supporting enforcement against piracy.	The Act protects original literary, musical, dramatic, and artistic works, computer programs, films, and other original works, offering rights to creators and outlining exceptions

Law	Purpose	Illicit Trade Aspects Covered
<b>Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act No. 51 of 1977)</b>	Provides the procedural framework for investigation, seizure, and prosecution of offences under the above laws.	like fair dealing for purposes like teaching and quotation.  To provide for procedures and related matters in criminal proceedings, outlining every aspect of the criminal justice process from arrest and search to trial, verdict, sentence, and appeal.

2) The Department through the various Master Plans recognised and highlighted illicit trade as one of the key threats to the sustainability of the domestic manufacturing industry and jobs. To this end, a number of interventions have been made to detect, prevent and reduce illicit activity across various value chain in partnership with the South African Revenue Services (SARS) as a custodian of the various legislation provisions to address the illicit trade. **the dtic** employs various strategies and measures to detect and prevent illicit trade, and these include:

- Given the adverse effects of illicit trade and customs fraud on the South African economy, the former Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition Honourable Minister E. Patel and Commissioner for SARS Mr. E. Kieswetter in June 2019 reviewed government's approach in addressing illicit trade. Subsequently, the Inter Agency Working Group (IAWG) on Illicit Trade was established on the 3rd of July 2019.
- The purpose of the IAWG is to combat illicit trade in a comprehensive whole of government approach. IAWG is chaired by SARS with senior officials from **the dtic**, National Treasury and International Trade Administration Commission of South Africa (ITAC). The IAWG meets on a monthly basis. Three workstreams (clothing, textile, leather and footwear steel Industry (scrap metal) and gold) were established to combat illicit trade in order to achieve immediate impact in those industries.



- Inter-Agency Coordination: Working with SARS Customs, SAPS, the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS) and ITAC to identify, intercept, and seize illicit goods.
- Risk-Based Surveillance: Targeting high-risk sectors such as tobacco, alcohol, clothing and textiles, and steel.
- Policy and Advocacy: Strengthening penalties and tightening standards to close regulatory loopholes exploited by illicit operators.

The NCC has prioritised combating illicit trade as one of its strategic objectives in terms of the five-year Strategic Plan, starting in the current Financial Year. The measures identified to ensure the detection and prevention of illicit trade are a hybrid of proactive and reactive initiatives.

Whilst reaction to complaints ensures that the NCC provides consumer specific redress, there are instances where the NCC rarely has the luxury of having such complaints and therefore, uses them as launching pads for implementing its enforcement strategy. The NCC enforcement strategy, therefore, is a hybrid in that it has a reactive and a proactive component to it.

Detection that naturally can only happen ex post facto depends largely on the collaboration the NCC has fostered with critical stakeholders in this area (illicit economy). Together with **the dtic**, Industry Associations particularly on CTFL, various dtic entities including the SABS and SARS Customs, the NCC actively participates in the CTFL Forum. Besides actively enforcing the CPA sanctioned mandate here, the NCC periodically reviews the effectiveness of the pillars of the enforcement strategy in this area and identifies such new loopholes as are exploited, especially the Prohibited & Restricted List (P&R List), the Tariffs Handbook Code, as well as the CPA itself. In this area i.e. the R-CTFL, **the dtic**, NCC and SARS Customs have an arrangement for SARS to inspect and detain illicit goods imported into the Republic, where there is a mutually agreed P&R List of Goods. These are flagged and where they are non-compliant with the CPA, the 2011 CPA Regulations and various Standards at the time of import into the Republic, SARS Customs detains these and the NCC initiated the enforcement process. This supports the R-CTFL Master Plan of **the dtic**. To ensure comprehensive enforcement in this area, the NCC also has cooperation arrangements with the Border Police and the BMA, with the latter at inception stage(s).

In the area of second-hand motor vehicles, the NCC investigates and prosecutes suppliers of sub-standard goods, where their conduct is within the CPA purview. To ensure behaviour change and lasting solutions suppliers are subjected to prosecution, administrative fines and well as consumer-friendly settlement agreements, whether at or outside (in or ex facie curiae) the National Consumer Tribunal (NCT).

In the areas of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) and Motor Vehicles, the NCC accredited relevant Ombud Schemes.

Further, whenever new previously unidentified phenomena arise including listeriosis, price gouging that manifested during the Covid-19 occasioned lockdown, e-commerce, tampering with fuel etc, and engagement is had with relevant stakeholders and customised responses are developed and pursued.

NRCS is utilising the 80/20 principle, where 80% of the inspections are conducted at source (ports of entry, manufacturers and importers premises) while 20% of the focus is on retailers.

NRCS has commenced with a pilot project in 2025/26 on remote inspections in conjunction with the South African International E-Commerce Association (SAIEA). NRCS is also training online platforms operating in South Africa in identifying non-compliant products and cooperating with them to delist such products.

