Water and Sanitation concludes 42 investigations during 2019/2020 financial year

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Joint Media Statement: SIU and DWS on DWS Forensic Audit Activities

The Forensic Audit Unit of the Department of Water and Sanitation concluded 42 investigations during the 2019/2020 financial year.

During the 2019/2020 financial year, an amount of R 3 119 914 964,85 (three billion one-hundred and nineteen million, nine-hundred and fourteen thousand, nine-hundred and sixty-four rand and eighty-five cents) was investigated which included pro-active work performed by the Internal Audit Unit to prevent irregular expenditure to the amount of R 1, 360 billion (one billion three-hundred and sixty thousand rand) and an amount of R 250 million (two-hundred and fifty million rand) during the 2020/2021 financial year.

As part of the Department’s proactive fraud prevention measures, the Directorate: Forensic Audit & Quality Assurance held 22 fraud awareness sessions in various Directorates within the Department and 900 officials were in attendance.

Certain of the cases that were investigated resulted in 21 criminal cases being opened with the South African Police Services (SAPS) and the investigation of such cases in still in progress.

Regular interaction between law enforcement agencies is taking place such as the SIU and HAWKS.

The SIU Proclamation No R54 of 2012 into various allegations at the Department of Water Affairs was as a result of the investigation work and the subsequent internal reports performed by the Forensic Audit Unit of the Department, that assisted with the motivation for this proclamation and the identification of matters to be investigated.

The department initiated an investigation on the irregular appointment of AECOM SA. Following the completion of the internal investigation, the department requested the SIU to perform a further investigation on the matter. The SIU was able to use the internal report to apply for and obtain proclamation number R28 of 2019: WP0485 - WTE – Goudertrouw and started their investigation. The department has been working together with the SIU on this matter.

With regard to the SAP matter, the department started its own internal investigation relating to the irregular appointment of SAP. The investigation discovered serious administrative irregularities. While the department’s investigation was underway the SIU obtained proclamation No R27 of 2018 and R44 of 2019: The awarding of a contract by the DWS to SAP (SA) to investigate the same matter that the department was investigating. Department investigators shared documents and information with SIU investigators. After the completion of the internal report, the department started a process of judicial review of the contract.

After a meeting with SIU, it was decided that there should be a joint litigation. The two entities are working closely together on this matter. The department had also requested the SIU to extend the scope of the investigation to investigate the alleged irregular appointment of EOH, which proclamation is in the process of being applied for by the SIU.

The SIU and the DWS have a strong working relationship in which the department assurance providers and SIU investigators meet on a monthly basis. Furthermore, the department during these meetings informs the SIU of progress on the matters that had been referred to the department for disciplinary actions.

The department has concluded investigations into irregularities relating to various projects, including the War on Leaks, Vaal Intervention and Drop a Block. The DWS has shared these reports with the SIU which has assisted in the motivation for a proclamation to investigate these matters.

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