

Public Works and Scopa at odds

Cox Mokgoro hits out at the DG and Public Service Commission

THE official at the centre of the fight between Minister of Public Works Thulas Nxesi and the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Scopa) has come out guns blazing and lashed out at the director-general (DG) and the Public Service Commission (PSC).

In his submission to the PSC, the official, Cox Mokgoro, has accused director-general Sam Vukela and the PSC of double standards and of making errors.

The PSC had tabled a report to Scopa in which it found that Mokgoro's appointment to the department was irregular.

Scopa was embroiled in a fight with Nxesi this week, with the minister threatening to take the committee to court.

This was after House chairperson in the National Assembly Cedric Frolick stopped Scopa from investigating the matter because the process followed was legally flawed.

Scopa chairperson Themba Godi described the threat by the minister as unprecedented and said they would meet with the Speaker's office to decide what to do next.

Mokgoro stated in his submission, seen by Independent Media, that the finding by the PSC was wrong because he was not given an opportunity to respond. He also accused Vukela of being both a referee and player after he lodged a complaint with the PSC against him and also gave evidence.

He said Vukela should have reported the case of his employment to Nxesi in line with the law because of his position.

"I know that advocate Vukela did

SIYABONGA
MKHWANAZI



not lodge his grievance with (Nxesi) but, surprisingly, the PSC has entertained it. Furthermore, in the PSC's guide on governance practices for executive authorities and heads of departments, it is stipulated that any career incident of employees of departments or government component from level 14 and above are to be dealt by the (minister) and the (minister) is precluded from delegating such. The PSC, however, has seen nothing wrong with the DG's intimate involvement with my matter," Mokgoro stated.

He added that Vukela never informed him that he was being investigated by the PSC.

Mokgoro said that, based on the unfolding of events, it appeared that the PSC had a predetermined outcome of his case.

He also said Vukela had stated that the provisional report of the PSC would not change irrespective of any comments by him. The PSC will file a final report.

Vukela declined to comment, saying that the matter was with Parliament. "The department has no comment at this stage as the chairperson of Scopa, Themba Godi, has indicated that the committee will engage with the Speaker of the National Assembly's office on how to take the matter

forward. Let us await the outcome of that engagement," said Vukela.

The PSC had not responded at the time of publication, but the commission has said previously that it did not want to comment on matters it was investigating.

In his submission, Mokgoro stated that Vukela knew of his appointment in the department from the time he

was deputy director-general (DDG) for corporate services until he was appointed DG.

"All my engagements, without exception, have gone through the normal departmental 'appointment value chain' with submissions initiated in certain instances by the deputy director for human resources for administration, through to the direc-

tor in human resources, chief director for human resources, the DDG for corporate services, the DG including the current DG, Vukela, and eventually the (minister) who acts on the basis of advice of all the above officials who are subject matter experts in terms of the procedural and legal integrity of the matter the (minister) is requested to approve," Mokgoro stated.