



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

Department of Water and Sanitation to deal with officials who flout procurement processes

22 August 2017

The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Ms Nomvula Mokonyane today, 22 August 2017 committed her department to deal decisively with the flouting of Supply Chain Management processes to ensure that the public money is spent wisely.

This commitment was reaffirmed during the Standing Committee on Public Account (Scopa) meeting held in Parliament to clarify matters of irregular expenditure that was incurred during the 2015/2016 financial year period.

Giving the account of events, Minister Mokonyane said the scope of work of the department necessitated it to go beyond the call of duty to ensure that there is adequate provision of water and sanitation services to the people.

Citing the unrelenting drought phenomenon that thwarted most parts of the country, she said the department had to go out of its way to alleviate catastrophic situation that threatened to deplete water resources.

“You can never budget for drought as it is a natural disaster and we as the department had to shift some funds and assist our communities who were running out of water,” she emphasised.

Minister Mokonyane added that her department did not actually incur irregular expenditure but the entities under the department are the ones who faced many challenges due to the volume of infrastructure projects that they are handling.

A case in point is Giyani Intervention Project which is being implemented by the Lepelle Northern Water Board was found to have irregularly spent by the Auditor General as a result of scope of work done in the Mopani District Municipality.

To this end, the emergency intervention in Giyani accounted for R1.3 billion of the R1.7 billion in irregular expenditure that was incurred in the 2015/2016 financial year.

The Giyani Project was implemented after the Supreme Court of Appeal, in 2014, instructed the Department of Water and Sanitation to intervene in the humanitarian crisis that was unfolding in the Mopani District since 2009.

An outbreak of water-borne diseases because of the lack of water as well as water contamination saw babies and the elderly dying, while wards of the Khensani Hospital closed down as a result of a lack of water.

The Giyani Project emergency interventions were implemented and the completion of the Giyani Water Works ensured that all 55 villages have access to water. The 6 boreholes of the Nkhensani Hospital have been refurbished and are all working. A 10 000 litre water tank was replaced and the internal pipe reticulation of the hospital as well as leaking taps and toilets have been attended to.



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Minister Mokonyane emphasized that there are cases where officials of the department have been found to have acted wrongly and did not follow the right processes in line with National Treasury regulations.

To mitigate this, she said the department will act strongly and bring to book all those who were found to have benefited personally from these devious means.

“In October 2016, I instituted an investigation into a number of projects and related procurement matters within the department led by Adv. Terry Motau, SC. The Task Team has submitted a report to me and a full forensic investigation will be instituted.”

“Anyone found be on the wrong side of the law will have to face the music. Already there are senior managers on are on suspension and we want to allow a fair process that will ensure that we get to the bottom of the problem”, she said.

Her sentiments were echoed by the Acting Director-General, Mr Sifiso Mkhize who said the department will also not only dismiss those found guilty but they will also institute processes to recoup any money owed to the department.

Mr Mkhize also revealed that the department is still grappling to recoup money that it is owed by Water Boards and Municipalities which amounts to R7.1 billion.

END.

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

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