

Huffington post online, 28 May 2018

Ayanda Dlodlo Tells Ministers: The Party Is Over

The public service and administration minister says ministers have too many advisers and are not sticking to the ministerial handbook.

By Staff Reporter

Cabinet ministers are being instructed to cut down on expenses, and will be expected to follow the ministerial handbook to the letter while cutting the number of advisers they each have. According to Business Day, new Public Service and Administration Minister Ayanda Dlodlo has written to ministers, heads of departments and directors-general across government, and wants to see their departmental organograms.

There are currently a total of 70 advisers for the president, deputy president, ministers and premiers, and the department reportedly wants to review regulations to put a stop to unnecessary appointments.

In an interview, Dlodlo reportedly said directors-general were supposed to act as ministerial advisers.

"No minister should have more than two [advisers] because you should rely on what the department has, and even at a lower level in the department there are subject matter experts, so why do you need a bloated office with a large number of advisers when the department has all the expertise and experts that you need ... to discharge your mandate?" she reportedly said.

The ministerial handbook which guides the benefits and privileges afforded to ministers is being reviewed, and until then, the guidelines will be "strictly" applied, Dlodlo reportedly said.

Dlodlo reportedly took issue with ministers who employed more than 15 people in their offices. The handbook reportedly says ministers should have no more than 10, although 15 can be allowed in very large departments.

Dlodlo reportedly said: "Is more than 15 too much? It is ridiculous. My belief is that the deputy directors-general should be your advisers because, in essence, those are the people that are supposed to be subject-matter experts.

"We need to look at the structures and organogram and see the type of people you have ... and if they will assist you in delivering on the mandate of your department."

Dlodlo told Talk Radio 702 that a directive had been issued to all ministers and directors-general that they had to stick to the ministerial handbook.

Last week, Dlodlo told Business Day that the public sector wage bill was out of control, and urgently had to be reined in. Dlodlo is currently locked in negotiations with unions over wage hikes.

"We've gone above the ceiling ... it should be scary for South Africans, but maybe not to the unions. But to the general [population] that should be scary.

"If you look at wages and think we take from grants to pay salaries, I don't know what we will do on the day that our people revolt against government, its employees and political parties. It has happened in many other countries," she reportedly said.

The DA called on President Cyril Ramaphosa to reduce the size of Cabinet last week, in line with his promise to consider doing so.

According to TimesLive, the DA says the cost of maintaining the country's 35 ministers and 37 deputy ministers is too high.

The ministers and their deputies will earn R163.5-million this year and the department of public works has spent R188-million on purchasing 33 properties for ministers and their deputies, at R5.7-million per residence, the party reportedly said.