

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 1

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

PROCEEDINGS OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The House met at Nieuwmeester Dome at 15:00.

The Deputy Speaker took the Chair and requested members to observe a moment of silence for prayer or meditation.

QUESTIONS

CLUSTER 1 – PEACE AND SECURITY

Question 464:

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Hon Deputy Speaker, I have quite a comprehensive answer prepared, and I will of course submit it, but I'm not going to read everything; I'll summarise. Firstly, the classification of inmates is an internationally recognised practice which is utilised for ensuring the improvement of institutional security by placing the offender in

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 2

an appropriate security classification level for determination of housing needs, programming needs, and work allocation.

The process involves the utilisation of an objective structural tool which employs the scoring system to determine outcome and to ensure fairness and consistency. There is a separation of offenders, and all inmates are detained in terms of basic guidelines and procedures in respect of accommodation. The following principles apply: Male offenders are housed separate from female offenders. Offenders who are children are kept separate from adult offenders and in accommodation appropriate to their age.

Furthermore, offenders between the ages of 18 and 21 years are incarcerated separately from offenders who are above the age of 21. I also want to mention that offenders of a particular security classification are detained separately from offenders with a different security classification. Offenders suffering from mental or chronic illness or whose health status will be affected detrimentally or whose health status poses a threat to other offenders if detained in a communal cell are accommodated separately on the request of the medical officer or registered nurse.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 3

Sentenced offenders are, as far as possible, separated from each other and detained separately according to their privileged groups, which is A, B and C groups, and their medium and their maximum-security classifications. Sentenced offenders are also classified according to section 29 of the Correctional Services Act, which stipulates that security classification is determined by the extent to which the inmate presents a security risk and so as to determine the correctional centre, therefore we have a maximum, medium of our facilities and of course also C-Max, which is actually part of the maximum.

These assessments of risk inform the security classification of inmates. The following risk factors are considered during admission, the crime category, the length of the sentence, the number of previous convictions, the number of current offences and counts, time lapse between current and previous convictions, history of recent violent crimes for the last five years, the escape history, age of admission, motive for current crime, how was crime committed and the number of victims. I thank you.

Mr C G NIEHAUS: Deputy Speaker, I will take the question on behalf of Nolotshungu. The issues of overcrowding, Minister, undermine the classification that you dealt with today. We must

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 4

continue to remain concerned that it is a pervasive challenge for the Department of Correctional Services to implement this classification model.

A significant proportion of incarcerated individuals are serving sentences for minor economic crimes, often driven by the broader difficulties that face South Africa, such as the persistent gap between the rich and the poor. This contributes substantially to our prison problems and the problems for facilities that we have.

If no substantive research or comparative studies have been done on electronic monitoring and similar non-custodial alternatives have been considered, why has this not been done? Given the current levels of overcrowding and the nature of many petty offenses, will you as Minister prioritise such research and the development of alternative sentencing frameworks as a key contribution to alleviating prison overcrowding while recognising that certain minor economically related crimes may be more effectively and more humanely addressed through non-incarceration measures? Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 5

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Deputy Speaker, firstly, we must have the correct perspective when we talk about the overcrowding in our prisons. At the moment, and I can give the latest statistics in terms of inmates, and that is on 19 May, we have in our facilities 107 067 beds. We then have remand detainees and sentenced offenders. Now the sentenced offenders, the latest still 19 May, is 106 280. So, there are enough beds for sentenced inmates or offenders. Our problem starts with remand detainees, people awaiting trial. The figure for 19 May was 62 002. In a total, we have 168 795 inmates. That gives us an overcrowding of 58%.

Now if we look at the classification that is applicable specifically when it comes to sentence offenders, we have enough beds for them. So, from my perspective, if we deal with the classification in terms of sentence offenders, it is appropriate, and yes, we can deal with that. Our problem is with the remand detainees, and the hon member has referred to that and what alternative measures consist of when it comes to the remand detainees. It is a problem with our whole criminal justice system. Can I mention that in terms of legislation, we have bail review in terms of section 63A ... [Time expired.] ... Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 6

Mr M M SOKOPO: Madam Deputy Speaker, to the Minister, I'm just trying to establish whether there are measures within this JCPS cluster to address overcrowding in the correctional centres through reduction in length of pretrial detention, address court backlogs and maximising alternative sentencing and community corrections? I would make an example, in a study tour that we just had in the UK where inmates that are sentenced for less than 12 months – which seems to be petty crimes – would have tags that will monitor their movement. In that way it works effectively as a reduction to overcrowding. Thank you

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Hon Deputy Speaker, I agree with the hon member. That is a way to reduce the overcrowding, specifically referring to the remand detainees, and I personally am in favour of community service, but that lies with the courts of South Africa, not with the correctional services. We have to accommodate all the people that are arrested and sent to correctional services.

There are also other ways. For instance, I was referring to section 63A and 63(1)1 of the Criminal Procedures Act, where we can ask for a bail review. We do that. For instance, the previous financial year we referred 8 849 of these cases, but we

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 7

were only successful for 1 278. That means a success rate of 14,44%.

There are other ways. For instance, we have about 3 300 remand detainees who couldn't afford bail of less than R1000, but it is costing the taxpayer R463 per day to keep them there. People who couldn't afford a bail of R100. Now, the previous inspecting judge, Judge Cameron, started a bail fund and it has started to become operational where, for instance, a private fund has been established to pay these bails to get the people out. So, there are ways of doing that, but I'm strongly in support of community services that should be part of the sentence in our courts. I thank you.

Mr J ENGELBRECHT: Madam Deputy Speaker, to the hon Minister, the system in the United Kingdom relies heavily on probation. They have 89 000 incarcerated people versus 246 000 on probation. Sentencing of nonviolent crimes are noncustodial for the most part. Would you consider or be in favour of adopting a similar system for correctional services here, obviously with the co-operation of all departments in the security cluster? Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 8

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Hon Deputy Speaker, to the hon member, I can directly say, of course I'm in favour of that. We will welcome that, but again, it is part of the criminal justice system where we have ... Can I say that there is communication from our side with the Department of Justice in the JCPS cluster as such to see where we can, as far as sentencing is concerned, have alternatives. Probation is one, and I think we are also in the process with electronic bracelets that will actually make such sentences. If you can add that to those probationers, then you can still ensure that they can move along safely protecting the community. So I am positive and strongly in favour of that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon members, before we proceed, could I just request hon members who are now busy conversing with each other ... The air conditioners are loud, and I am struggling to hear the questions and the Minister. You may converse but please keep the volume down. I am hearing all the conversations up here.

We proceed to the fourth supplementary question, and it will be asked by hon James.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 9

Ms L M NGOBENI: Hon Deputy Speaker, I will take the question on behalf of hon James. There's a lot of focus on illegal immigration at the moment, particularly as it pertains to its burden that it places on the healthcare system, the schooling system, and the housing system. In your particular space that has also come under sharp focus with regards to the population in our prisons. My question is, has the Minister made any progress in signing of bilateral agreements for the deportation of the 26 000 foreign criminals in our prisons, which represents one out of every six inmates in South Africa's prisons? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Hon Deputy Speaker, yes, I can say to the hon member that just last week we concluded a memorandum of agreement with the government of Botswana which provides for interstate transfer of prisoners, but – and I say but – the South African legislation at this moment is prohibiting this transfer because we need an amendment in terms of the security cluster when it comes to the Criminal Procedures Act and the Correctional Services Act. At the moment they state that the moment a person is arrested or sentenced, he or she must be kept in our prisons. We are now in the process amending that. What I also welcome in the binational commission we had

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 10

last week, we've set a deadline, but not later than May next year, to ensure that we have our house in order. I would also like to extend it to the other countries, for instance Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia and even other countries, but those are the major countries. It is a negotiating process, and I do believe we can succeed and then we can send, as you mentioned the 26 500 – they differ from time to time – back to their country of their origin. Thank you.

Mr C G NIEHAUS: Hon Deputy Speaker, to the Minister, one of the worst experiences that I had during the last few years that we did oversight was to go to Pollsmoor prison and finding juvenile awaiting trial prisoners held with hardened criminals. That is a problem which turns our prisons into universities of crime. Can you do something more about managing to keep juveniles away from hardened criminals, especially those that are awaiting trial? Can we also implement, as fast as possible, this excellent initiative that had been undertaken by the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services, JICS, for the bail fund, because certainly there are many juveniles who commit petty crimes and who can be placed out without bail or with assistance of the bail through the bail fund, and finally also can be assisted by giving them electronic monitoring? Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 11

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Hon Deputy Speaker, the question is can we do more? I would always say that of course we can do more. We can't get to a situation where we say we can't do anything more. We must always try to enhance the situation where we can accommodate the specific situation. As I mentioned, of course you have categories. Children are kept separate and offenders between the ages of 18 and 21 is another category, and then above 21. However, I agree with the hon member that you get situations where for instance it is a petty crime for shoplifting or whatever the case may be, they cannot afford a bail of R300 and then get in an overcrowded cell. Then the possibility is there that he or she can then become a hardened criminal. It's true. Therefore, we welcome the bail fund but take note that the bail fund is a private initiative and you cannot use government or taxpayers' money to pay bail of people. It is a private initiative and we fully support, wherever we can, that specific private initiative. I thank you.

Question 443:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon Deputy Speaker, the assessment of the SA Police Service, SAPS, IS THAT South Africa is increasingly being exploited not only as a transit corridor for international narcotics trafficking but

also as an emerging production, storage and distribution hub for organised transnational drug syndicates. This evolution is driven by several factors including the country's strategic geographic position, sophisticated transport and logistic infrastructure, porous borders, the involvement of transnational organised crime networks and the existence of local criminal enterprises capable of facilitating, manufacturing and distribution activities.

The proliferation of clandestine laboratories, precursor chemical networks and sophisticated trafficking methods suggest a growing level of co-ordination between domestic and international criminal syndicates.

Intelligence further points to the convergence between narcotics trafficking, illicit financial flows, corruption, illegal mining, firearms trafficking and other forms of serious organised crime. Thereby posing a significant threat to national security, economic stability and community safety.

The SA Police Service through intelligence-driven operations and multidisciplinary law-enforcement interventions, continues to address the evolving nature of organised crime and narcotics

related activities within the republic. The SA Police Service has intensified intelligence-led policing operations, interagency co-operation, financial investigations, border security interventions and partnerships with regional and national law-enforcement agencies. For an example we have held trilateral engagements with Tanzania and Mozambique, discussing specifically this aspect.

Priorities also being placed on dismantling the financial infrastructure of organised criminal networks, strengthening forensic and analytical capabilities, enhancing the monitoring of precursor chemicals and improving information sharing mechanisms across all spheres of government and law-enforcement.

The SA Police Service remains committed to disrupting and dismantling organised drug syndicates through a co-ordinated whole of government and multisectoral approach aimed at preventing South Africa from becoming entrenched as a global narcotics production and distribution centre. Thank you, Deputy Speaker. [Applause.]

Ms B E MACHI: Hon Deputy Speaker and hon Minister, has the SA Police Service identified any links between the rise of drug

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 14

manufacturing facilities and weaknesses in border security interdepartmental intelligence and precursor chemical regulations and if so, what urgent interventions are being taken to stop the Republic from becoming a regional drug production hub? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon Deputy Speaker and hon member, thank you for the follow up question. Yes indeed, we have observed that and we are as SAPS working together with other agencies and regional bodies co-ordinating our joint approach on the fight against narcotics and also strengthening our capability within crime intelligence which have experienced challenges in the past. It is through the strengthening of our intelligence capability that we are able to disrupt these activities including the matter we are discussing today where discovered drugs worth R100 million because of our capability and the work that intelligence is doing. Thank you, Deputy Speaker. [Applause.]

Ms N BUTHELEZI: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Deputy Minister I would like to pose the following question to you, in light of the increasing presence of sophisticated transnational drugs syndicates operating within South Africa: What specific measures

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 15

is the SAPS implementing to strengthen cross border intelligence sharing chemical, precursor monitoring and interagency co-ordination to prevent the further establishment of LifeScan narcotic manufacturing operations in the Republic of South Africa? Thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon Deputy Speaker and hon Buthelezi, thank you, our success against transnational organised crime around narcotics will only be so when we collaborate with other agencies including Interpol, and particularly strengthening our own capabilities inside the country working together with other agencies that not only look at the issues of narcotics but also financial flows because criminals are able to do this because of their ability to move their finances around. When we intervene in that space we will be able to disable their activities. Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

Mr A D BEESLEY: Hon Deputy Speaker and hon Deputy Minister, what guarantees can you give South Africans that the drugs confiscated in recent drug bust will not find their way back into the street and destroy the lives of the youth and their

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 16

families? The reason why I ask is that SAPS has failed dismally in this regard in the past. I thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon Deputy Speaker and thanks for the follow up question. Yes, indeed we have had problems around this space but our ability to interface and strengthen our intelligence have enabled us to be able to intervene and intercept in this space. We will continue to ensure that we strengthen our policing capabilities, utilising technology at our disposal. We believe with that we will be able to cap these weaknesses that has been there within the Police which were also identified. Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

Ms M MODISE-MPYA: Hon Deputy Speaker and hon Deputy Minister, would you kindly expand on whether the SAPS has conducted an assessment of or an investigation in other provinces regarding the transport corridors, ports of entry or economic sectors that are increasingly being exploited by transnational syndicates for drug production and whether the crime intelligence will be involved to detect and disrupt these networks before laboratories become operational? Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 17

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon Deputy Speaker and thank you hon member for the follow up question. Yes indeed, I can confirm that we have the capacity and the ability at SAPS to ensure that we interrupt activities of this nature should they arise in other provinces.

The discovery that has happened in the North West was not an accident. It was because of the work that we are doing and because of the strengthening of the intelligence work within SAPS has enabled us to discover this. It is not only in North West. In Limpopo in Groblersdal, we did make great discovery of a narcotics facility. So, we believe that the continued strengthening of our intelligence capability will make policing possible an incident of this nature we will be able to detect them and disrupt them. Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker.

Ms B E MACHI: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon Minister, in the light of the evidence that organised drugs syndicate exploit vulnerable communities through recruitment, corruption and intimidation: What measures are being taken to identify the protection of communities, municipal officials and the law-enforcement officers who may be at high risk of capture or questioned by

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 18

transnational criminal networks operating within the Republic?

Thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon Deputy Speaker, indeed the problem of crime in most instances affect vulnerable communities. That is why when you look at crime patterns in the country the most affected are vulnerable communities. Affluent suburbs are rarely affected by crime. That is why we developed the Integrated Violent Crime Prevention Strategy which is a whole of government approach to the fight of crime. If we develop our economy, we create opportunities for people to get employment. We create recreation facilities for our young people. We will definitely move them away from the streets and therefore the issue of vulnerability will cease to exist. We will have stronger communities that cannot be exploited by criminal networks. In that way we will be able to protect our communities against these criminal cartels. Thank you very much, hon Deputy Speaker.

Question 496:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Hon Deputy Speaker and hon members, the Department of Defence prioritises the physical security of military

installations, many of which are classified as national key points and critical infrastructure in order to safeguard national security and prevent catastrophic breaches. These measures are aimed at preventing the theft of highly sensitive material, intelligence, military equipment, weapons and ammunition while also protecting surrounding communities and personnel from operational hazards. The critical function is ensured through the implementation of standing-based security measures as prescribed within departmental policies and security frameworks.

