

23 JANUARY 2020

Adv Richard Sizani  
Chairperson of the Public Service Commission  
Per E-mail: [Ayandam@opsc.gov.za](mailto:Ayandam@opsc.gov.za)

Dear Adv. Sizani

**INVESTIGATION: THE APPOINTMENT OF STAFF MEMBERS AND/OR CONSULTANTS IN THE PRIVATE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS; AND, THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS' NATIONAL RAPID RESPONSE TASK TEAM (NRRTT).**

I am writing to request that an investigation into the appointment of staff members and/or advisory consultants to the Department of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation's Ministerial Office and its National Rapid Response Task Team (NRRTT) be instituted without delay.

A reply to a written question (Question No. 1720), submitted on 04 December 2019 and responded to by the Minister of Human Settlements, and Water and Sanitation on 15 January 2020, (attached hereto as Annexure "A"), revealed the names of Minister Lindiwe Sisulu's Ministerial Office and NRRTT employees.

This reply disclosed that both Menzi Simelane and Mo Shaik have been both respectively been appointed into the position of Special Advisor IV, benchmarked at a Grade 16 DPSA Remuneration Scale. According to DPSA Circular 19 of 2019, this grading scale is awarded to Departmental Director Generals. The response noted these employees hold an LLB and a Degree in Optometry, respectively.

The reply further disclosed that more than 8 of the employees hired to staff the National Department of Water and Sanitation and Human Settlements NRRTT had not yet even submitted CV's. The reply did not furnish these NRRTT staff member's DPSA Remuneration Grades. A Promotion of Access to Information Act application has been lodged by my office in this regard.

It is unacceptable that Minister Lindiwe Sisulu has hired Simelane and Shaik as Grade 16 Special Advisors, given an abundantly apparent lack of qualifications, experience or expertise in relation to the core functions of the Department's of Water and Sanitation and Human Settlements. Further, it is in my view unacceptable that taxpayers money which could've been used to hire suitably qualified Water and Housing Experts, or Engineers, has been used to hire what appear to be politically aligned cadre deployee's, both with questionable professional histories. This is especially egregious given the decimated financial state of the Department and the Water Boards reporting into the Department, and its patently clear failure to fulfil its mandate in light of the current drought crippling many parts of South Africa.

I believe that these appointments are inconsistent with the core functions and purpose of the Minister's Office and the alleged functions of the NRRTT (we are yet to see any viable departmentally related plans or action steps emerging from this office).

I am further of the view that these appoints are inconsistent with the Constitution; that it is irrational and corrupt to have appointed departmental staff members without their having so much as supplied CV's; and, that the Minister and her charges did not follow even the most basic public service employment recruitment and appointment processes in these appointments.

It is a great disservice to all South Africans that a task team (NRRTT) and Senior Advisors whose work is intended to fulfil the mandate of the National Departments of Water and Sanitation and Human Settlements, do not possess any apparently relevant qualifications, expertise and experience.

The simple fact that Menzi Simelane and Mo Shaik have qualifications in Law and Optometry, respectively, provides further evidence that these appointments are unlawful as these individuals are not qualified to provide advice to a department whose focus is on water, sanitation and housing delivery.


In terms of section 196(4)(b) of the Constitution the Public Service Commission is empowered to investigate, monitor and evaluate the organisation and administration of the public service and of personnel practices of the public service. In light of your Constitutional mandate, and the widespread public outcry across South Africa regarding these appointments, I hereby request that you act on this mandate and conduct a full and diligent investigation into:

1. The recruitment and appointment practices and rational basis for the appointments of all DPSA Grade 13 – Grade 16 staff members employed in Minister of Water and Sanitation and Human Settlements, Lindiwe Sisulu's Private Office.
2. The recruitment and appointment practice and rational basis for the appointment of all staff members (a minimum to our knowledge of 19 appointments) employed as part of the Department of Water and Sanitation and Human Settlements, National Rapid Response Task Team.

It is our strong contention that these appointments are irregular and irrational.

As the urgency and gravity of this matter is evident, your prompt response and action in this regard will be most appreciated.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Louise Powell  
Member of Parliament of the Republic of South Africa  
Deputy Shadow Minister for Water and Sanitation and Human Settlements