

■ PARLIAMENT

# Lifestyle audits for public works officials

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PUBLIC Works and Infrastructure Minister Patricia de Lille is cracking down on corruption in her department with several senior officials to be fired after being irregularly appointed.

De Lille also confirmed they were trying to recoup R155 million from architect Minenhle Makhanya over the Nkandla project.

However, on top of her list of things to do is the lifestyle audits of senior officials in the department.

De Lille said she will be the first one to face the lifestyle audit to be conducted.

President Cyril Ramaphosa, a few months ago, said lifestyle audits were going to be conducted against members of the Cabinet.

De Lille, in Parliament yesterday, said they were intensifying the fight against corruption.

She said the Special Investigating Unit was planning to recoup more

than R400m.

When she joined the department, the Public Service Commission (PSC) was conducting an investigation on more than 600 people who were irregularly appointed in the department, said De Lille.

The PSC found that 11 out of 37 senior officials were irregularly appointed and their appointments will be set aside, she said.

In the second phase of the investigation, the PSC has identified another 137 officials who were irregularly appointed.

She said the PSC had not concluded all the investigations.

De Lille also said tenders will now be open to the public.

This to ensure processes were without any questions. This also will serve in the fight against fraud and corruption in the manipulation of tender systems.

“In dealing with fraud and corruption, I instructed the department that all tenders be open to the

public. It means the public will be allowed to sit when we adjudicate and when tenders are awarded,” said De Lille.

The government is sitting on billions of rand for tenders every year.

The Gauteng provincial government has also started a system of having open tender processes.

The Premier of Gauteng, David Makhura, introduced the system more than a year ago.

De Lille said the open tender system will be able to clamp down on any form of corruption.

The Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Scopa) and other portfolio committees of Parliament have warned that procurement is the most key section of departments and State-Owned Entities where tender fraud and corruption was happening.

Scopa said it would be important that those who sit in procurement are screened to ensure they were not prone to corruption.