CIPC's anti-illicit trade strategy operates on three integrated levels:

- Capacity Building for Enforcement Partners - training programmes for SAPS, SARS Customs, NPA, and inspectors focus on IP enforcement, correct seizure procedures, and prosecution. International collaboration with WIPO, WCO, and INTERPOL enhances investigative capabilities.
- Education and Public Awareness - outreach to rights holders and business sectors promotes IP registration and enforcement. Public campaigns highlight the risks of counterfeit goods and their socio-economic impact. Partnerships with SALBA, PASA, and CGCSA support sector-specific compliance.
- Strategic Coordination and Intelligence Sharing - CIPC chairs multi-agency task teams to set priorities, coordinate operations, and share intelligence. SOPs are

developed to streamline enforcement, and pilot projects integrate lessons learned into future operations.

NRCS Market Surveillance Activities are centred on two elements:

- a) Pre-market Approvals – Regulated high risk products need to be pre-approved before the product is made available for sale or imported in to the republic. The NRCS therefore approves the type of product or the model and the manufacturer or importer must ensure on-going compliance. Failure to comply will lead to a withdrawal of the approval granted.
- b) Market Surveillance Inspections – Market surveillance inspections are conducted at Ports of Entries, Manufacturer Premises, Distribution Centres, retailers as well as online platforms. Market surveillance inspections are conducted to reduce the availability of non-compliant products in the market or remove any non-compliant products on the market. The NRCS on-site surveillance activities include, enforcement, investigations, testing of products, awareness briefings and communication.

3) (a)

In steel value chain, several interventions have been implemented to detect, prevent and reduce illicit activity across the steel value chain.

- **Customs Enforcement:**

- The incorporation of the steel sector as a priority under the Inter-Agency Working Group, co-chaired with SARS and SAPS, to improve monitoring of steel imports.
- Collaboration with the SARS on customs enforcement, where stricter import verification processes have been established to prevent mis-declaration, under-valuation and under-invoicing. The Reference Price risk rule was activated in August 2018 covering several tariff subheadings wherein the identification of tariff subheadings as well as the setting of Reference Prices was done in consultation with industry and labour.

- **Industry/Labour and government collaboration**

- Under the Steel Masterplan, a Local Content and Compliance Unit (LCCU) was established, whose mandate amongst others is to investigate suspected non-

compliance to designated products and other localisation imperatives; and to refer the findings of investigations and make recommendations to the respective organ of state or any other body for action.

- Awareness campaigns with industry bodies to promote compliance and reporting of illicit activities
- **Trade Remedies and Policy Instruments**
  - o Application of safeguard duties, tariffs, and anti-dumping measures where illicit imports at volumes and prices that cause injury to the local steel manufacturing. ITAC is currently reviewing several tariff lines in the steel sector as a measure to assist the domestic industry value chain in achieving sustainability and competitiveness at the back of the current geopolitical climate. This process, will also involve further import control and surveillance over 'target' products like thin gauge steel products which have safety implications.
  - o ITAC has also in the last eighteen months participated in joint operations with other law enforcement agencies bringing to bear its enforcement experience on restricted or controlled goods at the ports of entry and exit.
  - o Continuous monitoring of import patterns by ITAC to detect dumping or under-declaration, and projects are underway to increase the use of modern tools for pattern recognition and real time data analysis to strengthen trade monitoring.
- **Standards Enforcement**
  - Joint inspections with the NRCS, SARS and industry of imported steel at ports and retail outlets.
  - Enforcement against sub-standard steel imports.
  - Market Surveillance Inspections by the NRCS

Initiatives taken by the NCC to curb illicit trade are:

Market Monitoring/inspections - Routinely, the NCC conducts these in all 9 Provinces in the Country. Besides enforcing Fair and Reasonable Contract Terms, Quality and Safety of Goods, Pest Control, Licensing and Certificates of Acceptability (COA) etc., the NCC also focuses on Trade Labelling and Trade Description. These are inextricably linked and in the end focus on:

- The condition of the goods sold or marketed to consumers i.e. date markings, ingredients, directions, warnings etc;

- The premises and environment where such goods are sold to consumers i.e. licensing, COA, Pest Control etc;
- Terms and Conditions of transacting with, which immensely affect, impinge, and subsequent possible redress; and
- Essential supplier information on Till Slips or Proof of Purchase, including Registered Name and Number, Address and Contact Details, Tax / VAT details etc.

The above conglomeration ensures that suppliers operate within the laws of the Republic of South Africa.

