**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**JUSTICE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE APPROVES PUBLIC PROTECTOR’S NEW ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

**Parliament, Thursday, 25 June 2020 –** The Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services considered the organisational structure for the Public Protector South Africa, referred to it, and confirmed the determination.

Last week the committee received a presentation from the Public Protector on the matter. The committee raised concerns that the structure presented to it may not fully address any challenges that the Public Protector South Africa has in matching the skills available to it with those that are required for an institution of this nature, but that a shortage of funds prevented the Public Protector South Africa from carrying out such a review at this stage.

Committee Chairperson, Mr Bulelani Magwanishe, said the committee yesterday evening noted the advice of the Minister of Finance, that more attention should be given to funded posts that are directly linked to the core mandate of the institution. The Minister further advised that a multi-year implementation plan should be developed to ensure that critical posts are prioritised and filled within the Medium Term Expenditure Framework allocation.

The committee heard that the new organisational structure of the office of the Public Protector of South Africa (PPSA) will see the staff compliment decrease from 707 to 582. This will lead to staff costs decrease of about R48.5 million.

According to a briefing to the committee, the current personnel cost is around R427 million, whereas in the new structure this amount will be R378 million. The committee also heard that out of the 707 current posts, only 351 are funded, which constitute 49.6% of the structure. A total of 356 posts, which constitute just over 50% of the structure, are not funded.

The number of posts in the proposed structure is reduced by 125, and that includes 49 assistant investigators from both head office and the provinces. The committee heard that assistant Investigators are being removed because they do not handle investigations independently, and therefore they do not make an impact on reducing the workload. According to the presentation, over the past few years it has proven that it is impractical to fund these positions after several engagements with the National Treasury.

Mr Magwanishe raised concerns regarding the staff capacity in the private office of the Public Protector and the Deputy Public Protector. Currently the Public Protector has a chief of staff and a personal assistant, and the deputy has a personal assistant. “We need to be comforted that your office will have sufficient strategic support. As you oversee organisational effectiveness, you need technical capacity close to you, as well regarding all reports.”

Mr Magwanishe said the committee will continue to monitor the implementation of the revised structure.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES, MR BULELANI MAGWANISHE.**