

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY
QUESTION NUMBER: 661 [NW776E]
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661. Mr D J Maynier (DA) to ask the Minister of Finance:

- (1) Whether the (a) director-general and/or (b) any officials from his department attended meetings of the study groups of a certain political party (name furnished) in Parliament in the (i) 2014-15 and (ii) 2015-16 financial years; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, in each specified case, (aa) what was the purpose of the meeting, (bb) what is the (aaa) name and (bbb) designation of each official who attended, (cc) on what date did the meetings take place and (dd) which study group was attended by the specified officials;
- (2) whether there are any statutory grounds on which (a) the director-general and/or (b) any officials from his department are allowed to attend meetings of study groups of a certain political party in Parliament; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, on which provisions contained in the (i) Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, (ii) the Public Service Act, Act 103 of 1994 as amended, (iii) Public Service Regulations and/or (iv) Code of Conduct for Public Servants do the specified persons rely to attend the specified meetings?

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REPLY:

1. (a) No. And no to all subsequent sections to the question.
(b) Yes. The DDG: Tax Policy and Financial Regulations was requested by the Minister to brief the study group on certain items that were before the parliamentary committees.
 - (i) Yes
 - (ii) Yes
 - (aa) To discuss legislation before the parliamentary committees
 - (bb) (aaa) LC August and T Plaatjie
(bbb) Ministerial Parliamentary Liaison Officers
 - (cc) Upon request, usually during Parliamentary sessions.
 - (dd) Finance and Appropriation study groups
2. The Code of Conduct for Public Service (Chapter 2 of the Public Service Regulations, 2001, as amended) stipulates:
 - (a) An employee may not does not abuse her or his position in the public service to promote or prejudice the interest of any political party or interest group (regulation C.2.7)
 - (b) An employee must refrain from party political activities in the workplace (regulation C.3.7).

However, officials of a department may and should communicate with, and consult, relevant role players on policy and legislative proposals. Relevant role players include the study group of any political party for a Parliamentary committee. Furthermore, if a Minister is invited to a study group meeting in their capacity as the Minister, i.e. as a member of the executive, they may nominate an official to represent or attend on their behalf.

On the direction of the Minister, officials have also met Members of Parliament of various political parties to provide clarity on Legislative and policy matters.

