

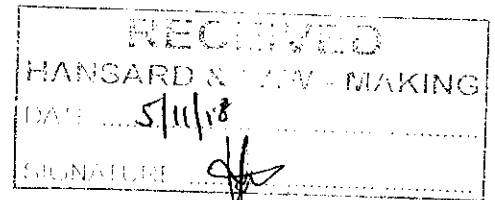
516 Hon Stevenson

State House



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The Speaker
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INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 39 – 2018 – MR R S STEVENSON TO ASK THE PREMIER

QUESTION 516 (1)

Whether he can kindly provide the precise number of civil servants that are on prolonged sick leave in the province for more than (i) 3 months, (ii) 6 months, (iii) 1 year, (iv) 2 years, (v) 3 years, (vi) 4 years, (vii) 5 years and (viii) 6 years and above and can he kindly provide relevant details in this regard;

ANSWER

The precise number of civil servants that are on prolonged sick leave in the province are as reflected in the table below:-

DEPARTMENT	Number of civil servants that are on prolonged sick leave in the province for the periods asked							
	(i) 3 months	(ii) 6 months	(iii) 1 year	(iv) 2 years	(v) 3 years	(vi) 4 years	(vii) 5 years	(viii) 6 years
OTP	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
DOH	0	6	50	12	2	1	0	0
DSD	10	5	0	1	0	0	0	0
DPW	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
DOE	95	77	64	19	2	0	0	0
COGTA	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
DRDAR	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

DEDEAT	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
DOT	1	3	1	0	0	0	1	0
DHS	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
PT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DSRAC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DSL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	113	98	117	33	4	1	2	0

QUESTION 516 (2)

What is the breakdown, per department in respect of the above instances;

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer provided above for Question 516 (1).

QUESTION 516 (3)

What is the estimated total cost to the province of the extended sick leave of these civil servants as at the latest specified date for which information is available;

ANSWER

The estimated total cost to the province R121 635 068.

QUESTION 516 (4)

Can he kindly provide reasons as to why has his Office reportedly allowed the situation to continue for such a length of time;

ANSWER

There has been general lack of understanding of the implementation and management of the policy on Incapacity Leave and Ill-Health Retirement (PILIR) as each department is responsible individually with no central coordination across the provincial administration for now.

Furthermore, this situation is exacerbated by lack of sharing information as these cases are not known as the relevant supervisors are not acting on absenteeism for long periods of time, employees are not submitting applications for incapacity leave and ill-health retirements instead just stay at home for as long as they wish without any discipline, departments are not processing applications to the Health Risk Manager (HRM) and recommendations from the HRM on time.

QUESTION 516 (5)

(a) whose function was it within the province to process these extended sick leave applications and (b) why have they not been processed;

ANSWER

(a) The management of all categories of leave is a Departmental Management responsibility and therefore falls under the purview of the individual Accounting Officer.

In each department the HR: Leave Section is responsible for document flow between the Department and the Health Risk Manager, SOMA Initiative. It is also responsible for updating the PERSAL system from submission to return of the advice all the way through to finalization of the process and payment of salary.

The HRM assesses the applications and considers all submitted information which includes medical, work environment, ergonomics and any other information submitted to substantiate the application in order to give comprehensive advice to the Accounting Officer based on which a decision can be made.

The Accounting Officer then takes the final decision on the employee's application after considering all information available, including the HRM recommendation.

(b) Delays are often experienced due to no or late submission of application forms by employees since absenteeism is not well managed primarily by line managers. There are further delays in processing PILIR applications where the applications originate from remote locations and logistical challenges cause the delayed submission to the relevant District and Head Office. Since there are inadequate monitoring systems in place, applications may delay at any stage and this delay will not be noticed. Although there are certain prescribed time frames for such submissions, these are often not adhered to.

QUESTION 516 (6)

Why has the human resources department of each of the provincial departments reportedly not been able to deal with this problem?

ANSWER

The pending court and internal disciplinary cases in particular and the lack of integration of the Human Resources, Employment Relations and Legal Services with respect to PILIR has caused the human resources unit of each of the provincial departments not to be able to deal with this problem.

QUESTION 516 (7)

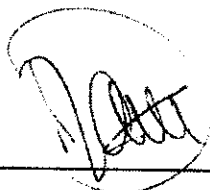
What decisive action has his Office taken or envisages to take with a view to dealing with this situation and can he kindly provide the relevant details in this regard?

ANSWER

There have been numerous strides made by OTP to educate and provide advice on the interpretation and application of the PILIR. OTP has accompanied Departments on their HR roadshows to the districts, as weaknesses in the implementation of the policy have been identified in the districts. An advocacy and educational programme is rolled out at these roadshows.

OTP hosts a quarterly Employee Wellness/PILIR Forum where topical issues are discussed and best practices are shared. OTP facilitates the interface between Departments and DPSA and cases are discussed with the Health Risk Manager.

Engagements between OTP and Departments are continuing and OTP is in the process of standardising PILIR process flows and monitoring systems within the Province.



DR P.P DYANTYI

ACTING PREMIER: PROVINCE OF THE EASTERN CAPE

02-11-2018

DATE