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Pupil transporter ordered to pay back R7m

Net tightens as
Mako told to also
pay SIU legal fees

By **Noxolo Sibiya**

The special tribunal yesterday ordered a North West businessman to pay back more than R7m that his company earned by inflating kilometres in a transport deal in the department of community safety and transport management in the province.

RI Mako Trading and Projects director Remosetlha Isaac Mako was ordered to pay R7.47m in connection with a

school transport tender to ferry children from rural schools in the Dr Ruth Segkomotsi Mompati district.

Special Investigating Unit (SIU) spokesperson Kaizer Kganyago said investigations revealed that RI Mako Trading submitted invoices to the department of public works, roads and transport for the period 2010 to 2017 that had inflated kilometres, unduly enriching themselves through the process.

“Although Mr Mako denied allegations against him and his company, he did not dispute that he inflated the kilometres travelled as claimed and contended that they claimed for kilometres as verified by the

department and were paid based on their invoices as approved by the department.

“The SIU was authorised to investigate by the president of the Republic under Proclamation R.2 of 2018, following widespread allegations of irregularities concerning the appointment and over-payment of service providers contracted in terms of the scholar transport tender.”

The order also instructed that the businessman pay for the SIU's legal fees.

Kganyago said this was a continuation of the investigation's outcomes and consequence management to recover monies lost by the department.

“There are other cases enrolled in the special tribunal awaiting adjudication and will result in recoveries for the department. The SIU is empowered to institute civil action in the high court or a special tribunal in its name, to correct any wrongdoing uncovered during both investigations caused by acts of corruption, fraud, or maladministration.

“In line with the Special Investigating Units and Special Tribunals Act 74 of 1996, the SIU will refer any evidence pointing to criminal conduct it uncovers to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) for further action.”

He welcomed the order.
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