While these measures continue to be implemented, certain aspects such as the upgrading of perimeter fencing and adequate lighting infrastructure remain constrained by prevailing financial limitations.

With regard to the reprioritisation of discretionary expenditure items, the department took a strategic decision during the previous financial year to redirect allocated funds towards critical operational requirements in order to strengthen core operational capabilities and improve force readiness. The prioritisation process included reductions and adjustments in certain discretionary spending areas in favour of operational

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 20

imperatives essential to the effectiveness of the SA National Defence Force.

As part of this process, the Border Safeguarding Optimisation Programme received funding amounting to R498 million. As far as the funding of operational capabilities, yes, arising from the continuous engagement between the Department of Defence and the Department of Finance through the National Treasury, the department was able to secure earmarked funding allocations for critical defence capabilities. These allocations include R557 million earmarked for border safeguarding, technology and vehicles. Secondly, R427 million earmarked for air force to maintain fighter capability. Thirdly, R607 million earmarked for the Navy to repair and maintain naval platforms. Lastly, R80 million was earmarked to provide uniforms for military personnel. Thank you.

Mr W T D PLAATJIES: Hon Deputy Speaker, I will take it on behalf of the Munyai. Deputy Minister, with all that you said: What measurable and notable improvements in the physical security of military bases and equipment has the department achieved over the last past 12 months? For example, progress in reducing the security systems, strengthening parameter controls, enhancing

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 21

surveillance, coverage of the borderlines and the audit of compliance improving as the department?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker and hon member. The Department of Defence has allocated funds to address these critical areas as I've said earlier on. The difference when you buy equipment for the Defence is not like you are buying a grocery at Woolworths. You place orders and they take time, but the National Treasury and the Department of Defence assist with this situation, especially where you see that some of the military bases there is absolutely no fence and things have fallen down. So, we are addressing that. Thank you.

Mr C HATTINGH: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Minister, given the repeated thefts, break-ins and security breaches at the military bases all over the country, from Simonstown to Limpopo, including incidents involving the theft of weapons, ammunition and critical infrastructure even a cable dug out from a metre deep within the security area of Wallmannsthal Military Base: What measurable reduction targets have been set for security breaches for this financial year, 26-27? When will Parliament receive a progress report? Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 22

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Thank you , hon Deputy Speaker. Hon member, the progress report will be provided as soon as possible. Now, what we need to do in light of what you have asked is to ask the commander of the SA National Defence Force to present a detailed plan so that we can avoid these shenanigans which are taking place.

Question number one would be in their own minds. Who is actually doing this exercise? Is it internal? Is it external? Is it part of sabotaging the capacity of the Defence? I cannot give you those details right now because I don't have the answers right away. What I have and what I know is that the Department of Defence has asked the commander of the SA National Defence Force to talk to his colleagues, the person in charge of Navy, Air Force, Army as well as the SA Maritime Safety Authority, Samsa, to tighten up the security of their military bases.

Xitsonga:

Tat S M GANA: Ndza khensa Mutshamaxitulu...

English:

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 23

... in the full sitting of the National Assembly. Let's once again congratulate the three times table champions of South Africa, Orlando Pirates.

Deputy Minister, there is this depot in Centurion, the main ordinance depot. In an on and on basis it faces break-ins and arms and ammunitions are being stolen from this base. I want to check from you, regarding the recent, "break-ins": Have you been briefed in terms of what happened there? What measures are being done to instal? Is it so difficult to instal a proper fence around that facility? Have you or the department interviewed the people in charge of those facilities to understand what really happened on that particular day?

Xitsonga:

Ndza khensa swinene, Mutshamaxitulu.

English:

Up the Bucs!

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Deputy Speaker, on a serious note, last year, we visited this base with the Minister. And we identified the areas

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 24

and the perimeters of that base. We found that the fence has broken down. An instruction was given by the Minister to the chief of logistics to make a plan by making sure that we get more money to fence the base off and protect the ammunition which is there.

As far as the latest break-ins, I have not been briefed other than to be told that the enquiry is underway. I am waiting for that enquiry - the results of the board of enquiry.

Ms B E MACHI: Thank you very much Deputy Speaker. Hon Deputy Minister, has the department assessed the risk that poorly secured military infrastructure and a string equipment could become targets for organised criminal syndicates or arms trafficking networks? And if so: What preventative measures are being implemented? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Hon Deputy Speaker, we have asked the chief of logistics as well as the chief of the SA National Defence Force together with the Secretary for Defence to submit a plan, the cost that plan in particular, so that we can approach the Department of Finance with a view of getting money to protect

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 25

these bases. The situation is dire in that area. I don't know what happened in the past as to why these institutions or bases were left unguarded and protected.

So, it is underway. The Department of Finance and the Department of Defence are assisting with the situation. Thank you.

Mr W T D PLAATJIES: Deputy Minister, with all that you've said and the measures that you are putting into the security systems: Is your department willing to reconsider the private security at our key points?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Deputy Speaker, well, that one is very difficult. But even our head office at the Armaments Corporation of South Africa, Armscor, building we are guarded by private security. That was an issue which I raised at the beginning when I arrived at that base.

But now that you are raising it in this platform, mine would be to submit a comprehensive report and the fears about exposing the Department of Defence wherein we hire private security yet we have troops. Leave it to me and I will report back to the

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 26

portfolio committee as to what I have done. I will also give you a copy of the report which I'll be submitting to the powers that are there in the department.

Question 433:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Deputy Speaker, the appointment of the acting incumbents in the post of national commissioner and deputy national commissioner has not had a negative impact on organisational stability or disciplinary enforcement and procurement oversight. The acting incumbents in these positions have been carefully selected and they possess the requisite skills and experience to fulfil the mandate of these positions.

Furthermore, the acting incumbents are supported by a strong and experienced leadership collective across the organisation to ensure that the department executes its constitutional mandate. It is worth mentioning that these posts cannot be filled with a permanent post as the positions are temporarily vacant as a result of the current incumbents being on suspension.

It was necessary for the leadership of the SA Police Service, to appoint acting personnel in this regard because not appointing

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 27

it was to lead to exactly what hon Maimane has asked will happen being instability, ill-discipline and affect the agency as a consequence.

The SA Police Service have, however, prioritised the filling of senior management posts, where the positions are permanently vacant due to retirement, resignation, etc. Lt-Gen Dimpane, who is our current acting National Commissioner, was appointed with effect from 23 April 2026. She has extensive experience in policing, financial management, governance and strategic leadership.

A key priority for the acting national commissioner is to address identified weaknesses in procurement systems, implementing reforms that will contribute to the broader restructuring of public procurement and to strengthen controls to ensure procurement processes are safeguarded against manipulation. Thank you, hon Speaker.

Dr M A MAIMANE: Deputy Minister, I think both you and I could agree that the SA Police Service cannot become Hollywood with too many actors. The police morale now sits at 57% confidence, as per your own report. So, the effect of having acting people

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 28

is already within the police. So, since 1994, Deputy Minister, we've only had one police commissioner complete their term.

Jackie Selebi was suspended because there were allegations of corruption. Beki Cele then succeeded him and was also suspended with concerns of conduct. Riah Phiyega, after the Farlam Commission, said we need to investigate her fitness to hold office. Khomotso Phahlane was first to resign because of allegations of fraud and money laundering. Khehla Sithole was presided over a breakdown in trust in terms of police. Now, today, Fani Masemola is now embroiled in another court related dispute.

Deputy Minister, to be fair to the South Africans, at some point you think it's an accident. Now, you will suddenly believe it is policy. You have an acting commissioner now who will preside over. If the movie continues like this, you will have a police commissioner who, only as a matter of time, will also be forced to resign because of corruption. Deputy Minister, let us end the movie.

I want to ask you and your department, what recommendations have you done to the President to ensure that we stop this cycle,

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 29

produce accountability and transparency in appointing the next national police commissioner and how far are you on that process? Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thank you, hon Maimane for the follow-up question. Yes, indeed, what you are raising about what transpired after General Fivaz within the police is true. It has happened, it's known, it's a fact and we are here where we are now.

However, what is also a fact is that the SA Police Service from pre-1994 have been an institution that was the backbone of the apartheid machinery. Post-1994, a process of transformation did not completely transform this institution to what it is supposed to be. In a democratic dispensation, it must play that similar role of being the backbone of the democratic project.

Given the fact that the process of transformation has not been fully completed, as I speak, we have not concluded the process of integrating the nonstatutory forces, a process which was started in 1994. This is a clear reflection that we still have a long way to go but we are determined to correct the past so that we create a South African police service that serves the needs

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 30

of our people. The issues of accountability and transparency, the President has already led in this regard.

The current national commissioner who, of course, unfortunately is on suspension, his appointment was done different from the previous appointments, which has heralded a new approach by President Ramaphosa on how issues of this nature will be handled. I'm quite confident, depending on the outcome of what the processes will yield, the process of appointing a new commissioner, if that arises, the President, like he has done already, he will do an open process through his office and make the necessary decisions on what needs to be done. Already ... Thank you. [Time expired.]

Ms J L MOKOENA: Deputy Minister, given that the current acting appointments arise from ongoing internal investigations and are relatively recent rather than prolonged, what measures have been put in place to ensure continuity of leadership, organisational stability and effective oversight while these investigations are underway, particularly in relation to disciplinary processes and procurement control within the SA Police Service? Thank you,

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 31

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thank you, hon Mokoena for the question. Indeed, to address continuity in leadership to ensure that there is stability, the President appointed Lt-General Dimpane as the Acting National Commissioner. Lt-General Dimpane is part of management as we speak. She is the chief finance officer, CFO, of the SA Police Service.

Her appointment ensures and guarantees that there should be continuity. I have already said that there is a process to ensure that procurement is reformed and handled in such a manner that it does not create the problems that we find ourselves with. What we are experiencing today, we all know that the national commissioner is on suspension due because of the procurement challenges that we are confronted with.

So, there is a need to professionalize how we procure our services and we believe Lt-General Dimpane is capable of leading that process to ensure that there is transparency and change on how to procure goods because this has been a weakness within the SA Police Service. Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 32

Ms L M SCHICKERLING: Hon Deputy Minister, so many of the members that are on suspension are nearing pensionable age and it is a concern. To what extent have delays in finalising disciplinary proceedings resulted in implicated officials reaching retirement or pensionable age without accountability processes being concluded? What financial implications has this had for the state in terms of pension payouts and benefits? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thank you, hon Schickerling. The financial implication will be determined, I think, at the time that these suspensions are concluded. We have agreed in the Ministry and the department that disciplinary processes will not take forever. We have had experiences of people who are on suspension for over a period of a year, some over a period of two years.

We have agreed together with management, that there is a need for the SA Police Service to have a standing committee that deals specifically with disciplinary matters so that we start a disciplinary process and within a short space of time, we conclude it. I believe that once that mechanism is put in place, we will be able to speedily do away with issues that need disciplinary processes.

Of course, the issue of people, many that are appearing who are of a pensionable age, that is a matter that we might not be able to avoid because, incidentally, it happened to be the case. Nevertheless, we will speed up the processes of a disciplinary committee to ensure that we don't delay and we handle things in such a manner that we are not badly affected as an organisation. Thank you, Deputy Speaker.

Ms N V MENTE-NKUNA: Hon Deputy Minister, if we were to ask the Madlanga Commission to expand their mandate into the police and look into the capacity of the police as well as the impact they have into the delivery of cases that are successfully prosecuted in court, it will lead us to the finding that the substantial amount of vacancies in the police generally, which then leads to stress as well as the low morale.

Now the question I have is, have you looked into the statistics to fill up all the vacancies within the police, in particular the Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences, FCS, unit and your violent crime units, where we find that in rural areas and in townships in particular, when you call on the police stations, you will be told that there is only three

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 34

police vans available because there are no personnel to drive whatever vans that are available? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thank you, hon Mente for the question. Of course, the extension of the probe by Madlanga Commission, I think, if recommendations are made and the President sees it fit to do so, he will do that.

However, to understand the state, the vacancies in SA Police Service or the personnel in the SA Police Service, we know that there is a shortage. We have not recruited in a manner that complements the retirement that happens annually. We approached the President in the past, in the Sixth administration to increase our capacity to train personnel in our colleges.

Generally, we are training 5 000 in our colleges. The President allowed us to train an extra five, which meant that we trained 10 000 officers in the past three years, which our academies could not even accommodate. We had to approach the army to request to use their facilities, which they obliged, so that we can train this project, which we call project 30 000.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 35

For the past three years, we were able to recruit 30 000 trainees who went into different units within the SA Police Service. However, as we speak, the number has gone down and we have agreed that we must still go back to the President to allow us to continue with the recruitment of 10 000 per annum, because annually we lose plus minus 4 000 people through retirement.

If we only recruit 5 000, it effectively means we are increasing by 1 000 per annum, which will not address the shortcomings that we have. The number of officers that we have today is less than what we had in 2010. So, you can see the gap of what happened between 2010 and 2022 when the ... Thank you. [Time expired.]

Dr M A MAIMANE: Deputy Minister, for your own report, it says you lose 6 000 every year, so you are in fact going backwards and people are dying and crime is out of control. So, Deputy Minister, as a follow up, I want to make practical suggestions.

You are correct when you say President Ramaphosa took a different view, but here is my problem. We are at the mercy of President Ramaphosa. Another President could come in and really say it is my provide to choose whom I like. So, can I suggest. One, let us open the process to the public. Two, let us appoint

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 36

the national police commissioner the same way we do judges, have a panel sit and interview them.

Three, let us have Parliament be involved so that we can hold these people accountable, so that the SA Police Service will know when we've appointed a national police commissioner we have somebody that enjoys the trust of citizens. Otherwise, Deputy Minister, I think we can both agree, another President could appoint another crook in the police and we will end up with more commissions but crime going up. Thank you, Deputy Speaker. [Time expired.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much. Hon Deputy Minister, that is a comment and you can respond if you wish.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Maybe we should treat it as a comment, Deputy Speaker. However, I would say that appointment of accounting officers can't be subjected to a Parliament sitting to appoint that. I think the President must exercise his prerogative together with the executive. Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker.

Question 477:

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 37

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Hon Deputy Speaker and hon members, following the approval by Cabinet of the blueprint plan for the SA National Defence Force termed the Journey to Greatness Plan, the Department of Defence will schedule engagements with Parliament on this matter. Following a portfolio committee meeting this morning, the 15th of June has been identified as the final possible date for these engagements to take place.

Given the strategic significance and broad scope of the Journey to Greatness Plan, discussions are likely to extend across a multitude of issues which may necessitate more comprehensive engagements with Parliament.

For this reason, joint scheduling and proper coordination between Parliament and the department on the Journey to Greatness Plan remain of cardinal importance. The SA National Defence Force, SANDF, evolution strategy and plan concept articulate a systemic and phased increase in defence allocations from the current level of approximately 0,7% of the gross domestic product, GDP.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 38

Discussions with the National Treasury are underway. This strategic trajectory received Cabinet's approval on 6 May 2026. Furthermore, the Department of Defence and National Treasury must still engage further in order to fully determine the modalities, funding mechanism and practical implementation framework associated with this long-term funding trajectory.

Hon members, As you are aware, in 1998 that the government of South Africa took a decision to invest more on social security as opposed to investing on military security. As a result of that, the Department of Defence has been defunded for almost 15 to 20 years, but that must be a thing of the past because the security threat to South Africa warrants us that we must spend and make sure that the Department of Defence or the SANDF state of readiness is in place and guaranteed.

