



the dtic

Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 215

Mr T M Langa (IFP) to ask the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition:

What mechanisms are currently in place to protect whistleblowers who provide critical information about alleged misconduct at the SA Bureau of Standards, ensuring that they are not subject to retaliation? NW245E

REPLY:

The SABS has developed a policy which regulates whistle-blowing and affords whistle-blowers with protections. An anonymous whistle-blowing mechanism has been set up which is managed independently by the Vuvuzela Hotline, through which persons are able to raise matters anonymously through various mechanisms which include:

- E-mail;
- Telephonically;
- SMS;
- Postage.

The SABS in terms of the whistle-blowing policy has adopted the following position in regard to the protection of whistle-blowers:

- The SABS will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take steps to protect employees when they raise concern in good faith;
- The SABS shall ensure that no employee is subject to harassment and/or retaliation because of reporting suspicious fraud to management;

- The SABS shall put measures in place to ensure that no employee will suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment consequences because of the submission in good faith of their disclosure;
- Any employee that retaliates against a person who has submitted a disclosure pursuant to this policy in good faith, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

In addition to the above anonymous reporting mechanism, the policy allows employees to report matters to their Managers or Executives of the SABS should they be more comfortable with this approach. The Managers or Executives are then duty bound to report the matters to the Head Internal Audit for investigating and onward reporting to those charged with governance.

The policy is in line with legislative and standards as follows:

- Protected Disclosures Act, No 26 of 2000;
- Prevention of Organised Crime Act, No 121 of 1998;
- King Code of Governance (King IV of 2016);
- Ant-bribery Management System (SANS 37001: 2020).

Furthermore, **the dtic** has a confidential whistle-blowing Hotline (e-mail) and the recipient of these e-mails is the CRO of the Department. There is also an anti-corruption message on **the dtic** website encouraging the public to report any corruption and fraud. **the dtic** also has a protection of whistle-blowers policy which was approved and communicated to the entire Department.

The Public Administration Ethics, Integrity and Disciplinary Technical Assistance Unit (TAU), a unit within the DPSA has the relevant processes for the protection of whistle-blowers. The TAU will be contacted immediately if there is a whistle-blower who needs protection.

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