

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO: 1802

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Mr A C Steyn (DA) to ask the Minister of Housing:

- (1) What was the (a) number of investigations undertaken by the Special Investigative Unit housed within her department for the period 2003 to 2005 inclusive, (b) total value of the projects that have been investigated in that period and (c) result of such investigations;
- (2) Whether any of the funds lost through fraudulent or corrupt activities have been recovered; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (3) Whether any criminal charges have been instituted against any persons, formerly or currently in the employ of her department, as a result of such investigations; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) Whether any steps have been taken to avoid a recurrence of such fraudulent or corrupt activities; if not, why not; if so, what steps?

REPLY

(1)(a) The concept of a Directorate: Special Investigations based in the national department of housing was initiated in 2004 as a sequel to the Cabinet approved Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements and my address last year on the occasion of the tabling of the Budget Vote for the Department of Housing for the 2004 / 05 financial year. The unit only came into existence in the second half of 2005 when staff were appointed.

1(b), 1(c), 2, 3 and 4 fall away

- Communication Services.

(ii) *External Service Delivery Standards*

The National Department of Housing is presently in the process of reviewing the following external service delivery standards, with the purpose of developing a Turnaround Strategy :

1. **Financial reporting and accountability:**
 - Manage the transfer of payments to provinces and housing institutions to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of housing; and
 - Facilitate a uniform financial reporting mechanism for provinces and housing institutions to support the evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of national housing programmes.
2. **Strategic guidance on government direction and priorities:**
 - Provide strategic guidance and support to provincial and local government, housing institutions, private sector stakeholders, labour and community organisations on government objectives and priorities to:
 - Ensure that the housing sector deliver on their objectives and mandates;
 - Support cooperation amongst housing delivery stakeholders; and
 - Increase housing delivery and the housing benefit to the end user.
3. **Housing policy and legislation development and review:**
 - Develop, review and maintain housing and human settlement policy, strategy, framework legislation and guidelines to:
 - Promote the development of sustainable human settlement, ensuring a planned approach to housing development based on national and provincial priorities;
 - Provide the legislative backing required for national housing policy and strategy; and
 - Guide the delivery and execution of housing legislation and regulations.
4. **Monitoring and impact assessment:**
 - Monitor and assess through surveys and reports from provinces, housing institutions and the public, the impact of housing policies and programmes on the delivery of low-income housing with a view to developing viable communities. Gaps will be identified in the policy implementation process

and recommendations will be made for corrective action.

5. Information provision:

- Develop a Housing Data Bank to provide a comprehensive source of integrated information regarding housing, urbanisation and related matters for the development, implementation and monitoring of national housing policy and development. This encompasses a data bank and information system of real time data to support the Government's housing process that is continuously updated, accurate and effective and related to housing and human settlements and accessible by all our partners in the housing delivery process through a single entry point.

6. Information dissemination and communication:

- Provide information and education on strategic direction and operational housing matters to the beneficiaries of housing and our partners in the development of housing with a view to:
 - Educate and inform the public on housing policies and programmes;
 - Popularise the Peoples' Housing process so that the people can take the initiative to build their own homes;
 - Provide and disseminate information to all housing stakeholders and partners on strategic direction, housing policy and programmes and operational activities to build relations, provide access to and encourage participation in housing delivery programmes.

7. Capacity building:

- Ensure good housing management practices and continued professional development of housing practitioners with improved professional standards and qualifications by:
 - Providing ongoing support and guidance in training needs assessment and planning, implementing and management of capacity building function to the provinces;
 - Facilitating the continued professional development of the housing sector through the establishment of a professional housing institute which will provide the opportunity for lifelong learning and a code of good practice; and
 - Facilitating formal and on-the-job training and mentorship programmes on housing policy, systems, legislation and programmes to our partners in housing delivery.

- (c) The new standards will assist in realizing the strategic intent of the Department and ensuring continuous alignment of Departmental strategies and policies with the actual performance so as to improve internal and external operational

effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of the departmental strategic plan.

- (d) The implementation of the new standards will be guided by adherence to the Batho Pele principles of : (i) Consultation – Internal customers and the citizenry will be consulted about the level and quality of the services they receive and, wherever possible, will be given a choice about the services that they are offered; (ii) Customers will be told of what level and quality of services they would receive so that they are aware of what to expect; (iii) Access – All internal customers and the citizens will have equal access to the services to which they are entitled; (iv) Courtesy – Internal customers and citizens will be treated with courtesy and consideration; (v) Information – Customers will be given complete, accurate information about the services they are entitled to receive; (vi) Openness and Transparency; (vii) Redress - if the promised standard of service is not delivered, customers will be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when the complaints are made, customers will receive a sympathetic, positive response; and (viii) Value for money – services will be provided for economically and efficiently in order to give customers the best possible value for money.
- (e) The use of management information systems to monitor and evaluate service standards, as well as customer satisfaction surveys will be utilized to monitor performance against service standards.

4. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that you approve the draft reply to question 1801.

~~ACTING ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL: HUMAN RESOURCE~~
~~MANAGEMENT~~

DATE:

Reply approved/not approvedComments:

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