

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: NO MERCY TOWARDS FRAUD

A former Pick n Pay Retailers limited (PnP) employee, Warren Lupke was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment at the Johannesburg Commercial Crimes Court on Friday, 17 October 2014.

The accused was a General Manager Fresh Produce, whose responsibilities were, *inter alia*, overseeing the marketing of fresh produce between PnP and its suppliers. Through his work relationship with the supplier UP to Date Sales known as UTD, he established a rebate account into which a percentage of all PnP invoicing would be allocated. PnP promotions were then funded from this account which ensured that UTD suffered no financial impact as a result of promotions. The accused issued fictitious invoices to UTD and paid by them from the rebate account to the total amount of R 4, 3 million.

The accused was charged with eight counts of fraud, three of which attracted a minimum sentence. The accused repaid PnP an amount of R 850 000 held in attorneys trust. During evidence on sentence, it transpired that he held shares in PnP in the amount of R 580 000, pension benefits in an approximate amount of R 1 046 million and leave payments in the amount of R 43 437. The accused made an offer that was accepted by PnP to forfeit all these benefits to recoup the loss suffered.

Despite all the efforts made to repay, senior state advocate Mbulelo Hermanus held the view that imprisonment is the only appropriate sentence as it will serve to deter people from committing crime and argued that in order to send a strong message that offering to pay back is not a pre-requisite for leniency.

NPA welcomes the sentence.

Kind Regards,

Issued by:

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