Thank you.

Mr C HATTINGH: Hon Deputy Minister, if the Department of Defence Journey to Greatness Plan is mature enough to guide the Armaments Corporation of South Africa, Armscor, Corporate Plan tabled before Parliament on 1 March 2026 and more than two months before it was accepted by Cabinet on 6 May, why was

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 39

Parliament not provided with this document despite requesting it repeatedly and before being expected to exercise oversight over plans already aligned to it?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Hon member, you must remember that issues related to security are normally not rendered early before the National Security Council has put a stamp of approval on that. We couldn't bring that plan before it has gone to the National Security Council or sent to the President and the Cabinet.

That is history now. You will receive the document before 15 June as we agreed. So, I'm not going to waste your time. That's history.

Mr M M HALA: Hon Deputy Speaker, hon members, can the hon Deputy Minister outline the main priorities and phases for the Journey to Greatness Plan aimed at modernising and strengthening the SA National Defence Force in particular?

What progress can we expect over the short to medium term in relation to the capability and enhancement force readiness and institutional renewal? Furthermore, how will the implementation

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 40

of this plan improve the SANDF's ability to respond effectively to both domestic and regional security challenges while ensuring that the Defence Force remains prepared, disciplined and capable in the years ahead?

Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Deputy Speaker, I can see that the hon member is curious about this plan being presented to them. But the key here is that the Department of Defence and in particular the SANDF has been defunded for many years and we have been found wanting in a number of operations in this country. I'm not going to give you details. Wait until we present the plan to you.

However, all you need to know is that this plan is going to address the short term, medium to long term. The short term will depend on the threat analysis which has been presented by the State Security Council to the Cabinet and what priorities are there for the defence. You are aware that we are currently assisting the police in order to deal with the high levels of crime.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 41

So unfortunately, I am unable to provide you with details on that part. Wait for the proper presentation when it is tabled to your portfolio committee.

Thank you.

Mr P KUBUKELI: Hon Deputy Minister, this binding agreement between your department and the National Treasury, to me, becomes piecemeal when set against more than 20 years of repeat adverse findings by the Auditor-General.

Findings that neither Defence nor Treasury have resolved. And not forgetting, Minister, that Public Works has its fair share in the failures that prevent Defence from meeting even the minimum national security compliance standards.

Would the Minister be open to establishing an independent external task team, outside Defence, Treasury and Public Works, with the authority to subpoena and the independence not to be intimidated by the generals, especially given that even the Defence boards of inquiry now appear complicit in shielding wrongdoing? We are not calling for a Madlanga Commission,

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 42

Minister. We want a practical vehicle that can finally address the incompetence, the negligence and transgressions.

Thank you. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Hon Deputy Speaker and hon member, the answer is yes, we can do that. But what I would suggest you do as a Member of Parliament, in the portfolio committee that you are serving in, that of Defence, is to write a formal letter to us and ask the Minister of Defence to do exactly what you are suggesting.

In particular, that task team should have powers to subpoena any member and also the terms of reference must be clarified when you approach the Department of Defence. It's true. About five years ago, we received adverse findings from the Auditor-General and some of the members who were responsible for this mess are no longer in the Defence Force.

You will also recall that we are still dealing with the corruption-related cases where the Special Investigating Unit, SIU and the Hawks are busy engaging the Department of Defence. Unfortunately, these allegations also affected the former

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 43

Minister of this Department. So, yes, we need that task team as of yesterday.

Thank you.

Mr C G NIEHAUS: Hon Deputy Minister, we were all excited to hear this morning that the 15th of June is the time to present the Journey of Greatness Plan. But unfortunately, your answer this afternoon is pouring cold water on my expectations.

Surely, Deputy Minister, you are aware that tabling the Journey to Greatness Plan in Parliament without a comprehensive costing and you say that those modalities are still under discussion in Cabinet and a detailed implementation plan will render the exercise futile and risk the plan suffering the same fate as the unimplemented 2015 Defence Review.

Surely, Deputy Minister, you will agree that it only makes sense to come and table to the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans the Journey to Greatness plan with a full costing and a detailed implementation schedule.

Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 44

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): Hon Carl Niehaus, relax, my brother. We are going to give you the estimated costs for short term, medium to long term on the plan we are going to table. But we will continue to engage the National Treasury. We cannot wait until we have briefed the portfolio committee, but there are figures, you will see them.

Thank you.

Mr C HATTINGH: Hon Deputy Minister, after more than a decade of the unfunded 2015 Defence Review, which was accepted by this Parliament, by Cabinet, and applauded by everyone, can you identify a single binding commitment from National Treasury that will increase the Defence funding or are we once again being asked to oversee plans that have no funding behind it?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND MILITARY VETERANS (Mr B H Holomisa): I think for the first time we have followed the processes correctly in that the money we are asking for has been approved by National Security Council. It has also been approved by the Security Cluster as well as the Cabinet.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 45

So, let us give the Minister of Finance an opportunity to comply with Cabinet's directive. Otherwise, if he is still going to apply delaying tactics, then I don't think we should have him as a Minister of Finance anymore because the President issued a directive to say let us move away from 0,7% to 1,5% of the GDP in order to address the backlogs and imbalances within the Department of Defence which were caused by us, as government, by redirecting the monies which were scheduled to help the Defence to other social related matters which were urgently needed at the time.

The instruction now is that the National Treasury, the Department of Defence has been prioritised. So let us give the Minister a chance to put a flesh into the skeleton.

Thank you.

Question 499:

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. Despite the constrained budget environment, the department will continue to prioritise activities that deliver the greatest value for South Africa's foreign policy and economic interests. Planned engagements will

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 46

be undertaken through our existing network of missions abroad, in partnership with other government departments, agencies, and stakeholders. The department will continue to reprioritise resources where necessary to ensure that key economic diplomacy, tourism promotion, and bilateral engagement targets are achieved within the available budget.

Xitsonga:

Vatsonga vari: Vana va munhu va tsemelana nhloko ya njiya.

English:

It is within this context that we will do our best with the resources we have. I understand that this idiom exists in all vernaculars.

Sesotho:

Ka Sesotho ba re, bana ba motho ba ngwathelana hlooho ya tsie.

English:

So, this is our reality. We will have to ensure that one family can live with one head of a locust.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 47

Mr M S MOELA: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Minister, given the constrained fiscal environment and the growing demands of South Africa's foreign policy, how is the department ensuring that this economic diplomacy and bilateral engagement initiative translates into measurable outcomes, such as increased trade, investment, tourism growth, and stronger strategic partnerships for our country?

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. During the year 2025/26, we participated in various multilateral United Nations, UN, platforms, which contributed to peace and security across the globe. We also hosted the G20 in South Africa, which delivered a declaration with tangible outcomes relating to disaster resilience, recovery, debt sustainability, energy security, and critical minerals, with a focus on Agenda 2063.

We continue to support efforts for democratic elections in South Sudan. We are also supporting economic diplomacy initiatives in trade and investment, as many members have seen, with the President hosting an investment conference with the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, DTIC, which we have also

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 48

supported through our various missions. Our work continues to serve the national interest of the Republic of South Africa.

Mr R SMITH: Thank you, hon Deputy Speaker. Minister, the 2026/27 budget also includes the provision of humanitarian aid to Cuba amounting to several tens of millions of rand, despite a loan granted to Cuba in 2018. South African foreign policy is intended to uphold the constitutional principles of freedom, democracy, and human rights. However, Cuba is a totalitarian communist dictatorship and has been since 1959.

Can the Minister explain to this House why South Africa is providing aid to a country that violates every value and principle enshrined in our Constitution?

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. The Renaissance Fund Act allows South Africa to provide humanitarian aid to any country in the world, including Cuba. We are also currently providing five million US dollars, to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, to support the fight against Ebola and assist the African continent in recovery, as we recognise that pandemics know no borders.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 49

Through the Renaissance Fund, we have also contributed to disaster response efforts in Mozambique, which, as you know, is our neighbour. When disasters occur, they can also lead to migration. Therefore, South Africa must be prepared to respond to any humanitarian situation anywhere on the African continent and globally, including in Cuba or in any area experiencing distress. Thank you very much.

Mr W M DOUGLAS: Thank you, Speaker. Minister, with only a 2% increase in the budget, can you explain when South Africans can realistically expect a shift from an outdated, symbolic, diplomatic, activity-based model of recording the number of meetings attended, conferences held, and so on, to a measurable developmental outcomes-based approach, such as how many jobs were created through foreign direct investment, and how many black industrialists gained opportunities in foreign markets?

Under the current Government of National Unity, GNU, with an austerity-driven budget, ongoing financial constraints, and continued vacancy freezes, does he agree that a budget claiming to prioritise economic diplomacy, without funding that transition, risks becoming little more than a public relations exercise?

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 50

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION: Thank you very much. As I have already said, the investment conference is measurable. It was announced that more than R2 trillion is expected to flow, and there are already tangible projects resulting from that investment conference that you can visit, inspect, and see happening in various areas of our country, including investments by Toyota, BMW, various mines, and other processing plants. You can see and touch them, they are not just symbolic or diplomatic missions. There has also been clear investment by the European Union in our green transition processes and energy sector. Therefore, it is not accurate to say that these are merely symbolic. You can count the money, you can count the investment, you can also flow look into the economic growth impact of foreign direct investment into South Africa, including the jobs that this foreign direct investment is creating.

Not only that, our peace efforts in the Eastern DRC, although it is a challenging environment, are visible, with South Africa present and encouraging dialogue. Our ongoing process in South Sudan, assisting them towards their first democratic election, is contributing to a democratic dividend. This progress can be measured and observed. Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 51

Ms N M MHLONGO: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. Minister, we are concerned that the department continues to expand its targets and international commitments while operating with severe staff shortages and a budget increase that barely keeps up with the inflation. This raises serious concerns about capacity, workload pressures, and the department's ability to deliver on its mandate effectively.

With the department getting the 2% increase in the budget for 2025/26 financial year, how will this increase ensure that the vacancy rate of 26,3% is resolved? If it will not resolve the vacancy rate, then what is the plan to ensure that we do not have an overworked workforce while delivering on the mandate of the department?

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION: Thank you, Chairperson, indeed, we are also concerned about the 2% increase. However, as I mentioned earlier, we must work with what we have, implement with the available resources, and reprioritise accordingly. That is what we are currently doing, while also ensuring alignment with the departmental organogram. The hon member is correct; it is challenging, but it must be done. We cannot ignore the situation. We have to do the job.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 52

Mr M S MOELA: Minister, in your response you mentioned that there is work that South Africa is doing to assist the continent in light of the Ebola outbreak and budget in the midst of these budget constraints. Can you elaborate more in terms of the work that South Africa is doing to assist the continent in light of the Ebola outbreak?

The MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND CO-OPERATION: Thank you, Chairperson. Our National Institute for Communicable Diseases, NICD, is among the best in the world. It is well placed to support efforts to combat Ebola and to enhance the response capability of the Africa CDC. In this context, the President has announced an allocation of R5 million to support the fight against the Ebola outbreak, including strengthening our capabilities within this world-class institution, the NICD.

Additionally, our universities have some of the leading scientists who can contribute to these efforts against Ebola. Our work in combating pandemics is also led by our President, who is a champion of pandemic preparedness on the continent. However, it does not end there.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 53

Even with the Botswana Vaccine Institute, South Africa is one of the biggest receivers of the vaccine from the Botswana Vaccine Institute. And when we were there in Botswana, they said South Africa even pays on time. This also shows the efforts we are making for regional integration, for regional co-operation, not just on issues of trade, on peace and security, and so forth, but also in science to promote science diplomacy.

There is also a number of activities in the Department of Science and Technology that I believe Minister Nzimande at the right time can mention, and higher education that are also contributing to science diplomacy in the continent, given our capabilities in the various science institutes in the country. Thank you very much.

Question 466:

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: House Chairperson, the Office of the Chief Justice, OCJ, is not currently aware of the continuous disappearance of court records affecting court proceedings and causing dysfunctionality in the system. However, there has been a challenge in accessing some court records from a previous system due to a cyber-attack. This was years ago. In instances such as this, we have taken steps to

reconstruct the affected court records. The OCJ is in the process of procuring 34 court recording technologies and sexual offenses system machines to ensure uninterrupted recording of court proceedings through the Criminal Asset Recovery Account, CARA, funding that has been allocated. Currently, there is an estimated R57,4 million budget shortfall, but it is not certain as we are still working on it. The OCJ will ensure that its service delivery needs are appropriately costed and will continue to utilize the normal Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, MTEF, process to motivate for additional funding going forward to prevent any adverse impact on the support to the judiciary and the public. This has consistently been done through engagement between the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, the Minister of Finance, and heads of court, led by the Chief Justice. Thank you.

Mr M MANYI: Minister, yes, of course, the OCGA would not know about these disappearing records because, Minister, in your own Budget Vote speech, you confirmed that court recording technology, information and communications technology, ICT, systems, and all the transcription services were only transferred from the Department of Justice to the OCJ only on 1st April 2026, hence they do not know. Meaning that for the

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 55

entire period during which court records have been disappearing, cases have been collapsing and proceedings postponed due to dysfunctional technology, your department, Minister, remained the responsible custodian of those systems in that period. Given that this was therefore a failure in your department's administration, Minister, not the OCJ's failure, will the Minister confirm two things? Firstly, how many criminal cases have been struck off the roll or permanently lost in the period 2022 to 2026, specifically due to missing or corrupted court recordings? And secondly, what legal remedy exists for accused persons and victims whose constitutional rights under sections 35 and 34 were violated during that period of a department's administrative custody of those systems, and has any such remedy been made available to them? Thank you. [Applause.]

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Manyi, let us correct you. Firstly, while the administrative part was with the department, the functioning and running of the courts continued to be with the Chief Justice by the heads of courts. So, they were responsible. So, all those officials who worked in superior courts and High Courts, were already in the OCJ, not in the Department of Justice. So, the transfer was part of the procurement process and under management. But regarding

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 56

operational issues, OCJ continued. The second part of your question is a new question, which requires statistics. I would be happy to answer it in a written reply since we can provide those statistics. Thank you.

Mr O M MATHAFA: House Chair, let me take this opportunity to thank the Minister for the comprehensive responses to the earlier questions. Minister, given the R57,4 million shortfall and the discussions that are unfolding with the Minister of Finance, what contingency measures are in place to prevent further ICT deterioration while additional funding is pursued through the MTEF period? Thank you very much, House Chair.

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: The current system is working. The issue of the shortfall is with upgrading. I need to clarify that. Because if you know, technology becomes obsolete and unreliable at some point. That is why we are talking about upgrading the facilities that we need to. But what we have done to close the shortfall that existed, which would have been more dire, we provided allocation from the CARA funding so that we can be able to close the gap in terms of those who would have been worse off. Similarly, operational efficiency management systems have been put in place

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 57

by the OCJ and the heads of court, together with the registrars, to ensure that there is no malfunctioning within our High Courts. Thank you very much.

