



**MINISTRY: PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO.: 635

Ms N V Mente (EFF) to ask the Minister of Public Service and Administration:

Whether, in accordance with section 3(4)(a) and (b) of the Public Service Act, Act 103 of 2007, his department conducted any study in order to advise the President on the possibility of reducing the size of the national Government and thereby reduce the size of Cabinet; if not, why not; if so, (a) which departments can be abolished and (b) what amount can be saved?

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REPLY

In terms of section 91(2) read with section 91(3)(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, the President appoints the Deputy President and Ministers and assigns them powers and functions. The appointments are made under a President's Act, see for example President's Act No. 135 signed on 26 May 2014 after the 2014 general elections.

Following the appointment of the national Executive by the President (President's Act) various administrative and legal steps are taken to give effect to the new Executive portfolios. The Presidency with the support of the Department of Public Service and Administration and the National Treasury, lead the National Macro Organisation of the State (NMOS) in 2014. The NMOS process gives effect to the Presidential proclamations regarding the establishment of new or amended Executive portfolios, the renaming and establishment of new departments, and the transfer of legislation between Ministers in terms of the Constitution.

The NMOS process does consider efficiencies in terms of the size of Ministerial portfolios and locate, as far as possible, more than one department or government component under a Ministry without the need to create a Ministry for every department. Examples of multiple departments within Ministerial Portfolios are:

- (a) Communications - Department of Communications and the Government Communication and Information System.
- (b) Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs - Department of Cooperative Governance, the Department of Traditional Affairs, and the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent.
- (c) Defence and Military Veterans - Department of Defence and the Department of Military Veterans.
- (d) Public Service and Administration - Department of Public Service and Administration, the National School of Government, the Office of the Public Service Commission and the Centre of Public Service Innovation.
- (e) Justice and Correctional Services - Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, the Department of Correctional Services and the Office of the Chief Justice.
- (f) Minister in the Presidency: Planning Monitoring and Evaluation - Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and Statistics South Africa

Departments are linked to Ministers' portfolios to administer the legislation and policies in that portfolio. The decision to establish national departments is an executive decision by the President. In terms of section 7(5)(a) of the Public Service Act, 1994, the President by proclamation may on the advice of the Minister for the Public Service and Administration amend Schedule 1 so as to establish or abolish any national department, designate such department and the head thereof or amend such designation.

The Department of Public Service and Administration has not conducted a study to advise the President on reducing the size of national government.