**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1213 / NW1308E**

**MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES:**

**Mr M Bagraim (DA) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:**

**QUESTION:**

**Mr M Bagraim (DA) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:**

Has there been any findings by the Auditor-General (AG) in the past three financial years questioning the qualifications of any officials employed by his department in each case indicating (a) which official was implicated and (b) what (i) recommendations were made, (ii) internal processes were followed in the appointment of each official and (iii) steps were taken by his department after recommendations were made by the AG? **NW1308E**

**REPLY:**

**Has there been any findings by the Auditor-General (AG) in the past three financial years questioning the qualifications of any officials employed by his department:**

Yes

**(a)** **Which Official was implicated?**

It was Ms N.B. Parker, Director Financial Management, in the Branch: Fisheries Management, during the 2016/17 financial year.

(**b) (i) What recommendations were made?**

Management should ensure the following

* Section responsible for appointment must ensure that job descriptions are established for each post to be advertised.
* Job descriptions must be reviewed and approved by a senior official before a post is advertised.
* Filling of posts must be properly planned to ensure that advertising requirements are complied with.
* Section responsible for appointments must ensure advertisement for the posts are drafted in a manner that complies with the applicable requirements.
* Before making recommendation to executive authority, the selection committee must satisfy itself that employees meet inherent job requirements.

Management must implement controls over record keeping and safe guarding of the entity information to ensure that that complete, relevant and accurate information is accessible and available in a timely manner to support financial and performance reporting. Furthermore when inspecting qualification of the recommended employee, the Auditor-General noted that they related to the Bachelor of Arts (education) and the Masters in BA was not finance related.

(**b)(ii) What internal processes were followed in the appointment of each official?**

The recruitment process was conducted in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994, (Chapter IV), the Public Service Regulations, 2001, (Chapter 1, Part VII) as well as all other applicable legislation.

The vacant post of Director: Financial Management (Salary Level 13) was advertised on 10 January 2016, Ref. no. 10/2016/ST in the media (Sunday Times and City Press) with a closing date of 25 January 2016.

The advertisement was in line with the Job Description that had been designed for the post of Director: Financial Management and was approved by the CFO as the senior official under which the post reported. The advert was also in line with the applicable requirements as set out by the DPSA for Senior Management positions.

A total number of 62 applications were received, of which 21 wererecommended candidates, 13 possible and 28 non-recommended candidates, respectively.

A pre-selection was done on 11 February 2016 by the Selection Committee Members, through scrutinising each of the applications received, with due consideration to the core functions and requirements of the post as indicated in the advertisement.

The interviews of short-listed candidates were conducted on 16, 17 and 18 February 2016.

The Selection *C*ommittee Members consisted of:-

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Role | Name  | Position |
| Chairperson | Mr. J. Hlatshwayo | Chief Financial Officer |
| Member | Ms. S. Ndudane  | Deputy Director-General Fisheries Management |
| Member | Ms. S. Middleton | CD. Fisheries Operations Support |

Ms S. Melane, Director: Integrated Human Resources Management rendered a secretariat and advisory services to the Selection Committee.

Competency assessment and personnel suitability checks were duly conducted prior to approval of the appointment by the delegated authority (Acting Director General, Mr KCM Mannya) on 26/04/2016.

**(b)** (**iii) What steps were taken by his department after recommendations were made by the AG?**

DAFF does not agree with the audit finding and internal control deficiencies as all the recruitment processes for the post of Dir. Financial Management were conducted in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994, (Chapter IV), the Public Service Regulations, 2001, (Chapter 1, Part VII) as well as all other applicable legislation and all the supporting documents were furnished to the Auditors during the auditing period.

The Job Description and advert, articulating all the inherent job requirements, were duly approved by the CFO and the Acting Director-General at the time.

DAFF does not agree with the recommendation as there is no basis for findings and recommendations as Ms. Parker’s application was scrutinised against the applicable requirements and she met all the said requirements as per the advertisement by the Selection Committee.

In ensuring that the matter is finally laid to rest, the Department has instituted a thorough investigation into the appointment of Ms N.B. Parker.