

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: POLICE OFFICER SENTENCED TO SIX YEARS FOR FOUR COUNTS OF FRAUD

A Bloemfontein police officer who was working for Crime Intelligence was yesterday sentenced to six years imprisonment after he was convicted on four counts of fraud by the Bloemfontein Specialised Commercial Crimes Court. Magistrate Vogens sentenced warrant officer Teboho Japhta Mohapi (42) for defrauding crime intelligence of R38 000. The offences were committed between January and September 2016.

The court heard that Mohapi would get information from his informers and lodge a claim for the informer to be paid from the secret account. Mohapi would claim R10 000 but instead pay the informer just R4 000 and claim that the other money is for the other informer who provided him with the same information. He would however, pocket the difference.

He used the same modus operandi four times and the informer reported him to the police. The Hawks investigated the matter and it was found that he was keeping some of the money for himself. His dishonesty led to the termination of his employment by the SAPS. The trial was delayed on many occasions as a result of the accused not attending the court proceedings.

Mohapi's legal representative requested the court to impose a non-custodial sentence on the accused because he was a first time offender. However, the State Prosecutor, Advocate Mvuseni Ponye requested the court to impose direct imprisonment because the accused was holding a position of trust and the state had to apply for declassification of the documents to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt.

"The accused was working for crime intelligence and because of greed he defrauded the secret account. He knew that these kinds of offences are not easy to detect because

that information is highly classified. He also betrayed the trust that informers have in intelligence officers and this will make it difficult for informers to provide the police with relevant information to solve crime. The only appropriate sentence the court could impose is a term of direct imprisonment”, said Ponye.

Magistrate Vogens agreed with the state that a suitable punishment for the accused will be a term of direct imprisonment. She took all the counts together for purposes of sentencing and sentenced Mohapi to six years imprisonment. She however, suspended two years of the sentence for a period of four years on condition that the accused is not found guilty of a similar offence during the period of suspension.

The Acting Director of Public Prosecutions in the Free State, Advocate Navilla Somaru has commended the good work done by the Investigating Officer, Captain Thabang Mokoena and the prosecutor, Advocate Ponye in ensuring that the accused is punished for his crimes despite being a law enforcement officer.

Kind Regards,

Phaladi Shuping

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Free State

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