

Water, sanitation department's tough stance on graft

THE PORTFOLIO committee on human settlements, water and sanitation last week commended the Department of Water and Sanitation for acquiring a unqualified audit outcome in the 2018/19 financial year.

This clean audit is the second in 10 years.

The outcome is the result of measures to turn the department around.

However, the committee also noted that the department has lost millions in fruitless and wasteful expenditure. The department said there were irregular payments in certain areas.

This follows Minister Lindiwe Sisulu's announcement recently that 86 officials were found guilty of fraud and corruption.

For a department mandated to deliver a basic and significant service such as the provision of water and sanitation, it cannot be allowed that this kind of money is not recovered.

To address this, the acting director-general Mbulelo Tshangana has committed to work with his team to clean up the department through the implementation of the financial recovery plan which seeks to stabilise

the department, its water boards and decisively deal with officials found to have transgressed and flouted the Public Finance Management Act.

Priority interventions areas of the recovery plan include funding and budget management which will entail the implementation of debt collection, a revenue-enhancement strategy and a zero-tolerance stance on overdraft.

Corrupt officials should be held accountable and face the full might of the law.

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VISITORS wearing protective masks stand in front of the Enchanted Storybook Castle during the reopening of the Walt Disney Shanghai Disneyland theme park in Shanghai on May 11. | QILAI SHEN Bloomberg