Mr D D KLOPPER: I rise on behalf of the DA to answer this question. Minister, a shortfall of R57,4 million will inevitably affect operations at the Constitutional Court. The courts are already buckling under an enormous caseload. The saying goes that the wheels of justice turn slowly, but Minister, they do turn. In South Africa's case, the wheels are not well, and the road it runs on is fraught with potholes. When will you admit that the apex court of South Africa is understaffed, underfunded, and unsupported? And when, if ever, do you plan on doing something about it? Thank you. [Applause.]

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: House Chairperson. I think the member serves on the portfolio committee, and he knows that what he is saying is factually incorrect. Since my arrival in the portfolio, for example, last February, we were able to give the heads of court or OCJ an additional 271 posts. That would have closed the gap. We have announced that we are in the process of closing the gap regarding the rationalization report that Minister Lamola

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 58

initiated, which calls for 20% capacitation of judges in courts, and we have said that this will bring additional staff. So, currently, there have been mechanisms and money that we added. If you look at the budget itself, there is additional budget allocation, and there is additional staff that we have reported to the portfolio committee. So, I am not so sure where the collapse is, hon member. You must talk about facts. Let us not imagine things that do not happen. Our courts are functioning. The Constitutional Court is functioning. It has capacity, for example, one of the things that we have been able to do as the executive when I got into the portfolio, is that because we realized that Parliament, together with the executive, as two arms of the state, had opportunities to have private offices, those who are leading those two arms. We immediately, working together with the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Public Service and Administration, established private offices of heads of court. So, you cannot say that there is no support for the judiciary by the executive, but also, there is no capacity. So, I think, especially for somebody who sits in that committee, we expect better.

IsiXhosa:

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 59

Mnu. C MATIWANE: Mphathiswa, njengokuba isebe lakho liqhubeka lizingomba isifuba ngeCourt Online olichiza lokuphucula iindlela iinkundla zamatyala ezisebenza ngazo kodwa iinkundla zisaqhubeka ngokubika ukulahleka kweengxelo, oku ukuphikayo. Uye ufamanise ngamanye amaxesha kusithiwa iikhompyutha azisebenzi, ukufeda kweenkundla zamatyala ukushicelela amatyala kusetyenziswa ubuchwephesha bale mihla nto leyo ekhokelela ekumisweni kwamatyala. Ezi ngxelo uyaziphika ukuba ziyenzeka. Ungayicacisa ngelithini into ethethwa lisebe nengqinwa luluntu malunga nento eyenzeka ezinkundleni? Kwenzeka njani ukuba zikhabane? Ingaba uyavuma kusini na ukuba xa uqhubeka usithi iCourt Online iyasebenza ulahlekisa nje kuphela le Ndlu? Enkosi.

UMPHATHISWA WEZOBULUNGISA NOPHUHLISO LOMGAQOSISEKO: Kaloku lungu elihloniphekileyo, xa uthetha ngeCourt Online ... Uyabona ke ngoku, ubuza umbuzo kodwa awuyimameli impendulo. ICourt Online ifumaneka kwiinkundla eziphakamileyo ayikafiki kwezi nkundla zingezantsi. Nalapho kwiinkundla eziphakamileyo isebenza kuphela kumatyala embambano ayikafiki kumatyala olwaphulomthetho. Xa ujonge uhlahlomali lalo nyaka uza kubona ukuba sithe siza kuqalisa izifundo ezijongene namatyala olwaphulomthetho.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 60

Okwangoku, sisasebenzisa le yamatyala embambano. Ngoko ke, xa uluntu lusithi abakayiboni bathetha ukuba phaya kwiinkundla zamatyala zikamantyi ayikafiki. Kodwa asikakwazi ukuyifaka kwiinkundla zamatyala olwaphulomthetho nangona sizenzile zonke iinkundla naphaya eMthatha ikhona. Xa ujonge iinkundla ezingekafakwa kwezi ziphezulu, yiNkundla yoMgaqosiseko, nenkundla ephezulu (Supreme Court). Le ndiyithethayo yinyaniso kwaye ibhalwe phantsi ungakwazi ukuzijongela ngaphandle kwale uyithethayo. [Kwaqhwyatywa.]

English:

Mr M MANYI: Minister, focus, we are here. Minister, I am happy that you have made the admission that the operations and everything else are with the OCJ. You are just dealing with the procurement. The issue here is that in their own budget, the R57,4 million shortfall is against those items like ICT systems, the recordings, all those things, they are on those items. And the issue here is that the shortfall, which is indicated, is a shortfall that is appropriated by the National Treasury through your department. Now, when the chips are down, who then must be accountable for failure in this whole system? You control the pass; everything comes through you. There is a problem ... [Time expired.]

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 61

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Thanks, hon Manyi. I remain the executive authority for both departments, and I am therefore accountable for both the Office of the OCJ and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development. In terms of the shortfalls, then it is me who has put in there ... not the OCJ, because the Chief Justice does not have authority over the budget as we speak. So, it is the Minister as the executive authority, the secretary-general as the accounting officer, and the team. So, what we are saying there is that over time, the department ... it is not only the issue of what is being transferred ... there are shortfalls because, as we were looking at the work and during the times where the government was battling with finances, there would have been a reduction in allocation both in the Department of Justice and in the OCJ. So, as we said, let us go back and look at what would bring us to full capacity as the OCJ and the department to function effectively. What is it that we need? And out of those, we will go to the National Treasury and say, this is what we are short of. If we are to hand over this machinery to the OCJ completely when it becomes independent administratively, we must have closed all those gaps. And that is the intention. And our commitment is to continue to engage with Treasury to ensure that we do not hand over a limping car

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 62

to OCJ but to make sure that a fully functional ... and that is why I can talk about how we have capacitated the private offices and how we are improving in terms of staff complement because we had challenges of legal researchers but also we are looking at the issue of how do we deal with the issue of the compliance with Public Service and Administration because it is not able to comply with what the judges are looking for regarding administration. So, we are also looking at transitional mechanisms. So, all those things are support mechanisms that we are acknowledging as the executive to say we need to give to the judiciary fully so that they can function effectively, including ... that is why we had to close the gap in some of the issues, interventions, including training. When you look at the CARA funding, it does not look only at the machinery that we have done, but also capacitation in terms of the judiciary for specialized court matters. Thanks.

Question 474:

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: House Chairperson, magistrates are public office bearers and entitled to such salaries, allowances and benefits as determined by the President in terms of section 12(1) of the Magistrates Act 90 of 1993 by notice in the *Gazette*, taking into consideration the

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 63

recommendation of the Independent Commission for the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers, IRC.

Furthermore, Parliament must, before the publication of notice, approve the determination, whether in whole or in part, or disapprove it. Medical benefits are part of the benefits recommended under the purview of the commission, approved by Parliament, not the Minister. Currently, each magistrate is allowed to structure the benefits in a manner that is suitable for them. I must indicate that magistrates have been indicating that they are not happy with their current packages and their benefits.

The IRC published for comment a major review on the salaries, allowances and benefits of all public office bearers, including that of magistrates, which includes their medical benefits amongst other benefits. I am informed that this process has not been concluded by the commission. Similarly, lower court officials are public servants within the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development and are appointed in terms of the Public Service Act No 103 of 1994, as amended and the Public Service Regulations, 2016.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 64

All lower court employees qualify for medical assistance benefits. Employees are eligible for membership of the Government Employees Medical Scheme and qualify for a government subsidy. I do not have a role as the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development to determine the medical benefits or any other benefits for employees or magistrates. Thank you very much.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): I have been informed that the first supplementary question will be asked by hon Shikwambana in accordance with Rule 137. Hon Shikwambana?

Mr M SHIKWAMBANA: House Chair, Minister, it is unacceptable that the very people who keep the lower courts functioning are expected to administer justice while being denied basic dignity in their own conditions of service. A justice system cannot claim to value the rule of law while magistrates and lower court officials are pushed into financial strain and overcrowded public hospitals because affordable medical aid support remains unresolved. Has the department conducted any assessment on the extent to which financial distress, medical debt and lack of health care access amongst magistrates and lower court officials may expose vulnerable officials to corruption, external

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 65

influence or compromise judicial independence? If not, why has the department neglected such a serious institutional risk?
Thank you.

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon member, like you, I am very concerned, but you are more powerful than me because those are determined by Parliament, not the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, because the recommendations of the commission come to Parliament. So, Parliament, as members, you have powers to either accept or reject or even make recommendations for changes. I would be happy, I know magistrates would be happy, to hear what you are saying because if Parliament agrees, then Parliament has the power to change those conditions. Thank you very much.

Mr N T TSHOTETSI: House Chairperson, now Minister, given that there is an independent commission to review the benefits of public office bearers, the question is, whether the department has made a submission advocating, in particular, for the magistrates, and whether you are able to give us a sense of what are the proposals that you would have made, if the department has made a submission to this independent commission. Thank you very much.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 66

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: House Chair, as per the process, what the department gets to be involved in is when the commission has consulted and has finalised its process. Then they send us to make comments at the end. But because this part of the process has not been completed, we are waiting for them to make those recommendations, and then once they do, and ask formally for our comments, we'll definitely do as department. I do think, as I said, we support the issues raised by the magistrates. We do believe that they are of concern.

And, including, that's why one of the issues that we talk about, hon members, is that when we deal with a single and independent judiciary-led administration, we do understand it will be able to articulate all these issues. That is why we are consistently advocating and pushing for this. But beyond that, we do not have a legal standing nor legal mandate to be able to do anything else. We would be happy to do so if we had a legal mandate to do something. Thank you.

IsiZulu:

Dkt K LITCHFIELD-TSHABALALA: Ngibonge, Sihlalo, ...

English:

... judges are not elected representatives. They do not constitute part of the national Parliament or provincial legislatures.

Sesotho:

Ke mehopolo le menahano e feng e ileng ya fihlela hore ...

IsiZulu:

Ngehlise?

Sesotho:

Ke mehopolo le menahano e feng e ileng ya fihlela hore ba kenywe hara Parmed ...

English:

... to the exclusion of magistrates who bear the brunt of the criminal justice system in terms of caseload and the high-paced court environment. How in the past 30 years have we allowed this injustice in a just democratic period to go on? It is a classist system.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 68

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: House Chair, the issue of magistrates comes very far, because if you look at the conditions of employment between them and judges, they are separate, yes, because if you look at the magistrates, they are now determined under different legislation, and judges under different administration. And that's why our call is for a single judiciary, where we are now working on legislation to bring them under one roof. But they still don't have an agreement on that amongst themselves. So, they are still consulting each other and will be able to. And I think if we look historically, hon member, quite a number of things we might have thought that this is what can work better. And also, remember part of the issue was to ensure that we lower the barriers of entry so that you don't have a sector that is exclusionary, doesn't allow for transformation, and doesn't allow for many people to participate.

And sometimes you can accept that certain things have unintended consequences in terms of that. When you look at the magistrates, I agree; they bear the brunt of frontline services, and they get threatened more, but they get accused of corruption. And you look at the salaries, for example, one of the issues that we were talking about, we were comparing, and I was doing an

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 69

analysis of comparative salaries of magistrates and prosecutors. You find in certain instances, prosecutors even earning more than magistrates. And it's an anomaly that when we do an analysis of why, we end up with some of the problems that we have. You understand that, first, it is the conditions of employment that you've got to improve and ensure that you treat people who are doing the most work with the decency they deserve. So, I advocate for a better environment and better conditions for magistrates. That I think we all agree.

Mr M SHIKWAMBANA: House Chairperson, Minister, you see, the magistrates and the officials of the lower courts are working every day in the morning. They go to work and perform their duties to make sure that our lower courts function and work. So just last week in Pretoria, Mr Silas Novela was at work, performing his duties and responsibilities. He got sick and was taken to hospital in Kalafong. Unfortunately, he died. And this issue has been long, and we know all of us that it is incorrect that we keep our magistrates and officials of the lower courts from being given medical aid. Maybe if he had that chance of getting medical aid, he would have been taken to a better hospital.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 70

Today we are going to speak of something different. But you keep on saying that you don't have a legal obligation to enforce and for these matters to be brought to Parliament. But my question would be, to what extent do we have an influence on the commission to finish their process and bring this matter here in Parliament and Parliament to approve and give these people their medical aid? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: House Chair, hon member, the officials in lower courts are staff members of the Department of Justice. So, they are public servants. Officials in the Office of the Chief Justice are staff members in the department. They are public servants, like any other public servant. So, if an individual chooses not to use medical aid, it's a choice. Remember, the Constitution says that we can't force people. It is only us here in Parliament who are forced to Parmed. But in terms of public servants, they are not forced, so it's there. Now the official would have, and some of the people what they do, they say, I am on a medical aid of my spouse, therefore. I don't have to take this medical aid.

Now the department would not be able to see when that medical aid lapses or something happens to it because the person has

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 71

made a declaration to the department to say, I am not in this medical aid; I am on my spouse's medical aid. That is the first thing. So, they have support from the department as employees of the department. Then with the magistrates, currently magistrates, because of the package, all of us are public office bearers, so you work out your package in a manner that caters for your needs. So, there are those magistrates, for example, if you interact them, do have medical aid. They have been able to structure their packages and benefits to include medical aid. What we are advocating for is not a type of Parmed, because many of them are saying they want to be part of Parmed as magistrates. They have been saying that to us that they want to be part of Parmed because Parmed has better benefits for the long term. That is what they've been advocating, not what I think you have. The issue of the magistrates' petition, what they've raised with me as the Minister, is their involvement not on any other medical aid but Parmed. That is where we are sitting. Now, I think that's what I wanted to explain, because I think maybe the information you got is not exactly what they have made in submission in writing to me as the Minister.

Question 502:

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 72

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Hon Chair, firstly, to ensure that learnership stipends are paid accurately, consistently, and in accordance with the Public Service Regulations, the Department of Correctional Services relies on a combination of strict administrative controls and legally binding frameworks. Stipend payments are legally contingent on active participation in the programme.

Furthermore, to ensure payments are executed correctly and only to eligible, active learners, the department utilises localised verification structures such as regional monitoring. For the workplace learning phase – the practical components conducted at our centres – local human resource branches and centre co-ordinators maintain strict attendance registers. As far as academy tracking is concerned, during the theoretical training phase, a college's daily attendance logs are cross-referenced before monthly payroll runs are approved. This ensures that learners who abscond or withdraw are immediately flagged, preventing fraudulent or erroneous payouts.

The third aspect is that the Persal system also has built-in validation to prevent the payment of stipends to learners that are employed elsewhere in the Public Service. The department has

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 73

registered a new National Qualifications Framework, NQF, Level 5 Higher Occupational Certificate for Correctional Officials with the SA Qualifications Authority. This will replace the current NQF Level 4 Further Education and Training learnership, which expires in June 2026. Student enrolment for the NQF Level 4 programme will remain open until 2027. I thank you.

Mr W T D PLAATJIES: Chair, I wish to thank the Minister for the answer. Minister, as a follow-up, what contingency funds or immediate, localised relief interventions exist within the management area to assist learners when regional administration fails to process their stipend files on time?

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Hon Chair, as I said, we have these three methods of ensuring that the correct people get it. It is part of our budget to ensure that we have the funds. I can say to the hon member that, at present, as we speak, we have 1 033 learners. So, we do it in phases. We had a group 1, a group 2, and a group 3 so that we comply with the budget constraints we do have, whilst ensuring that they receive what they are entitled to.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 74

Mr J ENGELBRECHT: House Chair, to the Minister: With the department's R11,7 billion budget cut over the next five years, and its reliance on the 2026-2027 allocation of R30,93 billion, how will the department move from its current limited intake of 1 033 learners to the required 3 000 learners per annum to reach the 2030 target of employing 12 950 new officers, especially when employee compensation already accounts for over 70% of its spending, leaving only R9,3 billion for all other operational costs? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Hon Chair, firstly, let me say it is worrying that, for instance, if we take our complete budget, almost 70% of our budget is for compensation of employees. For me, that is very worrying, not that I say our officials should get less, but that must be considered when we ask for money in terms of our budget.

