

# 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: 22 March 2018**

**RE: SIX YEARS DIRECT IMPRISONMENT FOR A PRASA OFFICIAL**

The Durban Regional Court sentenced the employee of Prasa to 6 years direct imprisonment after she was convicted on 5 counts of corruption. The court sentenced her to two years imprisonment on each count, 10 years altogether however counts 2 were ordered to run concurrently with count 1 and for count 5 to run concurrently with count 4.

The employee was charged during the course of her employment at Prasa for her role in organising jobs at Prasa for desperate job seekers in exchange for cash. The complainants either had to pay a once off R12 000 or in two instalments of R6000. After the payments, the accused still gave them false hope that they would soon be interviewed for an available post. This was brought to Prasa's attention and a trap was authorised for her. The police successfully conducted the trap and she was arrested.

The state relied upon the evidence of the complainants who had to acknowledge that they were aware as well that it was wrong to pay to get jobs at Prasa. The state also relied on the provisions of Section 252A to prove that the accused was the person who coerced desperate complainants into paying her money. It was a lengthy trial with multiple witnesses being led.

In aggravation of sentence, the state reminded the court that witnesses were led during their evidence in chief about the impact this crime had on them. It was clear that they were all desperate and in need of jobs, some had tried to get jobs at Prasa before but were unsuccessful. They genuinely believed the accused had contacts as the accused's daughter was also employed at Prasa. Due to their faith in the accused and her capabilities they took loans from family and friends or utilised their savings so they can secure these jobs, the court heard.

Some complainants did not recover their monies from the accused. One of the complainants went as far as suing her in Small Claims Court and successfully got judgment against her, the court was told.

The state addressed the court highlighting the seriousness of corruption by citing the latest binding case law S v Philips 2017 decision by Supreme Court of Appeal, which sentenced a police official for accepting R900 to 4 years imprisonment. The state also relied on various other cases like S v Mahlangu (2011), S v New Year (1995) and S v Klaasen (2015). All these cases highlighted the seriousness of how courts viewed corruption.

Representing the state was Regional Court Prosecutor, Surekha Marimuthu. This sentence sends a clear message to government officials who abuse their positions of authority and take advantage of the poor and marginalised in society.

Kind Regards,

**Roshiela Benimadho**  
**Senior Public Prosecutor: Durban**  
**031-3024260**