



MINISTRY
COMMUNICATIONS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO: 5106

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QUESTION PAPER NO: 33

Mr S M Gana (Rise Mzansi) to ask the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies [★765] [Question submitted for oral reply now placed for written reply because it is more than quota (Rule 137(8))]:

- (1) Whether, given the prevalence of problem gambling and gambling addiction in the Republic, he intends to put mechanisms in place to curb the gambling and betting vouchers bought through mobile network providers; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) What safeguards does his department require from mobile network providers to ensure that minors are not able to access such vouchers? NW5494E

REPLY:

The National Gambling Act, 2004, together with applicable provincial gambling legislation, provides the regulatory and licensing framework for gambling and betting activities. Accordingly, where a mobile network or mobile platform is used merely as a channel through which a consumer purchases or accesses a betting or gambling voucher, this does not in itself make the underlying gambling product an electronic communications service regulated by ICASA.

However, I recognise and support the need to protect South Africans, particularly vulnerable and low-income households, from the harmful social and economic consequences associated with irresponsible gambling.

I will therefore engage ICASA on what measures can appropriately be taken within its regulatory mandate where electronic communications networks and services are used to facilitate access to gambling and betting products. This will include considering whether existing consumer-protection measures within ICASA's regulatory framework are adequate and whether further interventions within its mandate may be warranted.

ICASA regulates the conduct of its licensees insofar as such conduct constitutes the provision of an electronic communications service or a premium-rated service regulated under the Electronic Communications Act and ICASA's regulations.

ICASA's Regulations on the Code of Conduct for Premium Rated Services, 2016, for example, apply to electronic communications service and electronic communications network service licensees and require licensees to ensure that third-party providers of premium-rated services offered over their networks comply with prescribed consumer-protection standards.

Any specific safeguards applicable to the purchase of gambling or betting vouchers will therefore depend on the manner in which the service is structured and whether it falls within ICASA's regulatory jurisdiction. Requirements governing the age at which a person may lawfully participate in gambling remain subject to the applicable gambling legislation and regulation.

More broadly, the Department has a responsibility to help ensure that South Africa's digital environment is safe, responsible and contributes positively to the social and economic wellbeing of its citizens. I am committed to ensuring that the Department plays its part, together with ICASA and the relevant authorities responsible for gambling regulation, in addressing harmful practices facilitated through digital platforms and communications networks.

Authorised for submission by

MS NONKQUBELA JORDAN-DYANI
DIRECTOR-GENERAL
DATE:

Recommended/not recommended

HON. MONDLI GUNGUBELA, MP
DEPUTY MINISTER
DATE:

Approved/ ~~not approved~~



HON. SOLLY MALATSI
MINISTER
DATE: 06/10/2026