

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 709**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 06/2014)**

**Ms A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

- (1) Which grades will be writing tests as part of the Annual National Assessments (ANAs) of literacy and numeracy in the (a) 2014, (b) 2015 and (c) 2016 academic years;
- (2) whether all schools participate in the ANAs; if not, (a) how many participate in these assessments and (b) how is the participating school sample determined;
- (3) how she will ensure that the ANAs are (a) internationally benchmarked, (b) statistically comparable to the previous years' tests and (c) independently moderated;
- (4) how will she ensure that the results of the ANAs are utilised by (a) the national department and (b) each (i) province and (ii) district to inform literacy and numeracy strategies? NW793E

**Response**

- (1) (a) Grades 1- 6 and grade 9 will write ANA tests in 2014. In addition, a random sample of 50 schools per province with grades 7 and 8 will participate in an ANA pilot study in 2014, (b) the Minister is currently in the process of reviewing the administration of ANA with a view to strengthening its impact on the efficiency of the system and enhancing the quality of learning outcomes, from 2015 and beyond. This will be finalized at a meeting with the Council of Education Ministers; and (c) this will be dependent on the review process referred to in (b).

- (2) (a) All schools in Grades 1–6 and 9 will participate in ANA in 2014, except for grades 7 and 8. (b) the schools at which Grades 7 and 8 learners will participate in ANA in 2014 will be randomly sampled.
- (3) (a) The Department has already engaged international experts in the design of the ANA tests and the Department will continue to increase the international inputs into these tests. The Director General has established an Advisory Committee which comprises local and international expertise that advises on matters relating to large scale assessments.
- (b) ongoing discussions with experts include how the design of testing can include confidential tests or test items that can be used for proper equating of results from year to year and (c) the 2013 ANA was verified by an independent agent that exercised oversight in the test administration in a sample of schools across all provinces, marked the tests independently and also processed the data which was reported on.
- (4) (a) All sections of the Department at national level are using ANA results as a basis that informs planned activities that are geared towards making an impact on learner performance and (b) the DBE is working together with both (i) provinces and (ii) districts to ensure that our human and material resources are directed towards addressing the gaps that the assessment is revealing in terms of teacher support, instructional school management, involvement of parents and other relevant interventions. The priority attached to this initiative is confirmed by the Minister hosting quarterly meetings with district directors where the role of the district in addressing these gaps is highlighted.