

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES  
QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY  
QUESTION NUMBER 275 [CW375E]  
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**275. Mr R A Lees (DA-KZN) to ask the Minister of Finance:**

- (1) With reference to his reply to Question 560 on 6 November 2012, (a) what are the details of the mobile tax units that have been deployed in KwaZulu-Natal, including the (i) number that was deployed, (ii) addresses where they were deployed, (iii) business hours for each unit, (iv) shelters that were provided to clients at each unit, (v) toilets and (vi) seating arrangements for clients at each unit;
- (2) whether taxpayers were informed of the availability of the mobile tax units in the villages or towns closest to their place of residence; if not, why not; if so, (a) how were they informed and (b) what services are provided by such mobile tax units;
- (3) whether the mobile tax units are equipped with online connectivity; if not, (a) why not and (b) when will such online connectivity be in place; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) (a) at what stage will the SA Revenue Service (SARS) request a taxpayer to visit its branch for the verification of details and (b) what action does SARS take in the case where a taxpayer is unable to visit the closest branch?

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**REPLY**

- (1) The Mobile Tax Units (hereafter referred to as MTU's) have enabled SARS to expand the footprint of the organization into areas that do not have a SARS presence. The first three MTU's were procured in the 2010/11 financial year and were deployed in August 2011. These units have been deployed in KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape/Free State and Limpopo/Mpumalanga. In the 2012/13 financial year, the MTU's were deployed in 526 locations throughout the country, servicing 54,560 taxpayers. As a result of the impact of these units, SARS is in the process of procuring six new mobile tax units. This will mean that each province in the country will have a Mobile Tax Unit by the end of 2013.
  - i) In KZN specifically, the one MTU dedicated to the province was deployed at 120 locations within the province, servicing a total of 13,037 taxpayers.
  - ii) The one MTU in KZN was deployed at the following municipalities and hospitals:  
Bergville Municipality, Kokstad Municipality, Madadeni Hospital, Okhahlamba Municipality.

The MTU was also deployed at Town Halls in the following towns: Phoenix, Umhlanga, Pietermaritzburg, Durban, Umbilo, Waterval, Utrecht, Estcourt, NewCastle, Tongaat, Ezakheni, Emadadeni, Stanger, Kokstad, Empangeni, Pomeroy, Inkandla, Maphumulo, Ladysmith, Ulundi and Melmoth

- iii) The MTU's are operational from 09h00 to 15h30.
- iv) Shelters in the form of gazebos are provided to protect taxpayers from the weather conditions.
- v) Access to ablution facilities are considered as part of our planning for the location of the MTU's. In this regard we have co-located ourselves at areas where there are public ablution facilities.
- vi) The seating arrangements include 24 chairs per vehicle for the use of taxpayers during their wait for assistance.

- (2) (a) SARS engages with the local authorities prior to deploying an MTU to an area. SARS informs the public of the presence and location of the MTU's by way of leaflets and posters at areas where community members visit, such as, amongst others municipal premises and libraries. We also use local media such as community newspapers and community radio to inform taxpayers of our interventions.

(b) The following services are provided by the MTU's:

- Completion & submission of tax returns
- Submission of PAYE recons & e@syfile™
- Statements of account
- General queries
- Banking detail changes
- Changes to registered particulars

- (3) The SARS MTU's are offices on wheels with satellite connectivity. We try to offer the same service to taxpayers that they would receive at a SARS branch.

- (4) (a) In the few instances where SARS is unable to validate the bank details of a taxpayer through the interface with banks, SARS will require taxpayers to visit their local SARS branch which includes the MTU's.

(b) Where, due to exceptional circumstances, a taxpayer is unable to visit a SARS branch, SARS will allow the person who is granted the power of attorney to act on behalf of the taxpayer in respect of the taxpayer's tax affairs. This person would have to visit a SARS branch with the required proof of acting capacity on behalf of the taxpayer. The appointed person would only be allowed to enquire, complete and sign the necessary tax returns or other documents regarding the taxpayer's tax affairs.