



23 April 2013

Corruption Watch handles all complaints equally

The Corruption Watch Board has noted the recent allegations that Corruption Watch is using its investigative capacity to “meddle in Cosatu power battles”. The Board wishes to respond as follows:

Corruption Watch received 1 500 cases of corruption from the public in 2012. Of the reports received, only 13 implicated unions. A preliminary investigation was conducted on one union case and the report was tested against CW’s investigations criteria. The matter was dropped when it was established that the case did not meet the criteria.

The criteria by which Corruption Watch investigates complaints include:

- The corruption occurred post January 2010.
- The complaint is about the abuse of public resources and/or public power.
- There are contact details of the complainant or sufficient information within the report to enable CW to follow up on the matter.
- CW’s investigation will add value to a case that is being handled by another agency.
- CW has the financial and human resource capacity to pursue the matter.

The CW Board members emphatically affirm that no unions are presently being investigated.

Corruption Watch is committed to exposing and fighting the abuse of public resources. This involves corruption in government and the private sector, but also in all non-government or civil society organisations which must enjoy public confidence, including trade unions.

CW Board non-executive directors are not involved in operational matters such as deciding on investigations. In fact, when the organisation was established, a decision was taken never to discuss the details of particular reports and investigations with the board to avoid conflict of interest.

The Board can unequivocally state that no member was aware that there had been 13 complaints brought against any union prior to the *Mail & Guardian* report published on Friday the 19th of April 2013, nor has any member of the board been instrumental in bringing any such report to the attention of the CW.

The *Mail & Guardian* is simply wrong to state that it 'can reveal that Corruption Watch is investigating leaders of at least four Cosatu affiliates for alleged corruption related to their union members' investment money'. CW Executive Director David Lewis has already clarified this matter to the satisfaction of the CW Board in his statement, which was published in the said *Mail & Guardian* article:

“Five Cosatu affiliates were implicated in eight of these reports, Satawu, Popcru, Saccawu, Pawusa and Ceppwawu”, and that,

“We conducted a preliminary investigation into one of these namely a report alleging corruption in Satawu. However, when we read media reports to the effect that formal charges have been levelled against certain Satawu officials we decided not to proceed with our investigation on the ground that we were unlikely to add value to the police investigation ... in several other instances where the complaints submitted to us had been previously reported to the public protector, we passed on the information that we received to the public protector”.

The Board trusts that this clarifies the facts of the matter. It will continue to work to ensure that Corruption Watch plays its part in supporting government and business in their commitment to implementing anti-corruption programmes, and to provide a vehicle to the public to actively support this commitment.

For more information:

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Corruption Watch Board Members

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