



MINISTRY
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, WATER AND SANITATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Press Release

SISULU RECEIVES REPORTS ON INVESTIGATIONS INTO MALADMINISTRATION

04 May 2020

“We faced huge financial mismanagement in the water sector, with the result that many of our top officials at national and municipal levels are under investigation. All current investigations will be fast-tracked and ensure there will be follow-through consequences. If needed we will also call in forensic investigators to assist us,” Human Settlements Minister Lindiwe Sisulu.

We have followed through on our commitment to the nation made at the Water and Sanitation Budget Vote, which took place on 16 July 2019. Minister Sisulu appointed a team of eminent persons assisted by National Treasury approved investigators, to investigate allegations of maladministration at the Department of Water and Sanitation. We can now report to the nation that the first phase of investigations has been concluded.

There were 48 cases of serious misconduct within the department. Of these, six were prioritized which implicated two DDGs and two Chief Directors. In one case, a senior official was allegedly involved in awarding irregular contracts to the value of R7 billion.

In total, R16.5 billion in irregular expenditure was involved. The department lost R1.7 billion rand on fruitless and wasteful expenditure.

About 180 less serious cases are being handled internally within the Department of Water and Sanitation and will be concluded within weeks. Some of the cases have

been delayed due to the current COVID-19 lockdown, which started over a month ago.

In addition, there are ongoing investigations related to irregular expenditure, mismanagement and governance issues at the Amatola Water Board in the Eastern Cape, as well as Lepelle Northern Water Board in Limpopo Province. The CEO of Amatola is currently on precautionary suspension to allow the investigations to continue.

The investigations are aimed at ensuring that the Department of Water and Sanitation, and the entities under the ministry's jurisdiction, deliver on the services to the people of South Africa. We have received the reports of the forensic investigations and are preparing to hand these over to the law enforcement agencies. Apart from the outcomes of the forensic reports, other charges are also being formulated in terms of the Public Service Regulations in line with the forensic reports.

Sisulu will report on the cases to SCOPA at the earliest opportunity. The Minister would like to thank all the persons who assisted the department professionally and with integrity to conclude these cases for their time and dedication. We would like to urge the media to refrain from the frenzy of fake news currently doing the rounds. These are ongoing processes, and the frenzy is aimed at distracting from the ongoing investigations. The conduct of the officials involved in peddling information is in direct contravention of the Code of Conduct for public servants.

These are historic problems of the department spanning more than a decade. Every precaution has been taken to ensure that the investigations are thorough, to provide justice for the accused, and to clean up the department. The Ministry will not be deterred by persons who try to deflect from our success.

Enquiries: Please contact McIntosh Polela, Ministry Spokesperson on 079 563 1625 OR McIntosh.polela@dhs.gov.za

Issued by the Ministry of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation

Govan Mbeki House

240 Justice Mahomed Street, Sunnyside, Pretoria, 0001