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CW 2016 report shows increasing intolerance for corruption

The public in South Africa are increasingly intolerant of corruption and the abuse of power by those in positions of leadership and are more willing to hold them to account, according to Corruption Watch's 2016 Annual Corruption Report. The [report](#) reviews the past five years of the public reporting their experiences of corruption to Corruption Watch and celebrates the almost 15 000 whistle-blowers from across the spectrum who have chosen to take action.

This trend of increased and vocal activism mirrors a heightened climate of public engagement that was seen in 2016, and points to greater levels of awareness and urgency among communities to rise up against corruption in all aspects of daily life.

"2016 was the year in which South Africans decisively and publicly rejected corruption. From ordinary voters and community members through to leading public officials and cabinet ministers, there was a groundswell of opposition to corruption and its perpetrators. But the fight is not over by any means. The future of our country rests on our ability to maintain and intensify the pressure exerted in 2016," commented David Lewis, executive director of Corruption Watch.

During 2016 a total of 4 391 reports of corruption were received, a substantial increase on previous years since the organisation was launched in 2012. This amounts to an average of 11 reports a day, compared to seven in 2015. The hotspots of corruption, as demonstrated by the complaints received, were again related to corruption in schools at 16%, followed by 7% of reports involving road traffic corruption incidents, with 6% of reports focused on licensing and immigration-related matters.

This data creates the opportunity to target corruption in specific sectors, as reports continue to come in about ongoing corruption in schools, home affairs and housing departments, to name a few.

It also enables Corruption Watch to launch campaigns that rely on increased public participation and mobilisation, for example the schools campaign, Project Lokisa, a campaign focused on exposing corruption in the immigration sector, or others like Bua Mzansi that encourage the public to participate in the appointment of public officials.

The most prevalent types of corruption reported in 2016 centre on the abuse of power, followed by bribery and procurement corruption. This analysis is made possible by the active role played by our whistle-blowers in bringing corruption-related information to light.

As part of its efforts to protect whistle-blowers in South Africa, Corruption Watch has made significant input into the Protected Disclosures Act. Earlier this year the organisation was invited to provide public

commentary on the Protected Disclosures Amendment Bill by the Select Committee on Justice and Correctional Services, and made its [submissions](#) to Parliament on 15 February 2017.

The focus for Corruption Watch in 2017/2018 is to continue to engage the public around issues such as the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, as well as the school governing body (SGB) elections in 2018. The organisation is also committed to extending its reach beyond urban areas to provide access for those in rural communities to report corruption in their provinces.

Lewis commented: 'The whistleblowing reports that we receive are the source of our legitimacy. They enable us to speak with the voice of the public. They provide us with the ability to identify patterns and hotspots of corruption, to target campaigns, to investigate and to litigate. They constitute the evidence that we present to those in authority. In 2017 our primary objective is to significantly raise the volume of reports that we receive.'

To access the report, go to the following link:

<https://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Corruption-Watch-Annual-Report-27-02-2017-Low-Res-Version.pdf>

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