

To: The Editor
Sowetan
Thursday 29 January, 2009

LIVING THE VALUES OF THE NPA IS NON-NEGOTIABLE

The fact that racist allegations against a prosecutor in Johannesburg made screaming newspaper headlines two days in a row bears testimony to the fact that people expect nothing less than fairness and integrity from public service professionals. This is particularly important when people engage with institutions within the criminal justice system.

The NPA condemns in the strongest tone any manner of misconduct, including racism, by all its members. It is even more disturbing when such behaviour is exhibited by prosecutors, who are at the coal face of service delivery to the people of South Africa in court. We applaud the media and members of the public whenever they bring allegations of non-professionalism and misconduct by NPA employees to our attention, and we will always act decisively where there is evidence of wrongdoing.

Last year the NPA adopted values with which all employees committed to living. These are ***Accountability, Integrity, Service Excellence, Professionalism and Credibility***. Most significantly, these values were determined through a democratic process within the NPA, where all employees made a contribution to what these values should be. Of course, as in any institution of the size of the NPA, there will be a handful of 'bad apples'.

Possible sanctions against a prosecutor found guilty of misconduct include corrective counselling, demotion, suspension without pay and in the worst cases, dismissal from service. Fortunately, incidents of misconduct and accusations of racism are not that prevalent in the NPA. For instance, last year we registered only 14 dismissals.

Members of the public are encouraged to report cases of misconduct and corruption against NPA employees at the Hotline number at **0800 212 580**

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