



FW de Klerk
FOUNDATION

WELCOMING LIFESTYLE AUDITS AT STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES

The FW de Klerk Foundation welcomes the announcement of the Minister of Public Enterprises, Pravin Gordhan, that lifestyle audits for senior managers of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have started and will be completed by March 2019. As a country, we have too long concentrated only on 'big' Zupta-related corruption and state capture, forgetting that 'smaller' corruption in the public service is also endemic. It is a well-known fact that most of the bigger SOEs are in dire financial trouble, amongst others apparently because of sky-high salary bills. While legal battles are playing themselves out with regard to the Zupta-related issues, a start must be made on the other instances of corruption. While a lifestyle audit will not be conclusive evidence of corruption, it would be a good indicator of possible ill-begotten income. This task will be undertaken by the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) and it must be hoped that they have the requisite skills to complete the task successfully. It is perhaps significant that the period for financial declarations go back to 2009, the start of the Zuma administration.

Minster Gordhan has shown him as a fearless talker but also a doer. Perhaps his colleagues in the ministries of the Public Service, Cooperative Governance and others must take a leaf out of his book. Lifestyle audits should become an integral part of the public service and elected politicians. It is one of the best ways to stop the scourge of corruption in our country that is most harmful to those who cannot afford it: the poor.

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