Correctional Services takes over from Bosasa

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DCS ready to in-source nutrition services

The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) is ready to take over services in the 26 kitchens being serviced by African Global Operations (AGO), previously known as Bosasa. Briefing the portfolio committee on Justice and Correctional Services, DCS presented a business continuity plan, clearly indicated the state of readiness as services of African Global Operations will lapse 24 March 2019.

This deadline has been brought forward by a 30 days’ notice of cancelation that DCS issued to AGO following its voluntary liquidation application being granted by the Master of High Court.

Strengthening in-house capacity in DCS is gaining ground, and this is demonstrated by the recent in-sourcing of nutrition as of 31 January 2019 in Groenpunt Management Area preceded by similar in-sourcing at Bizzah Makhathe Management area on 1 February 2017, thus bringing the in-sourcing capacity to 70 percent.

A detailed implementation plan, looking at stabilisation and normalisation of nutritional services covering all the affected management areas affirming that it’s all systems go and there will be seamless transition.

The department’s response to in-sourcing is staggered into short-to-medium term and medium-to-long term. The identified risks in the areas of legal, security, financial and health have been assessed and mitigation plans have been put in place.

Members of the Portfolio Committee advised DCS to put in place a mechanism to avoid a situation where one company becomes a dominant service provider and in the process monopolises the department.  The portfolio committee emphasised the need to perform oversight as an important exercise so as to have assurance that indeed the Department is ready to take over the 26 kitchens.

The National Commissioner, Arthur Fraser, stated that officials who are in the employ of DCS that were implicated in acts of impropriety in the testimonies given before the Zondo Commission have been served with notices in accordance with rules of natural justice to show cause. All but one of the six cited officials have responded and the next phase will be for the officials making presentations directly with the National Commissioner.

Responding to questions on poor procurement processes that have been abused in the past, DCS made it clear that it was attending to the malpractices in the Supply Chain and are being corrected. Further, the department is working with National Treasury to ensure that there is good governance around procurement during the transitional period.

This will require compliance with relevant legislation and minimise the likelihood of fraud, corruption and favouritism as well as unfair and irregular practices.