

Auditor-general takes dim view of transport entities

Auditor-General Kimi Makwetu's office has presented a damning picture of Department of Transport entities including the South African National Roads Agency Limited (Sanral), saying they are on a path that will miss the targets set out in their strategic plans.



The auditor-general flagged the Passenger Rail Agency of SA (Prasa), the Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA), the Railway Safety Regulator (RSR) and the South African Maritime Safety Authority (Samsa) as being among entities that will miss targets.

These entities are either in the process of pushing significant legislative reforms in their subsectors or are preparing to undertake major infrastructure programmes.

The auditor-general said the Department of Transport was also on its way to receiving a qualified audit opinion because of the continued bungling of the transfer from Tasima of the electronic national administration traffic information system (eNatis).

The department said it took over the management of the system only in April.

Assessed programmes

Tshego Singo, a representative of Makwetu's office, told Parliament's portfolio committee on transport this week that the auditor-general had assessed the entities' programmes on administration, road, rail and public transport.

The office had also looked at the integrated transport programme after the department requested it.

"We found that targets for RSR, Samsa, Prasa, Sanral and RTIA were not reliably timebound. Targets were not specific and measurable," said Singo.

However, she said that although the review and findings were reliable indicators of performance they would not necessarily affect the department's 2016-17 audit outcomes. "It will be used as an early warning system and, if acted upon appropriately, should not be reflected in the audit outcomes."

"Did not understand the department"

Collins Letsoalo, Prasa's former CEO and the department's erstwhile director, who was at the meeting, disputed Singo's presentation, saying the auditor-general's assessment showed that it "did not understand the department" or its entities.

"We have never accounted for eNatis as an asset before, but last year, the [auditor-general] said we must. It's not a correct reflection," said Letsoalo.

The department's acting director-general, Mathabatha Mokonyama, said: "Qualification of the department has to do with eNatis and nothing else. When we went up and down with the auditor-general, we were told by the auditor-general to take this audit opinion. I told the minister that I had a big problem."

Source: Business Day

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