

NON-PAYMENTS

Department is 'delinquent'

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THE Public Service Commission (PSC) has again listed the Department of Water and Sanitation and the Property Management Trading Entity (PMTE) under the Ministry of Public Works as delinquents for their failure to pay their service providers on time.

This was revealed by PSC commissioner Mike Seloane when he tabled a report on the non-payment of government suppliers by national and provincial governments in Pretoria yesterday.

The report detailed the number of government departments that failed to pay their suppliers by March 2021, saying when these suppliers were not paid on time their business operations were negatively impacted, resulting in most small businesses becoming bankrupt and the loss of jobs.

Despite listing the two as delinquents, Seloane said there had been an improvement, but certain departments were continuing to pay suppliers late or not at all.

"What is concerning to the PSC is that some departments even fail



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to submit compliance reports to the National Treasury (NT), despite this being a specific requirement of the Public Finance Management Act and the NT's instruction Note 34," Seloane said.

Detailing the improvement, Seloane maintained that the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure had recorded six invoices with related costs of R189 729 not paid on December 31 last year and in March it reported no outstanding invoices.

In contrast, Seloane said the Department of Water and Sanitation including its Water Entity recorded an increase in the related cost to suppliers from R3.5 million in December to R3.9m by the end of March this year.

He expressed concern about the

Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development not submitting their reports to the NT.

"What is more, the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries has not submitted its exception reports to the National Treasury for the whole 2020/2021 financial year.

"This is despite the PSC consistently highlighting its concern in this regard, suggesting that the Accounting Officer of the department is not taking the advice of the PSC as a constitutional body seriously," Seloane said.

Reacting, Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries spokesperson Albi Modise said the departmental top leadership had vowed to act against all those who undermined the work of the PSC.

"Whilst the information is readily available in the department, it is totally unacceptable that it was never submitted to National Treasury as required.

"The department will institute necessary steps against the officials responsible for submitting the requested information," Modise said.