

# Home Affairs welcomes border management Bill

The Department of Home Affairs has welcomed the passing of the Border Management Authority Bill by the National Assembly on Friday, 9 June 2017.



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The Bill will now go to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) for processing. Once the legislative process is completed, South Africa will be ready to establish an integrated border management authority.

“The establishment of a Border Management Authority will represent a radical shift from the colonial and apartheid systems that were informed by a desire and mission to create and sustain racism, hostilities and hatred among the people rather than dignified migration,” the department said in a statement.

Cabinet took a decision in June 2013 to establish a border management authority to improve management of ports of entry and the borderline.

It subsequently endorsed a vision for the BMA in 2014. The BMA Bill has been through an extensive consultation process.

Between November 2015 and May 2016, government spent an intensive six months deliberating on it at the level of the

National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), before its tabling and approval by the National Assembly.

“As a Section 75 Bill, it will be submitted to the NCOP for processing before it is returned to the House for final consideration.

“When fully established, the BMA will play an important role at the frontline of South Africa’s borders,” the department said.

It will facilitate legitimate movement of people and goods in line with the country’s socio-economic objectives.

Over 40 million people enter and leave the country on an annual basis for various reasons including asylum, economic, educational and training opportunities, tourism and leisure, thus the need for an effective and efficient border management authority.

The BMA Bill is underpinned by imperatives ranging from giving South Africa a new policy paradigm of integrated border management to a determination to facilitate legal and secure movement of people and goods across SA borders.

This will close the chapter on porous borders bedevilling the country over the years, and will in great measure roll back the frontiers of corruption hitherto fuelled by fragmented border management.

The BMA will help in preventing, among others, drug-related crimes, human trafficking, illegitimate movement of goods and unauthorised movement of persons.

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