

# Media Statement



Tel: +27 12 845 6000

Email:  
[media@npa.gov.za](mailto:media@npa.gov.za)

Victoria & Griffiths  
Mxenge Building  
123 Westlake Avenue  
Weavind Park  
Silverton  
Pretoria

[www.npa.gov.za](http://www.npa.gov.za)

**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 20 FEBRUARY 2019**

**RE: FORMER ESTATE AGENT SENTENCED TO DIRECT IMPRISONMENT FOR FORGERY AND FRAUD**

Today, the Bellville Specialised Commercial Crimes Court sentenced Mariette Lourens to five years direct imprisonment. Lourens was sentenced to eight years direct imprisonment but the court suspended three years for five years.

The former estate agent was charged with three counts of forgery, two counts of fraud and two counts of the contraventions of Estate Agency Affairs Act. Advocate Jannie Knipe argued that the accused forged financial documentation to obtain loans. She also defrauded financial institutions by submitting such forged documentation (R2.4 million), defrauded and/or stole from various customers by not paying over trust funds received and/or held on their behalf (R1 million) and failed to open and/or keep a separate trust account for the deposits of trust funds received and/or held on behalf of third parties.

The court sentenced her to eight years imprisonment of which three years is suspended for five years in respect of the three counts of forgery and two counts of fraud (taken together for the purpose of sentence).

Advocate Jannie Knipe said that the court took into account that no actual loss was suffered by the complainants, that the accused is a first time offender, 58 years of age, and suffers from various ailments as per medical reports received. He indicated that the state was satisfied with the sentence.

"The state asked for a sentence of 10 years with half of it suspended. We are satisfied as the five years direct imprisonment adequately addresses the seriousness of the offences and will serve as a deterrent to would be transgressors in respect of fraudulent asset finance applications; even if no actual losses had been incurred and the accused is a first time offender. Although the accused was an estate agent, the forgery and fraud were

not conducted in that capacity so the sentence does not impact on the estate agency industry," he added.

Kind Regards,

**Eric Ntabazalila**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP Western Cape**

**Enquiries: [entabazalila@npa.gov.za](mailto:entabazalila@npa.gov.za)**

**073 062 1222**