

Department of Water and Sanitation working with SIU to finalise investigation

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The Department of Water and Sanitation is working with the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) and the Public Protector to finalise their investigations into the department.

Responding to questions by Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation based on the department's First Quarter Progress Report for the Financial Year 2017/18, Minister Nomvula Mokonyane said the department had sent responses to questions that were raised by the SIU almost more than a year ago.

"The last time we communicated with the investigative unit is when we submitted our response and made a commitment to participate in working with the unit to expedite the process of the investigation. Since our submission of responses we have had no further communication," said Minister Mokonyane on Wednesday.

The SIU is investigating tender and other matters relating to the Giyani Emergency Project, while the Public Protector is looking into the Lesotho Highlands Water Project.

The Minister told the Portfolio Committee that the SIU's investigations also entailed issues prior to 2014, saying that currently there was no report on the progress of the investigations.

Minister Mokonyane said she was also aware that there were a number of issues before the Public Protector, but that similarly there has not been a report to date forthcoming on the progress of investigation.

Commenting on concerns of instability in the department since the suspension of Director-General Dan Mashitsho, Minister Mokonyane told members of the committee that the interim governance arrangements had been put in place to guide the work of the department in the absence of the DG.

She said an acting Director-General had been appointed while the matter of the suspended DG is being dealt with between the department and the legal representatives for the suspended DG.

"The first hearing on the matter was supposed to have taken place last week but due to the DG falling ill, the matter was postponed. A new date is being identified between the legal representatives of Mr Mashitsho and the department," said Minister Mokonyane.

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