

Top Limpopo official may be suspended

Alex Matlala

Limpopo Premier Stan Mathabatha is expected to act against a prominent official this week, in a move to prove his commitment to stamping out graft.

Head of the department of public works in Limpopo, Timothy Seroka, allegedly defrauded the department of R11 000 by claiming petrol money for a larger car to the one he travelled in.

Seroka is also accused of irregularly claiming hotel stays for official trips in June to Tzaneen, the public works head office in Gauteng and the Limpopo legislature in Lebowakgomo, among others.

According to a document seen by *The Citizen*, Seroka claimed R11 405.88 for 1 790km from the department. This was just over R6 per kilometre.

His department confirmed the claim yesterday and said the matter has been handed over to the office of the premier as it was his prerogative to appoint or fire heads of departments.

But the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) was concerned, alleging: “Mr Seroka claimed to have used his official vehicle, a Mercedes Benz ML 350, when he instead used a smaller car, a Renault Sandero 1.4.

“When you claim for a big vehicle like a Mercedes M, the money is more than when you use a small vehicle like a Sandero. So the department’s boss is taking chances and heads must roll,” Nehawu provincial secretary Jacob Adams said yesterday.

“Seroka used the small vehicle and claimed for the ML because it’s a lot of money. That is fraud.

“He stole from the department and he must face the music.”

Mathabatha recently suspended his spokesperson, Kenny Mathivha, for a similar offence. “During our meeting last week, Mathabatha promised to take action against Seroka before the end of the week. But we are yet to see that action,” Adams added.

Acting spokesperson for the Limpopo provincial government Mamogo Ntuli said the premier appointed an investigator to look into the matter.