We have, however, in the Medium-Term Development Plan of the Government of National Unity, said we try to create jobs, and we do have vacancies that we have to ensure that, in future, we can fill those vacancies. That is why we started this learnership. I can also say to the hon member that he would know that we envisage that, between 2026 and 2030, we do hope that we can

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 75

accommodate 12 950 learners. However, it is a phased one, as I said. Of course, part of the savings the department is trying to obtain is through self-sufficiency, to ensure that there is money available because this is a very important component for the future.

Mr M M GASA: House Chairperson, to the hon Minister: Will you admit that the learnership programme is broken due to ongoing stipend delays, explain what penalties will be imposed on officials or service providers who miss payment deadlines, and commit to an independent forensic audit of all stipend payments since the programme started, potentially scrapping and rebuilding the outsourced payment system?

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Chair, there will always be some allegations when you start with these learnerships. I can mention to the hon member that, when we advertised for this learnership, the department received 1,2 million applications. You can think for yourself the administration to go through 1,2 million applications to ensure that qualifying people are identified and accommodated.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 76

If the hon member is aware that there are certain matters of corruption or irregularities, he is welcome to come forward. I will not shy away from that, and I have said before that, if it is necessary to have a forensic audit, we will do so.

However, we must also remember that forensic audits are very expensive. So, you must make sure that, if you want to spend the taxpayers' money, you have enough evidence to justify such forensic investigation. I thank you.

Afrikaans:

Mnr P A VAN STADEN: Huisvoorsitter, aan die Minister: Dit is tog sekerlik algemene praktyk dat die meeste werkgewers nuwe aanstellings op 'n proeftydperk aanstel, gewoonlik oor 'n tydperk van drie maande, maar in die geval van u departement beloop die tydperk een jaar. Dit is uit my oogpunt wel goeie praktyk om sodoende te verseker dat die regte mense in die regte posisies aangestel word. Kan u vir hierdie Huis aandui die bedrag van die betrokke toelaag wat betaal word, die aantal leerlingskapprogram-kandidate wat tans in hierdie program is, dat dit die bedoeling is dat al hierdie kandidate op die ou einde van die dag in diens geneem word, asook of daar vakatures

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 77

is wat gevul moet word in die betrokke departement? Ek dank u, Huisvoorsitter.

Die MINISTER VAN KORREKTIEWE DIENSTE: Voorsitter, ek wil die vir agb lid sê dat die bedrag wat betaal word R4 774 per maand is. Die agb lid is ook reg: Dit is 'n jaar tydperk, en in daardie jaar moet daar verseker word dat die leerders die kursus behoorlik voltooi, dat hulle hul eksamens slaag, en dat hulle dan kwalifiseer om dan opgeneem te word as permanente werknemers.

Die bedoeling is dat almal wat slaag wel opgeneem word, want daar is vakatures wat beskikbaar is. Ons sit veral op laer vlakke wat ons 'n probleem het en wat te min mense het. Ek kan maar vir die agb lede sê ek het een keer 'n besoek gebring aan Westville se korrektiewe sentrum, en vier bewaarders moes toesig hou oor meer as 600 prisoniers. Nou, dit is 'n onbehoorlike situasie dat so min bewaarders oor soveel mense moet toesig hou. My uitgangspunt is, en ek het dit ook aan die departement gesê, dat ons moet begin om die laer vlakke te bemagtig om meer mense te kry.

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 78

Ek is ook besig tans om te sê dat alle hoofde van tronke nou jaarliks 'n eksamen sal aflê om te verseker dat hulle hul pligte behoorlik ken, dat hulle die Wet op Korrektiewe Dienste ken, want die wet verwys net na drie persone: die Minister, die Nasionale Kommissaris van die Departement van Korrektiewe Dienste, en die hoofde van tronke. Ons moet ons standaard verhoog, en dit is deel van die proses om te verseker dat ons mense op die regte standaard is en toegerus is om hul werk tot die beste van hul vermoë te kan lewer. Ek dank u.

English:

Mr W T D PLAATJIES: Hon Chair, to the Minister: Thank you for clarifying some of these matters. However, Minister, I think we agree that there are problems with the issue of stipends to students in the learnership programme, much as we appreciate it. Can the Minister therefore clarify whether the department utilises direct electronic funds transfers to individual learners' accounts or if any third-party agency handles the payroll administration? If a third party is doing it and is involved, what is the administrative fee paid to them in percentage?

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 79

The MINISTER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: Chair, I don't have the specific percentage at the moment, but I will investigate, and I will comply and ensure that the hon member receives that specific amount. Let me say to the hon member: Yes, I agree. There are problems, and, when I started, I said there will always be problems. I invite the hon member to come forward and let's see how we can solve it. I agree with him. I also want to ensure that I have his agreement that we are going to solve the problems. Thank you.

Question 491:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon House Chairperson, no, the government and the SA Police Service, SAPS, has not lost control of the leadership in policing services. Following the developments referenced, Lt-Gen General Dimpane has been appointed Acting National Commissioner with effect from 23 April 2026. She will serve in this capacity until further notice. This appointment ensures continuity of leadership at the highest level and prevents any vacuum in authority within the SA Police Service. In order to mitigate the risk of institutional paralysis and to maintain operational stability, SAPS has adopted a collective leadership approach whereby the Acting National Commissioner is supported by an experienced executive

management structure across the organisation. This includes the delegation of responsibilities across senior management to ensure that operational, administrative and strategic functions continue without disruption.

Further measures have been implemented to strengthen institutional integrity and address concerns relating to corruption and infiltration within senior ranks.

In this regard the SAPS has commenced with the process announced by the President during the 2026 state of the nation address to subject all senior managers to vetting and lifestyle audits conducted by the State Security Agency. This process prioritises leadership in critical positions and is intended to reinforce accountability, restore organisational credibility and ensure that those entrusted with acting responsibilities meet the required standards of integrity. Where senior members are implicated in allegations of misconduct or are subject to ongoing investigations, interim acting appointments have already been effected to ensure that key leadership functions remain operational. This approach ensures continuity whilst simultaneously allowing investigative and oversight processes to proceed without disruption to service delivery.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 81

The SA Police Service has the necessary capacity, institutional knowledge and experience to ensure continuity of operations in the absence of a permanent National Commissioner. Operational continuity is currently maintained under the leadership of the Acting National Commissioner Lt-Gen Dimphe who brings extensive experience in policing, financial management and governance and strategic leadership. Her appointment is supported by an established executive structure with institutional memory and operational expertise across all levels of the organisation.

The prioritisation of filling critical posts including the placement of acting incumbents where vacancies or investigations exists ensures that leadership gaps do not translate into operational disruptions. This structured approach to leadership continuity combined with the support of the Ministry of Police enables SAPS to maintain stability, sustain service delivery and continue executing its constitutional mandate. Thank you, hon House Chairperson.

Ms L SCHICKERLING: Hon House Chairperson and hon Deputy Minister, what objective indicators performance matrix of evaluation framework does government currently use to assess whether the instability within the SAPS senior leadership is

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 82

affecting crime prevention, intelligence-led policing and investigative outcomes. If no such indicators are used so: Why not and when will they be introduced? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon House Chairperson, yes, we do do that. It is clear in terms of what is happening currently in the country that investigation work is not disrupted by the situation we find ourselves in. Policing is taking place and intelligence is doing its work. This is demonstrated by the discoveries that we made under the current situation like the drug bust in the North West and arrests that are continuing currently within South Africa that has to deal with the high crime activities that are committed by criminals. The work is going on, and we are convinced that the situation we find ourselves in will not disrupt policing. Investigations, arrests and law and order will be maintained in the country. Thank you, hon House Chairperson.

Mr M M SOKOPO: Hon House Chairperson and hon Deputy Minister, given the ongoing investigations into allegations of corruption affecting the senior leadership of the Police, what are the step in the Ministry taken to ensure that the Police itself remain stable, operational and capable to continue doing what they must

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 83

do in combating crime whilst the investigations are underway?

Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon House Chairperson, thank you, hon Sokopo for the question. As the Ministry we have made sure that affected individuals are suspended and in their place, we have appointed people to ensure that there is no space that is not occupied. Besides that, we have interacted with management indicating that areas where you have posts that are vacant those posts must be filled.

In crime intelligence for instance there was a communique to the effect that appointments should be halted. We have put aside that, and we have interacted with management that all funded vacant posts within intelligence should be filled up. We believe this decision will assist in stabilising the organisation and ensuring that service delivery is not affected by the situation we are going through. Thank you, hon House Chairperson.

IsiNdebele:

Nom D M SKOSANA: Ngikuthokoze Sihlalo no Ngqongqotjhe, kubayini kungabanga njengolokha wazi bona ukurarana kwesiPholisa nokungakazinzi kuhle kuthomalapha phezulu esiPholiseni. Kubayini

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 84

nibhalelwe kukobana ningenelele njengo Mnyango ukobana kube namatjhuguluko eniwenzako ukobana kungabi nento le esiyitholako yokobana abantu beSewula Afrika abasanathemba ngokunzinza kwesiPholisa nokubuyisa ukuhlonipheka kwesiPholisa esitjhaba silahlekelwe khulukhulu lapho?

Lami lamaphelelo lithi sichema se-Mamelodi Sundowns siyanithokozisangoku ngokuthumba iligi yeeNkutana ze-CAF TotalEnergies, nesiqhema se-Orlando Pirates siyasithokozisa ngokuthumba iligi noma banifakele amagondelo. Siyathokoza, Sihlalo.

English:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Ms Z Majozi): Hon Deputy Minister, I am sure the last supplementary question was just a comment to congratulate the big teams.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon House Chairperson, thank you hon Skosana, we were not spectating as the events unfolded within the service. It is on record that the suspended Minister did take action to try and assist in mediating on the tensions that existed at that level. Of course, unfortunately what has happened has happened. I think it was

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 85

necessary that the SA Police go through this process so that it can assist us to reset. I am quite confident that the Madlanga Commission and the ad hoc committee those processes are going to assist greatly to reset policing in South Africa so that it becomes effective and an instrument to defend and protect our democratic project. Thank you, hon House Chairperson.

Ms B E MACHI: Hon House Chairperson and hon Deputy Minister, given that mob justice raids have risen in a response to suboptimal efforts by SAPS: What practical measures is the department taking to ensure that law-enforcement remains in the hands of officials particularly in the rural and under-resourced communities? Thank you, hon House Chairperson.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon House Chairperson and hon Machi, indeed in a situation where communities or people do not find joy where crime takes place you turn to have emergence of mob justice. People taking law into their own hands. If we are to stop that SAPS must do their work. Where crime occurs, we must ensure that we respond and the perpetrators are brought to justice.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 86

When people come to report cases at Police stations, they should get an appropriate reception that will give them confidence that they are being respected, and their cases must be taken seriously and follow ups be made and they should be updated on developments in their cases. Once this is done people will be able to have confidence in what we are doing because we give them updates and justice done.

Through that we will be able to ensure that we reduce mop justice in our country. Thank you, hon House Chairperson.

Ms L SCHICKERLING: Hon House Chairperson and hon Deputy Minister, I want to disagree with you today. For I think the 58 people that were murdered in South Africa today and the 109 people that are raped and the countless other citizens that have been affected by crime today that have lost confidence in the SA Police services is vastly going to disagree with what you are saying to us today. For you have not answered the questions properly so: I just want to know what specific operational interventions have been implemented since the emergence of the leadership instability and what actual evidence can you give us that demonstrate the impact to date and if there is no evidence available why not because nothing you said today has actually

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 87

given us impact and evidence that there is a change? Thank you very much. [Applause.]

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Hon House Chairperson and the hon Schickerling, it is true that we have had major crime bust in the country. I gave an example of the drug lab in the North West. It happened this financial year while the Madlanga Commission and the ad hoc committee were on. If you say this is not evidence taking place in the country, I do not know what form of evidence you are looking at the hon Schickerling, because the Police are doing work currently with the Acting National Commissioner Lt-Gen Dimpane. There is evidence in that direction. There are arrests that have taken place in the current past few weeks which clearly demonstrate that the Police are at work despite the fact that we are going through these challenges we are confronted with. We acknowledge then but work is proceeding. Thank you, hon House Chairperson. [Applause.]

Question 504:

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Thank you very much, hon Chairperson. In terms of the second part of the question, the service centre in Maputo in Mozambique will open on Monday.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 88

According to the department's research, Mozambique is the only country in Africa with over 20 000 South Africans living in the country. That will be the first African country to get this service, followed by Zimbabwe later in the year.

In terms of the first part of the question, the decision to open passport and related services abroad is really based on the size of the South African population living in that particular country. The South African population in Australia, for example, is estimated to be over 200 000, the USA over 150 000, New Zealand over 100 000, the United Arab Emirates, UAE, over 100 000 and Canada around 52 000.

In Australia, as the member points out, the centre was opened in Sydney, but also in Melbourne and Perth, aimed at streamlining passport and registration services for South Africans abroad. Indeed, similar initiatives are being rolled out around the world, not only in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. To date we have additional facilities that have opened in New Zealand, the United Arab Emirates, Germany, France, the Netherlands, China, Canada and the USA. These centres are intended to improve access to civic services and critically to reduce turnaround times.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 89

In many cases, before the launching of these centres, South Africans had to wait as many as 12 months to get a passport processed once their South African passport had expired. In many of these centres, it is now a matter of weeks, rather than months, to get a new South African passport. Thank you.

Ms M MODISE-MPYA: Thank you very much, House Chair. Minister, how much does it cost to open and operate these offices overseas? Do you think it is valuable and necessary, whilst our people in South Africa, mainly in the poor communities and rural are struggling to access Home Affairs services? Thank you.

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Thank you, Chair. The good news is that opening these services does not cost Home Affairs anything additional. What you will find is that this is part of the existing contract with the service provider that also manages visa application intakes in South Africa. They have these centres located all around the world. So, they already have the facility. They often service visa applications in those particular countries. All we are doing is basically piggybacking on the existing infrastructure to roll-out this service. So, there is no trade-off here. There is no loss to anyone else. It's not an additional expense.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 90

What I would, however, point out is that the digital partnership model that we launched with the banks recently in South Africa are a revolution for access in poor, underserved and rural communities in South Africa. A number of 167 bank branches have been added to this network within the last nine weeks. Over 129 000 South Africans have already obtained replacement ID cards through this new service. It only takes five minutes, in some cases, to apply for your replacement ID.

Additionally, many of these places are located in the likes of Dutywa, Lusikisiki and many other rural parts of South Africa. Really, the enhancement of access to Home Affairs smart ID services is at a different scale. Thanks to our reform efforts. Thank you.

Ms N J BOLLMAN: Thank you, House Chair. Minister, in light of the Department's ongoing digital modernisation initiatives for South Africans abroad: Is consideration being given to incorporating citizenship renunciation functionality into the online citizenship confirmation portal in order to streamline administrative processes and reduce turnaround times for applicants overseas? Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 91

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Thank you very much, hon Chair.

