

National Assembly

Question No: 2566

Mr C H H Hunsinger (DA) to ask the Minister of Transport:

- (1) Whether, given that this year marks 15 years since the inception of the Taxi Recapitalisation Programme (TRP) and that the allowance has been increased to encourage a higher uptake of what should bring about safe, effective, reliable, affordable and accessible taxi operations by introducing new taxi vehicles designed to undertake public transport functions, and noting that in the 2019-20 financial year less than 2 000 taxis have been scrapped while over R5 billion has been paid in scrapping allowances to date, he has found that the TRP has succeeded in the specified objectives; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) whether, given the continued low uptake amongst taxi owners, he has found that the TRP should be continued; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY

- (1) The Taxi Recapitalisation Programme (TRP) has been successful in that to date, 77 763 old and unsafe minibus taxi vehicles have been removed from active operation and over R5 billion of support has been provided to an industry that transports approximately 69% of the public commuters daily while not receiving operational subsidy from government. Only minibus taxi vehicles older than 04 September 2006 are processed for scrapping and only if they are in possession of a valid operating license. As a result, the slow uptake in scrapping cannot simply be attribute to lack of interest from operators but it is equally a consequence of not meeting the requirements.
- (2) The objective of the TRP goes beyond the scrapping of old taxi vehicles. It forms a key pillar of the national programme to improve public transport, and is focused on the two pillars of improving the safety of passengers using the taxi mode, and the transformation and empowerment of the taxi industry. The South African public transport system consists of the rail, bus and minibus taxi services, with the latter being the only public transport service not receiving operational subsidy.

According to the National Household Travel Survey, the minibus taxi commuters account for approximately 69% of public transport users for work, school and other purposes. Over and above being the main mode of transporting public transport passengers, the taxi industry forms a critical and complex part of the South African economy with its business operations and activities. As a critical strategy in transforming and integrating the public transport system, the Taxi Recapitalisation Programme is aimed, amongst others, at:

- replacing old unsafe taxi vehicles with safe compliant vehicles,
- promoting modal integration through addressing the fragmentation in the minibus taxi industry, and

- promoting the formalisation of the taxi industry and its operations into business units thereby facilitating modal integration and effective structuring and institutionalisation of the taxi industry.

Therefore, the Taxi Recapitalisation Programme will be an ongoing programme that ensures the use of safe and compliant vehicles for the majority of commuters and also provide a form of capital subsidy to the industry to incentivise compliance.