

SIU, Saica and North West University sign MoU

Special Investigating Unit head, Advocate Andy Mothibi, has hailed a new partnership between the corruption-busting unit, the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants' (Saica) Thuthuka Education Upliftment Fund (TEUF), and the North-West University (NWU) as a strong move towards ensuring that the SIU is well capacitated in the future.



Image source: [tadamichi – 123RF.com](https://www.tadamichi.com)

The partnership facilitates a programme at the North West University, which, according to the SIU, “aims to train and produce a new generation of forensic accountants”.

Mothibi said criminals and their criminality has become more complex and the use of forensic accountants in investigation is becoming a top requirement.

“The corrupt and the criminals out there use sophisticated tools and ways to commit crime and they use sophisticated methods to hide the money and the assets that they have corruptly acquired.

“We need to up the game in terms of ensuring that we meet them pound for pound. We need to ensure that we have the

skills that will analyse all those financial statements, all those balance sheets, all those income statements to ensure that we come to grips on the kind of offences and corruption that has been committed,” he said.

Mothibi reflected that as recent as six years ago, the unit had a forensic accounting team that was under-capacitated.

“At the time when I joined the [SIU]...back in 2016, as we did the analysis we found that we had just two forensic accountants and after a year or two, there were three. As we adopted the new strategy... [which] placed premium at the impact of our work and the impact required us to investigate and to investigate effectively.

“As we were executing the strategy, we started seeing the allegations coming in and allegations from the public and government. So to [investigate effectively] we also started noticing some of the complexities in the investigation and as a team we agreed that part of what we needed to strengthen on was the part the forensic accountant skills,” he said.

He said that as the SIU enacted its new strategy and organogram, it made more space for forensic accountants.

“As we took this decision to increase the accountants...we recruited a few and of late we are numbering at around nine at the moment. There is still a need so this project is really going to enable us to build the timber such that we benefit previously disadvantaged students through the university and...Saica.

“This is a flagship project and we would like to make sure that we benefit both from reducing youth unemployment and also that we benefit the state agencies’ capacity,” he said.

Zondo commission recommendations

Turning to recommendations made in the report of the State Capture Commission’s report, Mothibi said the SIU is already investigating some of the findings and allegations at several state-owned entities including Transnet, South African Airways, Eskom and Denel.

“We do have proclamations already in most of those areas. What we are doing is that we already have a process in place to ensure that we understand the outcomes of the Zondo Commission and ensure that we run all of those outcomes and recommendations and places them in our processes so that they produce the results that we all are looking for. Be it civil litigation where we have got to recover monies that have been lost by government and by the state,” he said.

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