The online citizenship reinstatement portal has been an incredible success. Tens of thousands of South African citizens have used it. Thousands have had their citizenship reinstated following the ruling by the Constitutional Court requiring us to do so. And I think it is a very powerful example of how a focus on innovation and digital transformation can deliver a whole new kind of service experience to South Africans. No one had to fill in a form for us to comply with this process. No one had to stand in a queue. Instead, they are able to access the myhomeaffairsonline.dha.gov.za webpage and through the uploading of a selfie, facial recognition technology, we are able to match their record against the population register. And within a matter of minutes, if they qualify, we are able to reinstate their South African citizenship and update their ID number accordingly.

I think it's an interesting proposal to think, if we could do the renunciation function through this portal as well. It is something that we will take forward and explore as part of our broader digital transformation initiative. But indeed, it is in keeping with the principle we are trying to adopt that we are going digital first. We are not replicating and introducing more

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 92

forms, more paperwork and more queues. We are using what technology has to offer to solve these problems. Thank you.

Mr J S NGUBANE: Thank you, Chairperson. Hon Minister, other than the offices that you've opened in Home Affairs in Australia: How many other offices of similar nature in other countries like Canada, USA, London, and other countries? In which other Western or European countries have you opened Home Affairs offices? If not, why not? If so, what are the details? Has it been the norms of Home Affairs to open offices in the Western countries or European countries since the dawn of democracy? Or this has just started with the Seventh administrations that you are the Minister of currently?

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Thank you, hon Chair. I certainly don't think that the UAE or China would consider themselves to be Western countries, but that's up to them to decide. The truth is we have expanded this service to dozens of countries around the world, including the UAE that I mentioned, New Zealand, France, the US, and a litany of others. We have a link on our website, dha.gov.za, where you will find the full list of all the cities, including the new ones that we are launching on Monday, as I mentioned.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 93

I think, as I said in the first part of the reply, we have to serve South Africans where they are. So, we are looking at countries with particularly large populations. That's where we have the biggest impact when we introduce better services.

But this is certainly not the end of the process. As we continue to modernise our services, I think there are opportunities for us to move beyond even physical infrastructure. Members might be aware of the digital ID system that we are developing. The draft regulations for that are currently out for public comment. This would serve South Africans around the world, regardless of where they live, in South Africa or anywhere else, by introducing the option of having the enabling documents available in secure digital format. We can look at the success we've had in the digital partnership with the banks to potentially also introduce a more streamlined model to these physical locations abroad.

Indeed, South Africans around the world are receiving much better services as a result of this initiative. And really, our constitutional mandate is to serve all South African citizens, and that is exactly what we are doing. Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 94

Ms N M MHLONGO: Thank you, House Chairperson. Minister, the frustration faced by South Africans when applying for their passport or lose their passport when they are abroad, is really something that can be resolved urgently. To wait for a period of six to eight months, which is the turnaround time of the department to get a South African passport when they are abroad, is really frustrating because of the manual processes that have to be followed when a South African applies at the Department of International Relations and Co-operation and then the Department of International Relations and Co-operation takes it and submits it to Home Affairs, Home Affairs sends it back to the Department of International Relations and Co-operation, the Department of International Relations and Co-operation sends it back to the mission. It is really frustrating, Minister.

What measures have been put in place to address the persistent backlog with the manual processing of passports and other civic services at various foreign missions? Can we do something to reduce the turnaround time to get your passport when you are applying and you are already abroad? Thank you very much.

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Thank you, hon Chair. I must commend the hon member. She has perfectly described the problem.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 95

That's exactly the issue. You'll often find that even some of the officials working in the missions are not Home Affairs officials. So, you have to transfer between the Department of International Relations and Co-operation to Home Affairs. And then often one of the biggest delays is that we have to wait for the so-called diplomatic pouch to fill up.

It's literally a bag that Department of International Relations and Co-operation moves documents around with around the world. And often the passport is ready within a few weeks, but we have to wait for this bag to fill up. It's really not a very efficient way to do things.

That is exactly, why we have opened these service centres. The countries that I've mentioned, a number of cities across the world have gotten access to these new dedicated service centres where South Africans can go to lodge an application which is then couriered immediately. We don't have the delay associated with that diplomatic pouch. We don't have the movement between different departments. We simply courier it to Pretoria where the administration is done, the passport is produced, and then it is couriered back to the client.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 96

That indeed has dramatically cut turnaround times.

As I said, it often was a painful experience of over 12 months. And if you go to a mission to apply, you probably will still have that experience. But more and more cities now have these dedicated service centres around the world, which has indeed reduced it from months to weeks.

I think it's important to say that we are looking, as I mentioned, at how we can take the model we have built with the banks, where we are able to have a South African applying within a few minutes for a new Smart ID, and whether we could potentially also extend that to the service centres or other locations abroad to bring that same kind of quick turnaround time. But certainly, many, many South Africans have experienced the difference that these service centres are making compared to the arduous process that the hon member outlined. Thank you.

Ms M MODISE-MPYA: Thank you very much, Chair. Minister, why are you not expanding the similar model that comes at no cost overseas, as you have made mention of, to poor communities in the country? Other than the bank branches that you've alluded to as an alternative to access to rural areas? I thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 97

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Thank you, hon Chair. That's exactly what we are doing. It is exactly the same model. The difference, of course, is that in a city abroad we don't have a South African bank operating there. So, we are working with the service centre from the provider. But in South Africa we have the banks that we are partnering with. The question really is moot. This is exactly the model that we are rolling out.

What it means for South Africans abroad is that you are able to go to this dedicated service centre to lodge your application. What it means for South Africans in the country is that you are able to go to your local bank branch to lodge your application. At this stage, it is for smart ID replacements. If you want to replace your green ID book or if you've lost it, it is one of these 167 bank branches. Our goal is to have it at 750 branches by the end of the year. If you compare it to the fact that Home Affairs previously had only 349 branches, you can see that we are tripling the footprint and access that South Africans enjoy to the services through exactly these partnership model through digital transformation with the banking sector.

If anything South Africans in those poor, underserved and rural communities are seeing being the biggest impact, it was in

Orange Farm where we launched the very first new digital transformed bank partnership branches. It was incredible to be present when we helped the very first lady there, Gugu. She was on her way to do some shopping and she suddenly saw it that she could get a smart ID around the corner. She was able to be helped within five minutes. That's the power of our digital transformation process. Thank you, Chair.

Question 475:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Chairperson, in respect of Major General Rhooode, a departmental investigation was conducted, and disciplinary steps were instituted in line with the applicable recommendations. Following the conclusion of the disciplinary process, Major General Rhooode was found not guilty. Similarly, in respect of Constable Rikhotso, a departmental investigation was undertaken, and disciplinary action was pursued. Upon finalization of the process, Constable Rikhotso was also not found guilty. The investigations were initially conducted in line with the recommendations of the Public Protector and were subsequently expanded to incorporate the findings and recommendations of the Independent Police Investigative Directorate, IPID, received on 9 October 2023. Thank you, Chairperson.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 99

Ms L M NGOBENI: Deputy Minister, given the damning findings by the IPID, as you have alluded, including allegations that members of the Presidential Protection Unit that you have mentioned, refused to co-operate with investigators, falsified documents, incurred irregular expenditure, unlawfully detained suspects, and even invoked the President's name to pressure officials. How does the Minister justify the not-guilty outcome of the disciplinary hearings without creating the perception that there is one law for ordinary citizens and another for those who protect the President? And are you prepared to table the full record of decisions of these disciplinary hearings before Parliament and the South African public, or must we once again, as we did before, resort to strong-arming the department through a protected legal service and/or request the Madlanga Commission to intervene? Thank you, Chair.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thank you, hon Ngobeni. As I indicated, the two officers went through a process that was attended to by the administration, and upon the conclusion of those processes, the officers were not found guilty, and it is not because they belong to the Presidential Protection Unit. It is because of the due processes that were

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 100

followed that we arrived at that determination. Thank you, Chairperson.

Mr M S MOELA: Hon Deputy Minister, given the fact that the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, DPCI, was running a parallel investigation on the matter, did they make any findings on any of the officials involved in this regard?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thank you, hon Moela. The DPCI was investigating the criminal case of what happened at the farm, and that process led to the arrest of those who were involved in that process. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Ms L SCHICKERLING: Deputy Minister, I really think it is time that the SAPS takes the IPID more seriously because they clearly know more than what we think. In relation to the Presidential Protection Unit, what accountability mechanisms are in place regarding leadership decisions taken under Major General Wally Rhoode? And how do the SAPS ensure transparency where concerns or allegations have been raised, because this is a serious matter, and the Presidential Protection Services receives a large amount of the SAPS budget every month? Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 101

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thank you, hon Schickerling. The South African police management takes the issues that are brought before them very seriously, either by IPID or any other organ of state. The process of the disciplinary committee, DC, of the two officers was held in line with the disciplinary code that the South African police use, and there was no favouritism in this regard. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Mr L G SHANGASE: Hon Deputy Minister, given that the IPID recommended disciplinary action against Major General RhooDe and Constable Rikhotso, why were they both not found guilty in the South SAPS hearing, and will the Minister release the hearing records, because ...

IsiZulu:

... abantu bafuna ukwazi ukuthi kungani laba ababili bengazange balandele imigudu efanele amadola esethathiwe laphaya e-Phala Phala. Siyabonga, Sihlalo.

English:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE: Thank you, hon Shangase, for your question. Yes, the IPID investigated the matters and arrived at

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 102

a determination and made a recommendation to the South African police. And as I indicated, the processes of the DC that affected the two officers included the Public Protector and subsequently expanded to incorporate the findings of IPID, which found the two officers not guilty of any wrongdoing. Thank you, hon House Chair.

Ms L M NGOBENI: Deputy Minister, it is very sad because your response to me does not answer what I asked. What I initially asked was whether you would be willing to divulge or to provide the record of the decisions of the disciplinary hearings for us and South Africans to see, what it is that justified the not guilty finding? May I please get a response to that question? Thank you, hon House Chair.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thanks for that follow-up question. The question was regarding the processes affecting Major General RhooDe and Constable Rikhotso. I indicated that the processes of DC were conducted by the South African Police, which was as a result of the Public Protector, and subsequently incorporated issues that were recommended by the Independent Police Investigative Directorate. And these processes led to a not guilty finding for the two officers. And

there was nothing untoward regarding the processes, Chairperson.
Thank you very much.

Question 507:

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: House Chair, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development has implemented a number of targeted initiatives to address the entry barriers faced by law graduates.

Together with key justice sector institutions, the department has implemented a range of targeted and complementary initiatives in partnership with institutions such as Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority, Sassetta, Public Service Sector-Education and Training Authority, Pseta, etc, aimed at broadening access to the legal profession.

This includes candidate attorneys, articleship and internship programmes within the Office of the State Attorney, 406 have been recruited there. Legal Aid South Africa has currently recruited 1 063 candidates. The National Prosecuting Authority through the Aspirant Prosecutor Programme provides for 111 Bachelors of Law, LLB, graduates and the Special Investigating Unit, SIU, 45 LLB graduates who collectively provided or provide

structured practical legal training while advancing transformation and access to justice.

These initiatives are designed to provide workplace exposure, skills development, and mentorship within specialised legal, investigative, and litigation environment while balancing transformation objectives with operational security and capacity considerations across the justice sector.

While the Offices of the State Attorney remains the primary placement sites, entities such as SIU, Legal Aid and National Prosecuting Authority, NPA continue to support transformation through structured workplace exposure, skills development and mentorship of legally qualified personnel within the investigative and litigation support environments such as subject to mandate specific and resource planning.

The Office of State Attorney, Master's Office, SIU, Legal Aid and NPA also support internal capacity building and career progression for legally qualified employees, recognising that transformation of the profession must be balanced sustainability and the specialised nature of the investigative work.

Furthermore, the SIU has established an internal legal practice called SIU Law Firm from 1 April 2026, which will contribute to transformation and capacity building of legally trained professionals within the state and provide more exposure for young people.

Thank you.

Ms N E MOTAUNG: Minister, while the current programmes have largely accommodated law graduates, how many of these programmes are designed to assist the graduates to meet the stipulated entry requirements into a legal profession of either one or two years service of articles as stipulated by the Legal Practice Act before they can be recognised as admitted attorneys?

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Motaung, all of them actually assist the candidates to be able to enter fully into the workplace. If we look at the Aspirant Prosecutor Programme, you'd see that these are individuals that are trained to become prosecutors and once they graduate and they get the certificate to say they've met minimum requirements and become full prosecutors.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 106

Similarly at SIU, you'd note that those are trained specifically into investigators and be able to assist in terms of the work that is needed within the SIU and are fully absorbed.

Then in State Attorneys, you find that an employee in another department within the state has completed a law qualification, we are able to absorb them. Some of them move from administration and become law students and graduates. We are able to absorb ... [Inaudible.] ... to State Attorney offices so that they can conclude and be able to fulfil their requirements and become admitted attorneys. It's part of the work.

We also take graduates from the streets who have graduated. We open the process through Sasseta so that they can be fully absorbed and once they are done, they are able to be admitted as attorneys of the court.

Thank you very much.

Mr D D KLOPPER: Minister, given the enormous influx of graduates who cannot find placement for articles, how do you justify the fact that the National Prosecuting Authority, a severely

undercapacitated institution, only trains 100 graduates per year in its Aspirant Prosecutor Programme?

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Kloppe, I think we would love to do more training. We would love to absorb more. One, it's the capacity. Remember, in terms of training, you don't look at the amount of money you would pay the graduates as a stipend or whatever income they will have to receive. You've got to have mentors that are going to be able to support them.

The placements must match the person that is going to support them. Otherwise, the programme might be falling off and not meet the requirements because they would not have the exposure, the mentoring and coaching that is required.

So, it has to be matched based on the numbers that you need to have. Secondly, it's on the basis of the available budget, and what we can be able to absorb as part of training. If we are given enough budget and have enough people that are able to coach, we will be able to absorb more.

Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 108

Mr C MATIWANE: Chair, at a time when youth unemployment remains catastrophically high and thousands of qualified graduates are sitting at home with law degrees but without articles, the legal profession is increasingly becoming inaccessible to poor and working-class black graduates who cannot survive years without placement opportunities.

The reality is that many young people complete expensive qualifications only to enter a profession where access is determined by networks, privilege, and affordability rather than merit and capability.

Minister, you have mentioned that you are absorbing law graduates into state entities and departments for training. What is the retention rate because what we have witnessed with the government is that graduates are kept in perpetual internships or training programmes. You move from one programme of R2 500 per month, when your contract ends, you move to another. So, are there plans to retain them within the state? [Time expired.]

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: In terms of retention, the retention is higher when you look at NPA, SIU,

and Legal Aid, compared to what we would have in state entities and departments. It depends on where they have been placed.

I think hon member is speaking broadly on administration because we do have those. The question focused mainly on the legal graduates. You do have other form of graduates that you would have. I think it is far better for law graduates because once they do, the intention is to have them to be admitted.

When you give them that exposure, it helps them to be fully recognised that they can either go out and open their own practice or absorbed as attorneys in various companies. It gives them far better opportunities compared to those that do not have this opportunity in terms of absorption.

I understand what you are raising in terms of broader internship programmes where you find that, for example, because we have various areas, whether it's information, communication and technology, ICT, and others.

