

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER: 372 [NW519E]**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 8 MARCH 2013**

**314. Mr G B D Mc Intosh (Cope) to ask the Minister of Finance:**

Whether the SA Revenue Service has an inspectorate which visits businesses to ensure compliance with tax laws; if so, (a) how large is the inspectorate and (b) how many persons of each specified nationality have been (i) issued with warnings or (ii) prosecuted in the (aa) 2009-10, (bb) 2010-11 and (cc) 2011-12 financial years?

NW393E

**REPLY**

SARS has no dedicated inspectorate which focuses on ensuring compliance among businesses. The mandate to promote tax compliance among all taxpayers – including businesses – is shared between a range of SARS divisions and units. This includes the SARS Large Business Centre comprising approximately 500 personnel which focuses on large corporate taxpayers, while small and medium sized businesses are serviced by our branch network. This includes an outreach and education unit of approximately 300 personnel which visits taxpayers (both individual and corporate) to educate them on their tax obligations and responsibilities to promote compliance. This unit last year embarked on a registration campaign for businesses in the informal sector in partnership with other government agencies. This campaign is on-going.

Other divisions within SARS also perform a range of compliance checks on all taxpayer types including officials who perform assurance verifications based on risk assessments; audit; Customs officials who perform compliance verifications and checks (including site visits) in respect of Customs laws; and the Tax and Customs Enforcement Investigations division which pursues criminal investigations.

All persons / business resident / operating a business in South Africa are expected to be tax compliant in terms of the applicable law.