

### **Zondo commission has cost SA R356m so far**

The Zondo commission of inquiry into state capture brought South Africa Angelo Agrizzi's Bosasa-bombshells, Jacob Zuma's spy stories and more recently the Hlaudi Motsoeneng show. And it has cost the taxpayer R356m so far, according to a reply in Parliament.

This is R100m more than the "security upgrades" to Nkandla.

Slightly more than a year after the commission got going - headed by deputy chief justice Raymond Zondo - there still is no end in sight to its work.

DA MP Mergan Chetty asked Justice Minister Ronald Lamola what total cost had been incurred since the establishment of the commission.

Lamola responded that R356.127m had been spent since the commission's establishment.

R244.5m was spent in the 2018/2019 financial year, and R111.5m in the current year up until August 31.

The commission has thus far spent over R15m on the compensation of its employees.

It paid investigators R2.2m in 2018/2019, but in 2019/2020 up to the end of August, this skyrocketed to R86m.

Legal services cost just under R53m over the financial years combined, and "investigative tools" almost R35m, but this was all spent in the first year.

Communications cost about R10m and leasing the building just over R1.1m.

The vaguely described "other goods and services" cost R95m. In comparison, the commission of inquiry into tax administration and governance by the SA Revenue Services, also known as the Nugent Commission, only cost a shade over R8m.

This is according to Lamola's answer to a written question by DA MP Solly Malatsi.

On the Nugent Commission's recommendation, President Cyril Ramaphosa **fired** former SARS boss Tom Moyane.

The Zondo commission is yet to yield similar results.

However, Ramaphosa established a tribunal in the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) to recover money looted from the state. When the tribunal is up and running, it will deal with civil litigation to recover an estimated **R14.7bn**, dwarfing the R356m spent on the commission.

The tribunal was set to start its work in October, but the drafting of regulations for the unit became a more protracted and tedious process than initially anticipated, as the Department of Justice wants to ensure that

the regulations and rules of procedure are watertight to avoid legal technicalities and loopholes, according to Lamola.

Further to this, the National Prosecuting Authority's Asset Forfeiture Unit is also working on 319 cases, with an estimated value of R28.9bn. It is unclear to what extent these cases relate to state capture.