Yes, I acknowledge that the absorption rate in those areas is very low because in terms of the exposure and the work that you

need, you are actually giving them experience so that they can be able to be absorbed, including by private sector.

Government plays a developmental role in this regard, in taking the responsibility of training and being able to invest in those individuals so that they can be marketable and can be absorbed by the market itself.

Thank you.

Mr M A MNCWANGO: Hon Minister, what practical interventions are being implemented to widen access for unemployed law graduates to train at the bar and qualify as advocates in order to advance the transformation in the profession?

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Hon Chair, specifically because bars are not linked to the department, but broadly in terms of access, for example, what we will do as the department is provide briefing patterns, change briefing patterns, brief those who are entering the space, for example, as junior advocates, so that they can be able to grow within the space.

One of the issues that I've announced during the Budget Vote was that we want to do, what is done in the construction sector, where you have categories and you have those with two years competing against each other, and then you will start briefing differently.

Currently, you find that an advocate with two years is given a brief to compete with somebody with 20 years. They don't have an opportunity to grow and therefore opportunities will continue to be given to those who have more years.

So, as a department, we have decided that we will be issuing those directives and guidelines in the coming one month or two, where we start to say within the State Attorneys, briefs of those who are below three years to compete amongst themselves. We believe that this will increase in terms of transformation but also ensuring that those who are juniors or those who are entering in pupillage to become advocates can be able to grow and have the opportunity.

Ms N E MOTAUNG: I'm covered, House Chair.

Question 483:

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 112

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: House Chair, indeed, very significant progress has been made on this project. As the hon member correctly says, the target in the Medium-Term Development Plan, MTDP, was to get into 1000 bank branches through this new digital partnership. As of Friday, 15 May 2026, a total of 167 bank branches were operational under this new platform.

The rollout has already enabled more than 129 000 ID smart card replacement applications within approximately nine weeks of implementation. Participating banks currently include First National Bank, FNB, Standard Bank and Capitec, with a number of others in the final phases of testing.

The department also continues to engage the banking sector regarding future expansion plans. We have set a target, and we have moved our target forward because we are actually well ahead of our schedule to reach 750 branches by the end of this year, even though the MTDP, target was 1000 by 2029. I think you can see just how rapidly we are changing the face of home affairs civic service delivery.

We are also expecting updated implementation plans from participating banks over the next 30 days, and this will inform

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 113

the anticipated rollout trajectory for the remainder of this financial year. The department will accordingly align the future implementation planning and governance arrangements to the rollout plans once these have been finalised with the participating banks.

The current implementation approach leverages existing banking infrastructure through a digital partnership and application programming interfaces, API, integration model, eliminating the need for the department to establish expensive stand-alone live capture setups within the branches.

In short, our expectation is that the banks must use the infrastructure they already have, the cameras, the fingerprint scanners, as well as their existing integration with home affairs systems to carry the costs of the physical infrastructure, while home affairs continues to manage the back-end infrastructure and invest in the software capabilities we require going forward. Thank you very much.

Mr A C ROOS: Thank you, House Chair. Minister, what steps has the Department of Home Affairs taken to ensure that the bank branch rollout moves beyond pilot and metropolitan areas to

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 114

achieve equitable national coverage, including rural and peri-urban communities?

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Thank you, Chair. Hon member, the entire premise behind this partnership is to bring home affairs services to areas it has never been before. We call this "Home Affairs @ home." As a result, the 167 branches that are already in existence, you will often find them either in high-traffic areas, in urban environments, or, as I mentioned in the previous question, some of the most rural parts of South Africa.

And already we are seeing the benefits of this in the fact that people no longer need to travel a great distance to get to their local home affairs offices. I think about a place like Khatu in the Northern Cape or Dutywa in the Eastern Cape, both of which now have ID smart card replacement services within their own communities, eliminating the need to travel great distances.

As we move forward, we are also specifically targeting the 101 locations where home affairs branch themselves are not even yet modernised. In other words, out of the 349 existing physical Home Affairs offices, 101 do not even yet have live capture facilities, which means they cannot produce ID smart card, and

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 115

they cannot produce some of the quicker turnaround times on passports. Those 101 areas are being deliberately targeted through this bank project so that we can ensure that all of those communities get access to smart ID services. And as we continue towards the goal of 1000, we will continue to prioritise these particular areas to make sure that we deliver home affairs at home, in your own community, no need to travel a great distance. Even if you live in a rural area, as long as there is a bank branch, we can bring our services to you. Thank you very much.

Mr J S NGUBANE: Thank you, Chair. Hon Minister, with these bank branches of home affairs in progress, what is the cost structure that will be of benefit to banks by taking over some of these Home Affairs work? How much are they going to charge the government? If not, why not? If so, what are the details?

Secondly, in terms of staff training and skilling on the basic special work of home affairs processes and procedures, have these bank employees been trained enough to do this work? How are they going to be measured in terms of split work of the banks versus the home affairs work? If not, why not? Give details if it is so.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 116

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Before I recognise the hon Minister, hon members, you are reminded that follow-up is not supposed to have sub-sections, but I am quite sure the Minister will give it a go.

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Thank you, Chair. I am happy to give it a go. I think the first point to make is that the premise of hon Ngubane's question demonstrates the problem. We are not interested in processes and discretion for officials. That is why we have the many failures in home affairs that have been well documented over the years. As soon as your application is reliant on the discretion of an individual, you open the door for manipulation. These bank branches have no space for that whatsoever.

If you were to go and visit one of these 167 branches, all you will find there is a machine with a camera and a fingerprint scanner. You put your finger down on the scanner, you look into the camera, we instantly verify your identity against the population register and you select on the screen or on the computer terminal the service that you are looking for. That's it.

If your face matches, if your fingerprint matches, you proceed. If it does not, there is no space for you to bribe anyone, there is no space for you to interfere and there is no space for inefficiency. So, the entire model is completely revolutionised compared to what came before.

As I mentioned, in terms of one of the sub-sections of the question, there is no charging of government. The real incentive I think here, or as I said, it is actually the other way around. The banks are expected to use their infrastructure; they must provide all of the devices while we control the back end and the software.

But there is an interesting part to this equation which is the reduction of identity theft and fraud. Our financial sector loses billions of rands every year to people particularly using the green ID book. If you lose your green ID or someone steals it, they manipulate the photograph and they assume your identity and they could open a bank account in your name by way of example. That is exactly what we are working to eradicate by making sure that we get ID smart card in the hands of every eligible South African and by making sure we move away from

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 118

those paper-based documents as well as manipulatable processes. That is the change we are bringing. Thank you.

Ms N H MHLONGO: Minister, given that Capitec is one of the biggest funders of your political party, the Democratic Alliance, does the partnership with Capitec not create a conflict of interest for the Minister? And why was this partnership agreement only concluded a year after the Minister assumed office under the Government of National Unity, GNU?

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Thank you, Chair. I am not sure if the allegation, therefore, is that all of these banks, FNB, Standard Bank, ABSA, Nedbank, Capitec, are they all somehow implicated in this question. It is absolute nonsense. We are bringing services to people at a scale and at a pace that has never been seen before. We are doing it in a way that does not cost the government money. We are doing it in a way that eliminates the scope for fraud, that brings efficiency, including applications done sometimes, within as little as five minutes. That is what we are delivering, and the conspiracy theorists must step aside while we do so. Thank you.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 119

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon Mente, why do you want to be recognised, hon member?

Ms N V MENTE-NKUNA: House Chair, I think you should have called your member out. He cannot be addressing another member and say, "she is talking absolute nonsense." You should have called him out, and he must withdraw that. And the question is about Capitec, which then influenced him to include other banks so that there can be a smokescreen.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon member, I got your point of order. I got your point of order. I do not think you need to go into the merits. Hon Minister, at some points in the past, the use of the word's nonsense has been ruled unparliamentary, and other instances not. I would request you, for the sake of progress, to withdraw that statement.

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Gladly. Factually incorrect. Thank you.

Ms N V MENTE-NKUNA: That is not a withdrawal. That is not a withdrawal. That is an insult. And we are not going to be insulted by some white, small boys here.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 120

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon member. No, no, let the Minister first just withdraw unconditionally.

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Withdrawn unconditionally. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Thank you. Hon Nodada, why do you want to be recognised?

Mr B B NODADA: Chair, the hon Mente mentioned a derogatory term here, and I would like you to rule on that. And she withdraws the statement that she made. I know it may be offensive that we are doing well in government, but they must just take it because we are helping the people they are trying to fight for.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Order, hon members! Hon Nodada, just please repeat ... [Interjections.] ...

An HON MEMBER: Cadre deployment, basic education. Where are you doing well?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): ... Please do not unmute and speak without being recognised. Hon Nodada, my apologies. The

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 121

sound is not good. What is the substance of your point of order?

Mr B B NODADA: Chair, the substance of the point of order, is that hon Mente said a derogatory term to the Minister of Home Affairs. And she must withdraw that because it is unparliamentary language, and she must withdraw that. She spoke about ... [Interjections.]

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon Mente, you referred to the Minister as a "small boy," I do not know whether that is insulting. But a small boy, please withdraw those words. For the sake of progress.

Ms N H MHLONGO: No, don't say for the sake of progress.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): I did say that. Hon Mente!

Ms N H MHLONGO: Say it loudly?

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon Mente!

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 122

Ms N V MENTE-NKUNA: Chair, you know, you must not do that. You must not qualify your statement when you speak to your party, but you do not qualify it when you speak to other people.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): I have asked you to withdraw the words "small boy." Are you withdrawing?

Ms N V MENTE-NKUNA: Let me correct hon Nodada, I am not hon Mente, I am hon Mente.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): I am going to give you one more opportunity.

Ms N V MENTE-NKUNA: Yes, I withdraw.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Thank you. Hon Gana, you may ask the next follow-up question.

IsiZulu:

Mnu C V SHONGWE: Sihlalo, ephuzwini lokukhalima okuphambukayo: Ngifuna ukubuza, Sihlalo, ukuthi ngabe kuvumelekile yina la ePhalamende ukuthi i-Government of National Unity, GNU, le engapha ayiyisizi le-GNU engale. Insizwa le ensundu yakithi

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 123

ilwela abamhlophe kodwa i-GNU le engale ayibasizi. Ubumbano lusho ukuthini kanti, Sihlalo. Siyabonga. [Ihlombe.]

English:

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon member, that is not a point of order. Please sit down.

Mr A C ROOS: Minister, currently ID smart card and passport applications can be made at bank branches. But this still means going to home affairs branches for other services. So, what other services can we expect to be rolled out through live capture services at bank branches? And what are the timelines?

The MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS: Thank you, hon Chair. So, at the moment, it is only the ID smart card replacement service. So, if you have a green ID book and you want to transition to the more secure document, or if you have lost or your existing ID smart card has been stolen, you are currently able to do that replacement service. And that is where we have seen about 129 000 applications.

Next in line is to bring in passport applications. Again, working along the same principles, as well as the first-time ID

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 124

applications is one of the categories we are currently working on. I think, Chair, a very exciting service for South Africans to look forward to is for the very first time ever the option that we are looking at now of introducing secure home delivery of your enabling documents.

In other words, the days of standing in long home affairs queues just to collect a document is coming to an end because we will introduce technology that can actually securely deliver that document to you and make sure it reaches the right person. If you put that basket of services together by the end of this year, indeed Home Affairs @ home will be delivering a service delivery revolution for the people of South Africa. Thank you.

Question 445:

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Chairperson, the Office of the Chief Justice, OCJ, treats all allegations of fraud, corruption, misconduct and unethical conduct within court administration with the utmost seriousness because such conduct undermines public confidence in the integrity of the justice system and the administration of justice. Hence, the OCJ has incorporated a zero-tolerance approach on fraud and corruption.

The matter relating to the Mthatha High Court remains under investigation. As part of the investigation process, lifestyle audits were conducted on officials alleged to be involved. The investigation team is currently in the process of handing the matter over to the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, DPCI, for further criminal investigation.

The investigations relating to the Pretoria High Court involving four officials have been concluded from an internal investigation perspective. Three officials have since been dismissed from employment. One is currently still undergoing a disciplinary committee, DC, process. A criminal case in this regard has been opened with the SA Police Service, SAPS, for further criminal investigation. In addition, one official attached to the Johannesburg High Court was dismissed following an allegation related to the issuing of fraudulent court documents.

The consequence management process instituted over the past three years in matters involving allegations of fraud and corruption relating to the issuing of fraudulent court documents resulted in the dismissal of five officials. Four officials were dismissed during the 2025-26 financial year in matters involving

those fraudulent documents, while one official was dismissed during the 2024-25 financial year. Over the past three financial years, a total of 75 matters arising of allegations have been investigated and many of them have been handed over to law enforcement agencies.

A breakdown in terms of criminal investigations after criminal elements were identified during internal investigations are as follows: 32 cases in the 2023-24 financial year, 26 cases in the 2024-25 financial year and 18 cases in the 2025-26 financial year. These matters relate to various forms of alleged criminal conduct identified during investigations, including fraudulent court orders, corruption, financial misconduct, abuse of official processes and other irregular activities affecting court administration.

The DPCI has confirmed that these matters are in different stages of investigations and they are better placed to provide progress in this regard. Thank you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon members, in terms of Rule 137(10)(a), the hon Buthelezi will take charge of the first follow-up question. [Applause.]

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 127

Ms N BUTHELEZI: House Chair, I stand in for hon Mkongi who has raised this question. Minister, beyond the initiation of internal investigations or precautionary suspensions, how many of the implicated officials at the Mthatha and Pretoria High Courts have been dismissed or criminally prosecuted to date? What specific obstacles, whether procedural, evidentiary or related to judicial independence have prevented faster finalisation of these cases. Thank you. [Applause.]

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: I've answered the question. I gave numbers per court. I said four in Pretoria.

Ms N BUTHELEZI: I didn't get the answer, Minister, so can you please do the honours and answer me again?

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Okay, let me repeat. I said in terms of the Mthatha High Court, all the investigation, we have done lifestyle audits and the DPCI has taken over. So, there is no ... it's criminal cases. In terms of the Pretoria High Court, we've dismissed three, one pending in a DC process. In the Johannesburg High Court, one has been dismissed. Then the others, in terms of criminal records

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 128

and criminal cases that have been opened, it is 32 in 2023-24 financial year, 26 cases in the 2024-25 financial year and 18 cases in 2025-26. We don't have precautionary suspensions, but there have been dismissals and cases have been opened.

Mr J R B LORIMER: Chair, to the Minister: The President tasked you with ridding the justice system of corruption and you failed. He tasked a panel of which you were the chairperson to find a new National Director of Public Prosecutions, and you failed at that too. South Africa demands that all those implicated in the findings of the Zondo Commission be prosecuted without delay. You haven't exactly succeeded therein either. Will you succeed in improving anything in your department before the end of the Seventh Parliament?

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: I'm not so sure which planet this member lives in, honestly. I was appointed as the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development on 3 December 2024. I have one year in office. I have dismissed several officials as the Minister of Justice. I have given reports in terms of the work that has been done in the Zondo Commission Report. I don't know where you live.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 129

We've given you records of and issues of ... now it's a new question, that's why I've got to go, so I'm going there. But the issue is ... that is why I'm saying, I'm not so sure where he lives because the reports of the Zondo Commission are submitted to Parliament by the President quarterly. Now if the member doesn't read, that can't be me coming back to teach him how to read as a Member of Parliament, honestly speaking. It's beyond my job and beyond my pay grade. [Interjections.] [Applause.]

