

Scrap it entirely, former Sars staff say

Former South African Revenue Service (Sars) officials implicated in KPMG's report on the so-called rogue Sars unit met the international auditing firm and called on the company to withdraw the report in its entirety.



Two weeks ago, KPMG announced it was withdrawing the findings and recommendations made in the 2015 report.

Former Sars deputy commissioner Ivan Pillay, former strategic planning and risk head Peter Richter, Pillay's former special adviser Yolisa Pikie and former Sars spokesman Adrian Lackay said they were standing by their conviction that KPMG had caused "immense harm".

The meeting was requested by KPMG and led by the new CE, Nhlamu Dlomu.

Former SarsARS group executive Johann van Loggerenberg did not attend the meeting. His lawyer, Brett Murison, said his client would release a statement in due course.

Tuesday's meeting followed one held with former finance minister Pravin Gordhan and former deputy finance minister Mcebisi Jonas last week in a bid to defuse the crisis around KPMG's South African operations. Gordhan was removed from his post partly as a result of KPMG's report on Sars, and a number of his former revenue service colleagues were dismissed because of it.

On Friday, KPMG International chairman John Veihmeyer and chairman-elect Bill Thomas announced an independent investigation into work performed by KPMG SA in respect of the Gupta family and the SARS report.

Dlomu confirmed the meeting with the former officials, saying KPMG wanted to listen to their concern about the SARS report. "They told me loud and clear that the report caused suffering to them, other SARS employees and their families," she said.

"I understand their pain and apologised for the part that KPMG played."

KPMG expected that the terms of reference for the independent investigation would be broad enough to address their concerns, she said.

Like Gordhan, the four former officials said KPMG should make a full and frank disclosure about its past conduct and institute credible initiatives to "make right the harm" that was caused to individuals, public institutions, the country and the economy.

"In our view, the 'findings' of the KPMG 'forensic report' to SARS became the basis for the aborted criminal prosecution of the former finance minister, Mr Pravin Gordhan, the former Sars deputy commissioner, Mr Ivan Pillay, and others," they said in a statement following the meeting with KPMG.

Source: *Business Day*

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