

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR ORAL REPLY

QUESTION 89

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 05/03/2013

(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 05/2013)

Mrs J D Kilian (Cope) to ask the Minister of Basic Education:

- (1) What is the total estimated cost of the (a)(i) implementation and (ii) installation and (b) medium- and long-term maintenance of the proposed biometric attendance control system for educators;
- (2) (a) who will analyse and report on the data obtained from the proposed biometric devices and (b) how;
- (3) whether the principle and practice of the proposed system have been (a) discussed with and (b) approved by the relevant trade unions;
- (4) whether they have agreed to closer control of attendance patterns of their members? NO461E

REPLIES:

- (1) **What is the total estimated cost of the (a)(i) implementation and (ii) installation and**

1. (a)(i)/(ii)

The DBE is currently investigating possible scenarios around the cost associated with the implementation of Biometric systems in all schools especially in relation to the economies of scale. This would include the installation of SQL software, biometric hardware, peripheral hardware, project management and training and required infrastructure and connectivity. Once this has been finalized we will be better positioned to provide realistic estimates.

(b) medium- and long-term maintenance of the proposed biometric attendance control system for educators;

Estimated costs noted above include the training of personnel (Schools, Districts and Provincial) to ensure a self sustaining system. The service provider will provide on-site and telephonic support for a limited period of time after the installation and implementation of the biometric units at sites.

(2) (a) who will analyse and report on the data obtained from the proposed biometric devices and (b) how;

It is envisaged that a biometric terminal will be installed at each school and the data must flow through to the district offices and then to provincial level. All data will be synchronised to a single national database. Standard Time & Attendance reporting needs will include attendance, absentees, late coming, early leaving and detailed Teacher & Attendance reports. It is envisaged that the biometric system will be a web based online system connected to via ADSL or a mobile wireless connection depending on the IT infrastructure within provinces. This will enable managers at schools, districts, provinces and national levels will draw reports to facilitate management and planning processes.

(3) whether the principle and practice of the proposed system have been (a) discussed with and (b) approved by the relevant trade unions;

The principle and practice of monitoring the time and attendance of teachers is currently done manually with teachers signing attendance registers. The electronic biometric system is aimed at enhancing this process. The possibility of implementing this system is currently being researched and discussed at the various forums within the DBE. The principles and practice underpinning the new biometric system will be shared with trade unions as the process unfolds.

(4) whether they have agreed to closer control of attendance patterns of their members?

The issue has not been discussed with trade unions.