

The winds of change continue to blow as the CFO visits regions to workshop them on Irregular Expenditure

Chief Financial Officer, Ms Cathy Motsisi continued with her campaign to workshop departmental employees on financial statements and irregular expenditure at the Durban Regional office on Monday, the 12th of March 2012.

The focus of the workshop was on the Irregular Expenditure Policy and on the role of accounting officers in exercising caution to prevent and detect irregular expenditure. The workshop also focused on implementing effective, efficient and transparent processes of financial and risk management and internal control for the CFO to operate within parameters, as is clearly stipulated in (section 38 (1) (a) (1) (g) of the PFMA and Treasury Regulations 9.1.1.

The CFO encouraged staff to be responsible within their own area of work paying special attention to expenditure. "Everyone should be watching and reporting expenditure," Motsisi said.

"This campaign affects all of us in the Department and it therefore requires everyone to own it," she said while encouraging staff to say a new slogan "**it will never happen under my watch**".

She said we can all work together for the betterment of the Department which is forever in the media for a number of reasons.

The CFO said irregular expenditure has become a thorny issue which the Auditor General has singled out as being the main cause of the Department's unclean records.

She encouraged employees to remain vigilant not to fall into traps of being invited by external parties to free lunches and then ending up discussing tenders of the Department, while not officially assigned to do so. The CFO also pleaded with SCM officials to always operate within procurement ethics.

Issues discussed thoroughly during the workshop included causes of irregular expenditure, procurement of goods and services, leasing and capital goods, extension of contracts (e.g.; leases), tacit or otherwise, without following departmental processes and delegation, on-compliance with the Public Service Act and other regulations relating to the compensation of employees and Non-compliance with any of the Act or regulation applicable to the Department's operation (Non-compliance may be caused by any transaction which is not in line with the Departmental internal policies).

The CFO ended the workshop by calling on all employees to take appropriate steps to prevent occurrence of irregular expenditure and to report all suspicious acts of irregular expenditure immediately to her.

Meanwhile, Director Financial Accounting, Mr Mandla Sithole conducted the same workshop in the Cape Town regional office.

Mr Sithole also left no stone unturned as he explained to the employees that irregular expenditure is one of the contributing factors to the negative media publicity the department has been getting lately.

He told employees that they are accountable for the decisions they take on a daily basis and action must be taken against employees who fail to comply with departmental and treasury regulations and policies.

“We are not against service delivery but it must be delivered within compliance with all the prescripts,” he said

Mr Sithole urged all employees irrespective of rank, to change the situation the Department is facing.

“I urge you to ensure that in all your meeting agenda items, compliance and non-compliance becomes a permanent feature,” he said.

He also pleaded with employees to avoid deviations and non-compliance at all costs and that they become good ambassadors of good governance by applying prevention of all wrong things.

“Failure to plan doesn’t qualify the Accounting Officer to deviate,” he said.

Employees were also trained on financial statements, commitments and accruals.

The CFO’s Roadshows are continuing as she and her team are going to visit all the regions. The team has so far visited Johannesburg, Pretoria, Nelspruit, Durban, Cape Town and Mmabatho.