

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NUMBER 2139 [NW2456E]

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2139. Mr D J Maynier (DA) to ask the Minister of Finance:

Whether there are any specialised units within the SA Revenue Service (SARS), like the SARS High Risk Investigation Unit; if not, (a) why not and (b) what is the position in this regard; if so, (i) what are the (aa) names and (bb) functions of each of the specified units, (ii) how many persons are employed by each of the specified units, (iii) what is the 2016-17 budget for each of the specified units and (iv) when was each of the specified units established?

NW2456E

REPLY:

This information was provided by the South African Revenue Service (SARS) on the 08th November 2016. The Ministry of Finance cannot verify its accuracy because of lack of accountability and cooperation from the SARS top management.

1. There are **no** specialised units like the SARS High Risk Investigation Unit:

- a) The HRIU was formally dissolved in 2014.
- b) SARS has since implemented a New Operating Model and the current position in dealing with non-compliance in high risk areas (including areas such as the illicit economy) is guided by the focus

areas in the publicised 2012/13 – 2016/17 SARS Compliance Programme.

(i – iv) As stated there are no specialised units, thus the questions are not applicable.

Why not – why does SARS have no units similar to HRIU.

SARS has a multifaceted approach to tackle the illicit economy, tax related organised crime and tax evasion. This approach intergrates its resources to deal with such matters.

SARS also builds and maintains strong working relationships with South African law enforcement agencies. The SARS enforcement unit primarily deals with tax, customs and excise related investigations and is supported by other units within SARS such as case selection which identifies the cases; internal investigations which investigates cases perpetrated by / with the assistance of SARS employees and Customs and Excise Investigations, etc.

SARS is also represented in various clusters such as the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster, Governance and Administration Cluster, International Cooperation, Trade and Security Cluster, etc. Through these and various other fora, SARS works with government departments to execute its mandate.