

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY
QUESTION NUMBER: 1300 [NW1559E]
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1300. Dr D T George (DA) to ask the Minister of Finance:

- (1) What is the (a) current backlog of pension payouts for retired public servants, (b) current turnaround time for pension payouts for retired public servants and (c) total number of retired public servants whose pensions were paid out within 30 days in the (i) 2019-20 and (ii) 2020-21 financial years;
- (2) whether the (a) Government Pension Administration Agency and (b) Government Employees Pension Fund introduced and/or implemented measures to decrease the turnaround time for pension payouts for retired public servants; if not, what are the reasons that such measures have not been introduced and implemented; if so, what has she found has been the impact of the measures introduced and implemented in this regard?

NW1559E

REPLY

(1) (a)

Backlog cases are defined as cases older than 60 days

Retirements of Public Servants	
Current Backlog as of 31 March 2022	1 345

(1) (b)

Pension Payouts for Retired Public Servants	no	%
Retirees Paid within 60 Days	29 855	88,78
TOTAL Retirees Paid	33 627	100,00

(1) (c) (i) (ii)

Year	Paid within 30 Days		Total Paid
	no	%	100%
Retirement Claims 2019/20	21 905	64,27%	34 081
Retirement Claims 2020/21	13 255	47,41%	27 956
Retirement Claims 2021/22	20 485	60,92%	33 627

(2) (a)

The GPAA has implemented the following initiatives to improve the pay out of pension benefits:

- Improved staff capacity to deal with claim volumes given the constraints the department had faced under the Covid-19 regulations;
- System enhancements were done, where all retirement exit claims now pass through an automated process first allowing for reduced human intervention;
- Validations conducted in advance to further reduce unnecessary delays in the processing of claims. These validations include amongst others bank verifications of particulars and identification verifications with Department of Home Affairs;
- Reintroduction of member and employer department engagements under the required Covid-19 protocols. These engagements include Retiring Member Campaigns specifically focused on public servants who will soon retire, Human Resources forums with Employer Departments and Webinars;
- The establishment of a consultative forum between the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), GPAA and GEPF to deal with matters relating to the submission of exit claims by employer departments.

(2) (b)

In addition to the above, the GEPF has implemented the following initiatives:

- Hosted retirement member workshops on a regular basis. During these workshops the discussions and interactions focus on the requirements and responsibilities of members and departments when retirement is applied for. These workshops were conducted virtually in most cases but have now returned to physical format following the easing of lockdown restrictions.
- Set up mobile offices to execute its outreach initiatives and ease the burden of engagement for members who are located in remote or rural areas; and
- Developed educational videos which explain how members should complete the required exit forms and detail all the documentation required when a member exits.

The initiatives have resulted in varied success. In 93% of the cases, the GEPF is able to pay the retirement claims within 60 days from receipt of correct information. The initiatives have led to a reduced number of cases where documentation is sent back for correction. The initiatives have also resulted in more cases where employers provide the correct and complete documentation within 30 days. It is important to note that though there have been administrative delays in payments for some retirement benefits, this does not represent the majority of the cases. The majority of retirements are being paid within the 60 day period as per the GEP Law.