

Cyril sends back handbook and orders more cuts on perks

By ZIMASA MATIWANE

● President Cyril Ramaphosa has sent back the ministerial handbook and instructed his ministers to trim more fat in a bid to curb excessive spending.

Ramaphosa wants to make further cuts on perks for his executive.

He has instructed three of his ministers to review aspects of the recently revised ministerial handbook, a guide to benefits and privileges to which members of the cabinet are entitled.

“The president has assigned the ministers of public service & administration, finance, and public works & infrastructure to identify areas in the *Guide on Executive Members*, commonly known as the ministerial handbook,” said Senzo Mchunu, the minister of public service & administration.

“Areas under review include upper limits on purchasing of cars, tariffs on private vehicles and security upgrades for private residences.”

Mchunu described the current handbook, which was adopted by the cabinet just over a month ago, as “old news” because it had



Senzo Mchunu

been in the making for nine years.

Although three aspects of it are under review, Mchunu said “there may be other issues”.

In its current form, the handbook set the highest price for vehicles for members of the executive at R700,000, down from the R1.6m and R1.3m of what ministers and their deputies could spend before.

Although ministers and deputies are now personally liable for renovations and main-

tenance at their private homes, the government is still liable for part of any security upgrades.

The current handbook capped spending for security upgrades at R250,000, but this is also under review.

If officials use their own vehicles for official purposes, they will be reimbursed in terms of the tariff determined by the finance minister.

The tariff is also under review.

Ramaphosa’s spokesperson, Khusela Diko, said: “The president believes members of the national executive or other public office-bearers should not incur extravagance or wastefulness in the course of serving the nation.

“This imperative must be balanced with that of making it possible for office-bearers to access support services and amenities that enable them to be efficient and effective at all times, whether they are on duty in the country or globally.”

Diko said Ramaphosa believed this balance should be maintained at all times and that the handbook would remain a work in progress.