

Calls for Brown and board of Eskom to quit

Public Enterprises Minister Lynne Brown's capitulation over the removal of Eskom CEO Brian Molefe and the bungling of the Eskom board over his reinstatement have prompted calls for the removal of both the minister and the board.



Lynne Brown, minister of public enterprises. Photo: <http://www.sabreakingnews.co.za> SA Breaking News

After weeks of public outrage and opposition to Molefe's reinstatement, Brown directed the board to rescind it, but only once the decision to do so was taken by an interministerial committee established by President Jacob Zuma to investigate the reinstatement.

Brown was a member of the committee.

The Eskom board said in a statement that it would "meet to finalise the way forward on the issues raised by the minister".

Corruption Watch executive director David Lewis said the organisation was taking legal advice on either itself applying for or supporting an application to court to have all members of the Eskom board who were present when major coal contracts were concluded declared delinquent directors. This would include Molefe and board chairman Ben Ngubane.

A declaration of delinquency would prevent those involved being appointed to any board in the country. Lewis said Corruption Watch was not satisfied that only Molefe was being held responsible for the Eskom fiasco.

"I don't think that after their conduct on the Eskom board these people should be allowed to be on the board of any company," Lewis said. "The board has proved that it is not up to the governance of an institution as large and important as Eskom. They have proved themselves to be equally complicit and equally conflicted in some of the critical decisions that led to this crisis."

Corruption Watch met with its lawyers on Thursday to discuss the matter.

He believed that Brown's role in the fiasco also called into question whether she was competent to play the role of minister of public enterprises.

Council for the Advancement of the South African Constitution executive secretary Lawson Naidoo called for the removal of Brown because of the debacle which had been condemned across the political spectrum and had led to mass protests and several court applications.

Naidoo described Molefe's reinstatement as an "epic failure of governance and the minister and the board must be held accountable for the shambles.... She has presided over a shambolic state of affairs in terms of the improper manner in which Molefe was appointed and now has had to back down. She really ought to resign."

Source: *Business Day*

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