

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION 1737

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(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 20/2012)

Mr L Ramatlakane (Cope) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: [*Interdepartmental transfer on 3 August 2012*]

Whether the Limpopo textbook procurement tender was advertised; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW2125E

RESPONSE:

After having considered the urgency of the 2013 textbook procurement and delivery processes, and the fact that National Treasury could only commit funds for the 2013 textbook procurement and delivery processes on 29 August 2012, the Accounting Officer of the Limpopo Department of Education invoked the relevant sections of the PFMA, and the Preferential Procurement Policy and requested the relevant Treasury to approve a deviation from normal tender processes. All textbook publishers operating in South Africa were invited to briefing sessions at which further reduction of textbook prices as published in the National Catalogues were negotiated with the publishers. This is same process that was followed for the 2012 textbook procurement and delivery processes.

It must be emphasised that the National Catalogues, which in their compilation, involve rigorous procurement processes, publish eight textbook titles per subject. These titles are ranked according to prices. What is more important to note is the fact that the quality of the content for all eight titles has been quality assured by a team of experts and has been found to be similar between the eight titles per subject. Therefore, in terms of the quality of the content, a choice of the eighth ranked textbook, would have made no difference to that of a textbook ranked as first.

The publishers, whose prices were the most reduced and had indicated the capacity to deliver the ordered consignment of textbooks at a set timeframes, were formally notified as is a norm in all procurement processes. Of importance to note, is the fact that all textbooks that were procured for Limpopo schools, were selected from the National Catalogues, which as explained above, are products of rigorous procurement processes. In Limpopo, a deviation from the normal procurement processes was approved by the relevant Treasury, making the 2013 textbook procurement and delivery processes beyond reproach.