The CIPC has implemented a multi-pronged approach to curb trade mark counterfeiting and copyright piracy, including:

- Joint Inspection Drives: conducted in collaboration with SAPS and SARS Customs at key points of entry (ports), retail centres, and informal markets. Focused on high-risk sectors such as clothing, footwear, electronics, and entertainment media. These operations are intelligence-led and often follow tip-offs or trend analyses.
- Development of a National Counterfeit Case Database: CIPC is working to consolidate enforcement data from various agencies into a centralised system. This will enable tracking of repeat offenders, geographic hotspots, and product categories most affected. The database will support evidence-based policymaking and resource allocation.
- International Cooperation Agreements: signed with the Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property (IPI) and the Danish Patent and Trademark Office (DKPTO). These partnerships facilitate technical support, benchmarking, and skills transfer in enforcement and prosecution. Joint training and exchange programmes are underway.
- Annual Stakeholder Dialogues and Sectoral Risk Assessments: these forums bring together enforcement agencies, industry associations, and rights holders. They identify emerging threats such as online piracy, counterfeit pharmaceuticals, and illicit trade in branded alcohol and tobacco. Enforcement priorities are adjusted based on these insights.

- Commissioned Research Study: Focused on the economic impact of counterfeit trade in clothing, leather, and footwear. The study examines effects on investment, job creation, and consumer safety. Findings will inform targeted interventions and be implemented via the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG).

#### Initiatives Taken by the NRCS:

The NRCS has implemented the Risk based Approach to market surveillance inspections. In essence the NRCS is targeting high risk products and known areas of non-compliance. The NRCS also have the following:

- Port of Entry Inspections: The NRCS has an MOU with SARS and work with SARS at the port of entries to minimise the risk of non-compliant products being imported in to the country
- Targeted joint inspections with SARS, SAPS, NCC, Home Affairs and other government agencies.
- It should be noted that the NRCS conducts ongoing market surveillance daily at various locations within the borders of South Africa

(b)

For the period April to August 2025, SARS through the CTFL Special Focus team, frontline port of entry and inland whole of government joint interventions completed 327 seizures of CTFL goods with an estimated value of R 257,304,256 mainly for gross false declarations, non-declaration of goods and intellectual property rights infringements.

In-case of the Gold workstream, the following achievements have been recorded:

- VAT refunds reversed from April to August 2025 amounted to R 1,008,709,460.94
- VAT refunds stopped for the same period was R 340,456,971.01.

**Investigations and prosecutions** - where there is prohibited conduct that the NCC confirms via investigations and there are neither dilatory nor absolute defences, the perpetrators are prosecuted. Conclusion of such cases depends on the legal posture that transgressing suppliers take, as some become remorseful and settle. Others take their chances. NCC prosecutions, including issuance of Compliance Notices, occur in relation to complaint-based investigations as well as a result of market monitoring inspections.

**Port of Entry Inspections and Investigation** - together with **the dtic**, Industry Associations, various **dtic** entities including the SABS and SARS Customs, the NCC actively participates in the CTFL Forum. In this area i.e. the R-CTFL, **the dtic**, NCC and SARS Customs have an arrangement for SARS to inspect and detain illicit goods imported into the Republic, where there is a mutually agreed P&R List of Goods. These are flagged and where they are non-compliant with the CPA, the 2011 CPA Regulations, and various Standards at the time of import into the Republic, SARS Customs detains these, and the NCC initiates the enforcement process. This supports the R-CTFL Master Plan of **the dtic**. To ensure comprehensive enforcement in this area, the NCC also has cooperation arrangements with the Border Police and the BMA, with the latter at inception stage(s).

Similarly, the NRCS also does port of entry enforcement in collaboration with SARS, the BMA, SAPS and other governmental agencies. NRCS collaborates with the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) model in stoppage and inspection of containers.

Additional to the NRCS inspections, NRCS also regularly participates in targeted raids (group inspections) in identified non-compliant industries, companies or areas. The group inspections are conducted in collaboration with SARS, SAPS, NCC, Local authorities and various other regulatory entities.

The initiatives by CIPC have yielded measurable improvements:

- **Operational Impact:** increased number and scale of search and seizure operations. Higher volumes of counterfeit goods confiscated under the Counterfeit Goods Act.
- **Intelligence-Driven Enforcement:** Case-tracking systems have enabled more precise targeting of inspections. Reduced duplication and improved use of limited enforcement resources.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Industry partners report improved consistency and professionalism in investigations. Enhanced collaboration has led to faster prosecution and better conviction rates.

- Public Awareness and Behavioural Change: Campaigns have increased public reporting of suspected counterfeit goods. Consumer awareness of the risks associated with illicit trade has grown, reducing demand.

NRCS Market Surveillance Activities and Investigations: The NRCS identifies a number of non-compliant products especially through investigations and targeted market surveillance inspections. During the 2024/25 FY products worth more than R700 million were identified as non-complaint across various industries.

However, there is a challenge in preventing non-compliance products from being made available for sale. There is need for stringent penalties and stronger collaboration with law enforcement authorities.

