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**2800. Ms N I Tarabella Marchesi (DA) to ask the Minister of Basic Education: to ask the Minister of Basic Education:**

With reference to the 2019-20 financial year’s budgetary review and recommendations report of the Auditor-General that was presented to the Portfolio Committee on Basic Education that her department incurred R76 992 000 of wasteful expenditure most of which was as a result of noncompliance with procurement processes, what steps is her department taking to (a)(i) mitigate and/or (ii) monitor wasteful expenditure due to noncompliance with procurement procedures and/or (b) monitor irregular expenditure that is not being disclosed?

**Response**

a) What steps taken to:

(i) mitigate wasteful expenditure

Fruitless expenditure incurred is mainly due to inadequate planning and coordination between the national and provincial department, resulting in stopped immovable asset projects due to school mergers and rationalisation processes.

The Department will strengthen communications with Provincial education departments and ensure assessment reports on allocated projects provided by provincial departments are fully investigated to avoid projects being stopped after commencement.

(ii) monitor wasteful expenditure due to non-compliance with procurement procedures:

The Department will ensure that all instances of possible fruitless and wasteful expenditure are investigated as required by the PFMA section 38 to determine if disciplinary process needs to be taken and whether amounts needs to be recovered.

There will be regular reporting by the investigation committee to the accounting officer on the progress made by the investigation committee for oversight purposes.

The accounting officer will ensure that the validity of possible fruitless and wasteful expenditure is confirmed before the annual financial statements are submitted for audit purposes.

(b) what steps taken to monitor Irregular expenditure that is not being disclosed:

The Department will Improve oversight of implementing agents to ensure that representatives of the department are included in the implementing agents bid evaluation committee and bid adjudication committee to ensure that appropriate procurement processes are followed so as to avoid irregular expenditure being recorded by the department as required in terms of the guidelines on irregular expenditure issued by National Treasury.

Furthermore, additional staff (interns and in-house staff) will be employed to verify if all evaluations and adjudications which have already occurred are in line with all procurement processes, if department discover none compliance the expenditure will bel declare Irregular expenditure in the department's books.