



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES:**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY:**

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**Ms T G Mpambo-Sibhukwana (Western Cape: DA) to ask the Minister of Tourism:**

Whether the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Immigration Regulations has determined the amount of (a) revenue and (b) jobs lost in the tourism industry since the introduction of the new visa regulations in June 2015; if not, why not; if so, (i) how much revenue and (ii) how many jobs were lost? **CO567E**

**REPLY:**

The department had intended to conduct an economic impact study to determine the extent of impact of the Immigration Regulations on the tourism economy, but the need to find an urgent solution to the challenges that were identified became the focus of our attention. The recommendations of the IMC which were announced last week are constructive and positive for the tourism sector, and we must now focus on implementation.

While there are no official figures on the revenue and jobs lost in relation to the Immigration Regulations, it is known that they contributed to a decline in tourist numbers. Tourist numbers and revenue drive employment in the sector, and any decline in these indicators pose a challenge for job creation in the sector. According to

the latest WTTC figures, tourism accounts for 1.5 million direct and indirect jobs in South Africa.

We value our relationship with inbound operators who sell South African tourism products, experiences and services to the world. Like all business people, they invest where there is a good return on their investment. They became reluctant to enter into joint marketing agreements with South African Tourism and with specific products, and they had begun to divert their marketing to other destinations. We will now work closely with the industry to reclaim these markets.

Cabinet was of the view that the IMC succeeded in finding the appropriate balance between our national security interests and economic growth imperatives. The specific measures announced in the Cabinet statement issued on Friday, 23 October 2015 include the following:

- Accredited Travel Companies will be able to lodge visa applications on behalf their clients in countries like China, India and Russia, meaning that tourists will no longer have to apply in person for visas in those countries. The Department of Tourism will assist in compiling a list of these companies.
- In countries where there are no SA Missions DHA will allow postal applications.
- The DHA will, in the next three months, implement the capturing of biometrics (including fingerprints and photographs) at ports of entry, starting with a pilot at OR Tambo, King Shaka and Cape Town International Airports.
- The DHA will also continue issuing long-term multiple entry visas to certain categories of frequent travelers.
- Minors, or adults travelling with minors from visa exempt countries (which are by far our largest source markets for tourism), will no longer be required to carry Unabridged Birth Certificates or other related documents with them. Instead, they will be strongly advised to carry with them proof of the relationship and letters of consent from the absent parent/s or guardian/s.
- In respect of minors travelling from countries where visas are required, the provision of birth certificates and other relevant documentation will still be required in the visa application process.

The Department of Tourism will be working with the Department of Home Affairs to implement the Cabinet resolutions that emerged from the work of the IMC.