



## forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:  
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref: O2/1/5/2

### NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 3208 {NW4281E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 34 of 2023

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**Ms A M M Weber (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:**


- (1) With reference to the green scorpions and/or environmental management inspectors (EMIs) who are the lifeline for the environment and have done incredible work to investigate and resolve serious issues (details furnished), what are the details of the new financial constraints and austerity measures regarding the green scorpions;
- (2) how has she found that the green scorpions will be effective at compliance, monitoring and enforcement if they are short staffed and do not have enough resources to travel and investigate;
- (3) (a) what number of vacancies are there in each province and (b) on what date will the vacancies be filled;
- (4) what are the reasons that her department does not ensure that the EMIs have enough resources to ensure they can do their compliance, monitoring and enforcement effectively whilst being short staffed?

**3208. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:**

- (1) Environmental Management Inspectors (EMIs), who are designated to undertake compliance and enforcement activities in terms of environmental legislation, are employed in national, provincial and local spheres of government due to the concurrent nature of the function. The ambit of the National Treasury (NT) circular titled, *“Cost-Containment Measures to assist National Departments, Public Entities and Provinces to Close the Fiscal Gap”* seeks to implement stringent cost-containment measures in all three spheres of government. However, the NT circular makes provision for exceptions to these prohibitions in the event that it can be shown that such posts or travel are of a critical nature.
- (2) In this respect, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) has implemented processes to allow for the filling of certain vacant EMI posts identified as critical, to approve travel to ensure that service delivery is not interrupted, and to facilitate an expedited approval process in respect of certain urgent matters related to compliance and enforcement. In this manner, the DFFE hopes to mitigate the impacts of the NT circular on the critical work of EMIs.
- (3) Due to the concurrent nature of the EMI function, the information related to provinces can be obtained directly from the respective provinces. The information reflected in the table below relates to the national EMIs in the DFFE.

EMI institution	Number of vacant EMI posts	Date on which EMI vacancy is expected to be filled	Comments
DFFE	6	2023/24 FY	CD Compliance: 4 vacant posts (2 posts awaiting nomination and 2 recent posts still to be re-advertised). CD Enforcement: 2 vacant posts (re-advertising requested as no suitable candidates were found)

- 4) Recently, with the assistance of the Government Technical Advisory Centre (GTAC), the DFFE has undertaken an organisational review, specifically in relation to the capacity of national EMIs to execute their compliance and enforcement mandate. This organisational review included a workload assessment of the Chief Directorate: Sector Compliance and the Chief Directorate: Sector Enforcement, and the compilation of a draft business case, which proposes an increase in the DFFE EMI capacity to fulfil current and expected workloads. This draft business case is still under internal review and consideration.



MS B D CREECY, MP  
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT  
DATE: 23/10/2022