

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 787

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INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 8 - 2010

“Mr R B Bhoola (MF) to ask the Minister of Arts and Culture:

(1) What plans have been put in place to prevent a recurrence of the negative impact of (a) service delivery protests, (b) poor maintenance and (c) burglaries on public libraries?

NW918E

REPLY:

In South Africa, public library and information services are the responsibility of provincial governments, who render the service in cooperation with municipalities. The Provincial Library and Information Services have replied to Mr Bhoola's questions as follows:

- (1)(a) Plans that have been put in place to prevent a recurrence of the negative impact of **service delivery protests-**
- (i) Some provinces report that they have not experienced any problems with service delivery protests to date.
 - (ii) In one province libraries are sometimes targeted during service delivery protests, but the reasons for the protests seldom have a direct bearing on libraries. Where library service related problems are identified, the province implements measures to improve the service, e.g. by appointing

additional staff, or upgrading book collections. Each library was issued with a complaints and suggestions book that is monitored continuously with the purpose to improve services.

- (iii) To prevent or minimize damage to buildings, some provinces have started to erect security fencing around library buildings.
 - (iv) Service delivery protests are in some provinces dealt with by municipal officials and councilors and not by provincial officials. The MECs in these provinces, together with the Premiers, the MMCs (Municipal Management Committees) and municipal officials assist to reach agreements with communities on quality and levels of services delivery. Serious conflicts are solved by political leaders.
- (1)(b) Plans that have been put in place to prevent a recurrence of the negative impact of **poor maintenance-**
- (i) Most library buildings belong to municipalities, and are maintained by the municipalities. The maintenance of libraries is a huge challenge since many of the library buildings are old and need a lot of attention. The maintenance costs are also very high, and there is a gradual decline in maintenance due to re-prioritising of funds in municipalities and to fund only what is their function.
 - (ii) The provinces have in the past allocated funds from the community libraries conditional grant to maintain and upgrade library buildings. Some provinces have renovation, and preventative maintenance programmes in place.
- (1)(c) Plans that have been put in place to prevent a recurrence of the negative impact of **burglaries on public libraries-**

Security assessments are being done in most libraries. Measures that have been taken so far to secure libraries and to minimize burglaries include-

- i) the installation of CCTV cameras and tattle-tape detection systems, alarm systems, appointment of security staff and links to armed response units, burglar-proofing and fencing of the library buildings.
- ii) new library buildings are planned to prevent burglaries and to curb book losses. All computers and electronic equipment are secured to prevent theft.
- (iii) communities are encouraged to take ownership of the facilities and to assist with protecting the libraries.
- iv) communities were made aware of the importance of libraries and that they should be protected during the South African Library Week celebrations in March 2010.
- (v) some MECs have shown their support to libraries by publicly condemning the damage that was done to libraries during the service delivery protests.
- (vi) the Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) issued a statement in which the damage that was caused to community libraries was condemned strongly, and in which people was discouraged to participate in such actions.

8/5, 13/1/1, 13/2/1

SUBJECT: QUESTION 787 FOR WRITTEN REPLY: INTERNAL PAPER NO. 8-2010: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY:

MR R B BHOOLA (MF): PLANS IN PLACE TO PREVENT NEGATIVE IMPACT ON SERVICE

DELIVERY PROTESTS

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MINISTRY ARTS AND CULTURE

DG

Act DDG/CH

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