

Objective of the Anti-corruption Learning Network delivered by the  
Director-General for PALAMA, Dr Mark Orkin, at the Launch of the  
Anti-corruption Learning Network

Sheraton Hotel, Pretoria  
31 July 2008

The Minister for the Public Service and Administration  
Ms. Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi  
Programme Director:  
Representatives of the Anti-corruption Coordinating Committee;  
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen

Thanks Minister for unpacking the fundamental values that underpins learning and information sharing, and for reminding us once again of our collective responsibility and obligation to fight and prevent corruption. Your commitment to improving governance and anti-corruption practices is important to our quest for an ethical society. This commitment has prompted us to intensify our efforts to improve governance, particularly through measures to combat corruption.

Like the Minister has indicated, the objective of the learning network is to create a learning space for anti-corruption practitioners in the public sector, where experiences and knowledge can be exchanged. Today we have an opportunity as public sector anti-corruption practitioners to put this objective to test and review where necessary. The fundamental point that knowledge lead to improved capacities, skills, values and understanding will be assessed as the learning network progress. The challenges may be great but we shouldn't let them daunt or intimidate us.

The theme of today's launch is **"Increasing Capacity to Fight Corruption in the Public Sector"** and the attendance at this event is testament to the continued growth, development and strategic importance of knowledge and information sharing. I am confident that the rigorous debates we will have here today, will contribute significantly to this growth. Learning networks involve the coming

together of a group of experts to use their combined talent to achieve a result which would not be possible if the experts operated individually. Such networks play a pivotal role in fostering links and relationships not just between the experts but also between all stakeholders in the wider anti-corruption environment.

As indicated in my opening statement, the Anti-corruption Coordinating Committee identified and endorsed this emphasis on learning network and called for this launch to test this new strategic approach.

This innovative event brings together key managers from departments and anti-corruption agencies, many of whom are members of the Anti-corruption Coordinating Committee and who can offer their valued insight in the discussions during the day.

The learning network will highlight the importance, potential and benefits of an enabling collaborative environment across the public sector to fight and prevent corruption. Throughout the course of the event's proceeding you will learn about some of the approaches taken by government to address challenges in the fight against corruption and capture case studies to address those challenges. The common theme running through all of today's case studies and presentations is that capacity needs to be increased to intensify the fight against corruption. This was the underlying objective of the development of the Minimum Anti-corruption Capacity Requirements for the Public Service in 2003.

A presentation on the implementation of the Minimum Anti-corruption Capacity Requirements will be provided. This presentation will look at the requirements and highlight some of the findings of the 2004 compliance audit on Minimum Anti-corruption Capacity Requirements conducted by the DPSA. The Minimum Anti-corruption Capacity Requirements has been translated into Public Service Regulations which comes into effect in September 2008. The anti-corruption regulations aim at enforcing compliance to increase departmental and organisational capacity to prevent and detect corruption. The regulations are also calling for an establishment of ethics officers to champion departmental anti-corruption initiatives.

To unpack this requirement, case studies on the South African Revenue Services Ethics Management Model and the Eastern Cape Ethics and Corruption Prevention programme will be presented. In both presentations, participants will learn of the roles and responsibilities of ethics officers and the training that supports this role. The aim is to ensure that we have a common understanding of this phenomenon: ethics office/r.

In supporting the theme of the learning network, a presentation on Public Sector Anti-corruption Capacity Development Programme will be made. The aim of the presentation is to share with participants the objectives of the programme and its roll out strategy. The implementation of the programme is supported by SAMDI. Additional presentation will be presented by SAMDI on social networking, which will explore the notion of virtual forum in informing the design and development of anti-corruption training programmes.

Lastly, a presentation on the preliminary findings of the Public Administration Surveys conducted in 2007 as part of the Impact Appraisal will be presented. The surveys are aimed at measuring the level of corrupt practices within the public sector; susceptibility to corruption; and how corruption impacts on service delivery.

I hope that the learning network will provide the necessary space where experiences and knowledge can be exchanged. Your input and feedback today is essential to ensure that decision makers on anti-corruption policy and programme managers are aware of the importance of learning networks such as this one in order to best meet our information needs.

Finally, I would like to thank the Anti-corruption Coordinating Committee for organising and hosting this important event. I hope you find today's discussions informative and beneficial. I am sure you will find that, where networks are concerned, it is a case of the whole being greater than the sum of the parts.

I wish the learning network well for the proceedings today.

Thank you.