Mr M SHIKWAMBANA: Chair, Minister, corruption in the courts of South Africa is not an ordinary maladministration. It is an attack on justice itself. When court officials are accused of fraud, records disappear, cases are manipulated and poor people are forced to suffer delays. The courts become a marketplace for those with money and connection, instead of a place of justice. My question is, has the department conducted any broader forensic audits into possible syndicates and systemic corruption operating within court administration, particularly involving case allocations, disappearance of court records and procurement, and the manipulation of the court processes? Thank you. [Applause.]

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 130

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: We've given the incidences of what has happened and the actions that have been taken. In superior courts ... that's why the introduction of court online, we do believe that it allows for transparency. It allows for people to be able to see where their cases are, therefore, they can't be an administrator or a registrar that can push a case beyond what the people can and take money. So that is being attended to.

In terms of literally you're saying that it's broad, it's not broad because if we look at the Johannesburg case, it's four. How many employees do we have in the South Gauteng High Court? How many employees do we have in the North Gauteng High Court versus what we have been able to charge? We are not taking it lightly. That's why you can see where there has been discipline, it's not even an issue of a warning or docking of the salary. It's literally dismissal because all fraudulent cases we do ... and we are doing the same with lower courts.

For example, since I've been in the portfolio, we've not dismissed ... the dismissal of officials in the lower courts who have been particularly ... because this is an area where we are finding that they are colluding on maintenance money. They pay

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 131

the fathers not to pay the children's money. We've been finding them and we've been dismissing them. Thirty-five thousand officials have been dismissed, since I arrived in the Department of Justice, for those fraudulent cases, especially on maintenance, because we do understand the importance of children getting their money.

We are taking the issue of corruption seriously in the department and where we are able to act, we act decisively in DCs. For fraudulent cases, it's non-negotiable, it's a dismissible offence and we are not taking anything beyond that. Thank you.

Ms N BUTHELEZI: House Chair, I'll excuse myself. They didn't brief me.

Question 512:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Chairperson, there are 35 high contact crime stations countrywide. Note that the SA Police Service, SAPS, uses the principle of the 30-plus-five high contact crime stations to accommodate police stations that regularly migrate into and out of the list of the top 30 high contact crime stations.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 132

The response regarding the requested information is provided as the table below. For the province of the Eastern Cape, on part (1), no requests were declined. Not applicable, that is (b).

With regard to component (c), one application was approved. In Gauteng, regarding (a), no requests were declined, and (b) is not applicable. On (c), four applications were approved, and one was deferred to the following provincial integrated resource committee meeting.

With regard to KwaZulu-Natal, no requests were declined.

Components (a) and (b) are not applicable. On (c), requests from seven high contact crime stations in the province were approved.

In Limpopo, no applications were declined, and (b) is not applicable. On (c), the two high contact crime stations were capacitated with additional desktop computers and laptops. In Mpumalanga, no requests from the high contact crime stations were declined, as no requests were received, and (b) is not applicable. On (c), no requests from the high contact crime stations were declined.

The North West province could not process two requests from the high contact crime stations. None of the demands from the high contact crime stations in Rustenburg were declined. No

additional requests were received. In the Western Cape, on part (1), no additional requests were received. One request was not processed. The application could not be processed due to cost-containment measures. On (c), no applications could be processed.

With regard to part 2(a), it needs to be mentioned that the demand process within SAPS is conducted annually and is co-ordinated by the supply chain management capability within each key business unit, including each of the nine provinces. Demand plans are submitted by all business units, which are then consolidated at provincial level and provided to the national division supply chain for consolidation at national level.

The table below provides the requested responses regarding each of the top 30-plus-five high contact crime stations. Starting with the Eastern Cape, the requested equipment for the station, through the annual demand plan process, was received on 15 January 2025. On (a)(ii), the stations were provided with additional vehicles, bullet-resistant vests, and laptops, as requested, during August and October 2025. On (a)(iii), no disciplinary action was ... Thank you, Chair. [Time expired.]

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 134

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): In terms of Rule 137(10)(a), the hon Schickerling is recognised for the first follow-up question.

Ms L M SCHIKERLING: House Chair, it looks like the Deputy Minister and I are having a one-on-one today.

Hon Deputy Minister, I hear what you are saying, but, you know, when you are conducting oversight at police stations, more than 50% of the vehicles are not working, so the supply chain management's red tape is really causing trouble. I do not understand how there can be corruption in South Africa with all the red tape the SAPS has. Nevertheless, the question is whether any independent audit has been conducted to verify the operational readiness of the top 30 high contact crime police stations, particularly regarding the availability of vehicles, forensic equipment, and personnel. If not, why not? If so, what were the findings in each case? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Chair, to the hon member: Thank you for that question.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 135

Yes, indeed, the issue of vehicles, we have observed it as a problem because of the contract that was entered into centrally through the National Treasury. In this regard, we have taken a decision that provinces should be responsible for the fixing of vehicles, and we have found that this decision is assisting us greatly to have vehicles repaired on time and being made available to stations.

However, we are aware that the system is not as effective as we would like it to be, but we are confident that, moving forward, there will be improvement because provincial commissioners have committed to ensure that the processes work, and it is in their interest that this matter of vehicle maintenance is decentralised for ease of services to the stations. Thank you.

Mr C V SHONGWE: Chair, to the Deputy Minister: Given that station commanders at high contact crime police stations have reportedly submitted repeated requests and formal reports regarding critical shortages in both equipment and staffing, and considering the levels of violent crime recorded at these stations, what specific failures in the department's internal chain, budgeting prioritisation, and oversight mechanisms have resulted in these documented shortages persisting without

resolution? What consequence management has been implemented against senior officials within the SAPS, head office, and provincial supply chain structures that were responsible for ensuring that these operational needs were acted upon timeously and not left compromising frontline policing of ...

IsiZulu:

... amaphoyisa ethu emalokishini.

English:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Chair, I thank the hon Shongwe for that question. We discussed this matter and took a firm decision last week during the release of the crime statistics that we will be taking a tour to all the high contact crime stations to look at the challenges they are confronted with. We have agreed with management that there must be consequence management in this regard.

For those station commanders or district commanders who are not coming to the party, who are not fit to do the work they are supposed to do, we will first try and ensure that we capacitate them. For those that do not respond appropriately, there will be consequences in this regard because it is unacceptable that we

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 137

will have a situation where we have the same problems day in and day out without it being resolved. We are confident that, through this approach and working together with management, we will be able to overcome these shortcomings. Thank you, Chairperson.

Ms J S PETERSEN: House Chair, to the hon Deputy Minister: Can you explain why commanders facing impossible operational conditions are being threatened with disciplinary action for lack of readiness when the department itself allegedly failed to provide the basic tools, staffing, and resources required for them to perform their duties effectively? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Chair, I did not hear the first part of the question. The hon member was very soft on the microphone.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon Petersen, just repeat.

Ms J S PETERSEN: Thank you, House Chair. Deputy Minister, can you explain why commanders facing impossible operational conditions are being threatened with disciplinary action for lack of readiness when the department itself allegedly failed to

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 138

provide the basic tools, staffing, and resources required for them to perform their duties effectively? Thank you.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Chair, I wish to thank the hon Petersen. No commander will be taken through disciplinary proceedings for things they have not done. As I said, we – management and the Ministry – have resolved that we shall visit these high contact crime stations to check what their difficulties are and to work with station and district commanders to resolve the problems. Disciplinary action will only be taken against a commander that is not responding to the interventions despite the assistance they will have been offered. Thank you, Chairperson.

Ms L M SCHIKERLING: House Chair, to the hon Deputy Minister: You have just confirmed that, since you have decentralised the fixing of vehicles to provinces, the turnaround time is so much quicker. Would it then be fair for me to say that you are admitting, as the Ministry, that it is now a viable option to look at expanding policing powers to capable provinces, municipalities, and metros as a viable option to make sure that policing in provinces is rolled out effectively? Thank you.

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 139

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Chairperson, I wish to thank the hon Schickerling. Policing is not affected by how SAPS is structured, Chairperson.

Provinces and metros have outlined responsibilities in terms of the Constitution of the Republic. As policing and the security forces in general, their responsibilities and functions are outlined in the Constitution. It is the same Constitution in which it is indicated clearly that provinces have a role to play in policing. Nothing is inhibiting provinces from doing their responsibilities within the current arrangement. Thank you, Chairperson.

Question 517:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Chair, the border policing sea teams, which are part of the SA Police Service Specialised Visible Policing capability, specifically the border policing capability, operate within the coastal and maritime border environment to address transnational organised crime, whereas the water policing and diving services, which are part of the conventional visible policing capability, operate on inland freshwater environments and are primarily focused on diving, search and recover functions.

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 140

The financial information reflects annual harbour-level allocation for the Western Cape seaport environment, Eastern Cape Seaport environment, KwaZulu-Natal harbour and Durban; the combined allocation for these seaports is as follows: for the Western Cape, 2016-17, up to 2025-26, they were allocated various amounts, with R5 987 015 million allocated for the 2025-26 financial year. Eastern Cape, they were allocated R3 000 089 237 and KwaZulu-Natal, R10 865 029. The SAPS Water Policing and Diving Services: water policing and diving services within the SAPS are performed as an ad hoc function by members within provinces. These members are performing primary functions at police stations and/or units within the provinces. The dive points within the provinces are under the command of the provincial commissioners, who are responsible for the human and physical resources at dive points. Do not have a dedicated budget; therefore, they are reliant on the provincial budget. Below is a breakdown of funds allocated to this unit from the provincial budget for the last five financial years. The information for the 2018-19 financial year is not readily available.

And therefore, what we have that we have presented is the 2020-21 financial year, which is R2,7 million; 2021-22 financial year

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 141

is R3,9 million; the 2022-23 financial year, R3,1million, 2023-24 is R3,2 million, 2024-25 is R4,3 million, and 2025-26 is R3,6 million, giving a total of R20 992 601 555 cents. The SAPS border policing teams: the table below reflects the total funded posts versus actual capacity at the various border policing seaports; Eastern Cape, the capacitated percentage at seaport East London Harbour is 91,8%, Port Elizabeth Harbour is 68%, and Ngqura Harbour is 49%. Thank you. [Time expired.]

Mr J R B LORIMER: House Chair, Minister, it's quite clear that specialist units are underfunded from what you've said, which would explain why they are dysfunctional and lack capacity. Minister, how do you expect this unit to respond to drownings, floods and accidents and to retrieve evidence if the SAPS specialised units are in crisis?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thank you very much, Chair, and thanks, hon Lorimer, for the follow-up question. We do agree that the units are not appropriately funded, and we are doing everything possible to ensure that, despite this, the units are operational. I must say that despite this, the units are able to be given resources from time to time to carry out their responsibilities, and we can see them during

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 142

the time when they are needed to do their work that they do respond despite the constraints in terms of resource allocation.

We have seen them doing a good job during floods in affected areas throughout the country. We have seen the units doing a sterling job intercepting those who are drug traffickers in the inland. There were arrests that were affected, particularly in the area of the Western Cape, because of the good work that these units are doing despite the resource constraints that they have. Thank you very much, Chairperson.

IsiZulu:

Mnu C V SHONGWE: Ngiyabonga, Sihlalo, ...

English:

... Minister, in view of operational importance of the SAPS Diving Unit in recovering evidence in murder and drowning investigations, supporting disaster response, and ensuring evidential integrity in serious criminal cases, what specific failures in procurement planning, asset maintenance, and personnel allocation have resulted in the apparent difficulty of the department being able to readily account for the diving

unit's full operational capacity over the past 10 financial years?

And how does the Minister justify Parliament having to request basic readiness and capability information that should form part of the standardised annual performance reporting and audit compliance for the specialised high-risk operational units? And ...

IsiZulu:

... uphi ubaba wezwi lo u-Cachalia? [Ihlombe.]

English:

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thank you, Chairperson, for the opportunity; thanks, Hon Shongwe, for the question. We have discussed the organisational structure of the SAPS when we made the recommendations together with the leadership, with management, and there was wide consultation. We believe the new organisational structure of the SAPS will be able to respond to the challenges of the day. With regard to the issue that you have raised, the reset agenda that the Minister and the acting national commissioner have put forth as a consequence of the processes that we are going through in the

Madlanga Commission and the Ad Hoc Committee and other recommendations that came from other committees, and the need for us to ensure that the key units like the seaborne units that we are talking about receive the necessary resources and support within management.

We are convinced that through this reset agenda, we'll be able to emerge with a situation where, in this division, the sea teams are appropriately funded. I fully agree with you, as reflected in the response that we have outlined here, that they don't have a dedicated budget, but they are given a budget as and when necessary. This reset agenda and reprioritisation that we are going to emerge with will make sure that the sea division is given the necessary resources that it can continue to do the work that they have been doing despite the resource constraints. Thanks, Chairperson.

Mr S H M VAN WYK: House Chair, thank you very much, I just want to know from the Deputy Minister, can you please indicate whether any operational ... [Interjections.] ...

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 145

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): Hon Van Wyk, my apologies. Sound doesn't really travel well from that side of the House to the front. Just speak a bit harder, please.

Mr S H M VAN WYK: Okay, cool. Minister, okay, Chair, ... bases have been downgraded, underresourced, or left without adequate boats and diving equipment during the past 10 financial years, and what impact this has had on response times, recovery operations, and the overall effectiveness of the unit? Thank you very much.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Thank you, Chairperson, thanks, hon Van Wyk, yes, indeed, the SAPS, as an organisation, have been severely affected in the past years because of resource constraints that generally they have experienced. So, the sea unit was also affected by that. However, despite the resource constraints that were there and the fact that within the security cluster itself, the budget was affected over time. The administration, from the Sixth Administration to the current, there has been a realisation for the need for the security cluster to be appropriately resourced so that it can perform its responsibilities. I am quite certain that this realisation and the support led by the President will

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 146

ensure that units like these receive the necessary and appropriate resources that will enable them to carry out their responsibilities. Because yes, indeed, given the geographic position of our country and the fact that we have a greater part of the ocean, that is the responsibility of the country. And in that space, the SAPS must have appropriate capability to do policing work in that environment. And we believe the reset will appropriately place this unit together with the resources that they will need to do their work. Thanks very much, Chairperson.

Mr J R B LORIMER: Deputy Minister, considering the increasing juniorisation within the SAPS, how many senior experienced SAPS divers are currently available for duty?

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLICE (Mr C C Mathale): Chair, thanks, hon Lorimer. I might not be able to give you the exact figures, but it is not necessarily correct to say there is a juniorisation within the SA Police Service, and because senior members are not there is not correct. Yes, we do have people leaving because of age, but we do have a sizable number of experienced police officers that are in that space and are capable of doing that work that the SAPS need to carry out, to

UNREVISED HANSARD

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY, 27 MAY 2026

Page: 147

ensure that law and order is maintained in the country. Thanks very much, Chairperson.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr W Horn): The time allocated for Questions has now expired. Replies to questions we have not been able to deal with will be printed in the Hansard. I request members to stand and wait for the Presiding Officer and the Mace to leave the Chamber. That concludes the day. The House is adjourned.

The House adjourned at 19:01.