- 4) (a) Progress on anti-illicit trade efforts are monitored and tracked on a monthly basis through Inter Agency Working Group reports.

NRCS uses a structured monitoring and evaluation framework:

Performance Indicators:

- Value of non-complaint products identified, corrected or removed from the market.  
The NRCS tracks the non-compliance rate across the regulated industries. NRCS has an APP target for 2025/26 namely: 20% increase in sanctioning rate of illicit and non-compliant products sanctioned and removed from the market enabling compliant role players to access the market within the Automotive, Chemicals Materials and Mechanicals (CMM), Electrotechnical and Legal Metrology Sectors. I.e, in Q1 2025/26 NRCS conducted 9 674 inspections; issued 492 directives and removed non-compliant products valued at R153,98 million from the market.
- Number of market surveillance inspections
- Percentage of rejections across various metrics

The NRCS furthermore provides reports to the Minister on sanctioned products in terms of Section 15 (4) of the NRCS Act.



**Market Monitoring / Inspections -monitoring and evaluation** – the NCC inspections are followed up with investigations for non-compliant suppliers. Where non-compliance is identified, a matter is followed up with a formal investigation.

CIPC uses a structured monitoring and evaluation framework:

Performance Indicators:

- Number of training workshops, outreach events, and joint operations conducted.
- Volume and value of goods seized.
- Conviction rates and prosecution timelines.

Operational Reviews:

- Post-operation assessments with SAPS, Customs, and rights holders.
- Focus on compliance with the Counterfeit Goods Act and procedural efficiency.

Quarterly IGEC Meetings:

- The Inter-Governmental Enforcement Committee (IGEC) reviews progress, identifies bottlenecks, and sets new priorities.
- These meetings feed into departmental performance reports and strategic planning.

Data Analytics and Trend Analysis:

- Enforcement data is analysed to identify patterns, emerging threats, and enforcement gaps.
- This informs tactical adjustments and resource deployment.

4) (b)

- There is an urgency to review Customs and Excise Act to align to the current policy landscape and the industrialisation direction adopted as well as to improve enforcement capacity and penalties.
- Following investigations and prosecution, the NCC may seek punitive administrative penalties to serve as a deterrent. The NCC communicates widely on its actions with a view of promoting compliance and also raising consumer awareness.

CIPC has made several strategic adjustments:

#### Sectoral Prioritisation:

- Increased focus on high-risk sectors: pharmaceuticals, FMCGs, apparel, footwear, leather goods, and digital piracy.
- Enforcement efforts are now more targeted and sector specific.

#### Refinement of SOPs:

- Standard Operating Procedures for criminal prosecution have been revised.
- Improvements include faster case-handling, better evidence management, and clearer inter-agency roles.

#### Border Enforcement Strengthening:

- Resources reallocated to support the Border Management Authority.
- Enhanced inspection protocols and training for border officials.
- NRCS implemented the Border Enforcement Strategy and has over the years increased the number of personnel and market surveillance inspections at Ports of Entries.

#### Risk Based Approach:

The NRCS has implemented the risk-based approach, targeting known high risk areas and or companies

#### Online Enforcement

The NRCS has introduced a strategy to target the various online platforms and in a bid to enhance compliance, the NRCS is working with some of the platforms to enhance compliance through collaboration and empowering them to reject products that are not pre-approved by the NRCS where such approval is required.

#### Prosecutorial Support:

- A train-the-trainer initiative for court mentors has been launched.
- Mentors assist prosecutors in handling complex IP cases, improving conviction rates and legal consistency.

#### Expanded International Partnerships:

- Lessons from IPI Switzerland and DKPTO have been integrated into training and operational planning.

- These partnerships also support benchmarking and continuous improvement.

Besides these **dtic** entities, other Government departments either develop policy and/or enforce legislation that is meant to contribute to combating illicit trade. This is for different products. The Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources implements various consumer protection-oriented prescripts such as Act 28 of 2002, Act 120 of 1977 and various other prescripts applying to petroleum resources. The Department of Agriculture enforces the Agricultural Products Standard Act 119 of 1990, Meat Safety Act 40 of 2000 and a host of other prescripts with a bearing on consumer products and protection. The Department of Health develops and implements pertinent legislation such as the FCDA 12 of 1977, various FCDA-linked Regulations geared at consumer protection including FCDA Regulation 1145 of 2004 which the NCC used in Mycotoxins and Aflatoxins cases emanating from Contaminated Apple Juice and Peanut Butter. SARS Customs, sister entities such as CIPC's Counterfeit Goods Unit and many others are also integral to combating this phenomenon. In conclusion, **the dtic** recognises that illicit trade undermines industrialisation, jobs, revenue collection, and consumer safety. Therefore, the Department will continue to intensify enforcement, strengthen inter-agency coordination, and refine strategies to reduce the amount of illicit trade in the country.

**-END-**