



**Publication:** Daily News - Main

**Title:** Public Works officials in hot water over lifestyle audits

**Publish date:** 07 Oct 2022

**Page:** 4

**Reach:** 23508

**AVE:** R 16502.64

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NON-COMPLIANT

## Public Works officials in hot water over lifestyle audits

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TWELVE officials in the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure are in trouble after they did not subject themselves to lifestyle audits.

This emerged when Public Works and Infrastructure Minister Patricia de Lille was responding to parliamentary replies from IFP MP Sanele Zondo, who asked about the outcomes of the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) lifestyle audits of senior officials in her department.

Zondo wanted to know whether any officials had been red-flagged by the SIU.

Lifestyle audits for officials were introduced in April last year.

In her response, De Lille said the final report was being compiled for the Phase One SIU lifestyle audit project which focused on senior management personnel such as the director-general, deputy directors-general, chief directors and chief financial officers.

She said 66 of the department's senior management personnel were subjected to lifestyle audits.

"The draft reports are currently being reviewed, and follow-up areas are being identified. The report will be submitted to the minister as soon as the Phase One report has been finalised."

De Lille also said several people had been red-flagged and these flags were being followed up to ensure a fair evaluation of the possible risk.

"Of great concern is that 11 officials did not submit any of the requested documentation, while another one submitted their documents after the final SIU deadline, meaning 12 officials did not comply and could not be assessed. They will be dealt with in line with the Public Works and Infrastructure disciplinary policy, referred for further investigation and reported to the Department of Public Service and Administration per the lifestyle audit procedure," De Lille said.

In July, De Lille said integrity forms and supporting documents were received from 47 staff members, but 13 other officials were still to submit outstanding documentation.

The lifestyle audit checked whether senior management members held any positions or directorships at companies, what properties were registered in their names, financial disclosures, and whether they were registered on the government's central supplier database. The audit also included verification of criminal records for senior staff members.

"During the SIU's work on the lifestyle audits, the SAPS Criminal Record Centre was consulted. Of the 60 Department of Public Works and Infrastructure staff members, 58 were found to have no criminal record," De Lille said at the time.

She had said preliminary checks indicated that the remaining two officials were possibly linked to a criminal record.

"Fingerprints have been collected from the two officials and have been submitted to the SAPS Criminal Record Centre for verification," De Lille said.