

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA demands an investigation into Mpumalanga Department of Education's R2-million laptop procurement
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) calls for an urgent investigation into the Mpumalanga Department of Education's procurement of 22 laptops at a cost exceeding R2 million.

This expense equates to an average of over R91 000 per device, raising serious concerns about possible financial mismanagement and a troubling lack of transparency. During a recent sitting of the provincial legislature, the Education MEC confirmed that the laptops were allocated to office-based staff and school principals. The MEC was, however, unable to provide essential details such as the laptop's brands, specifications, or the name of the supplier, undertaking only to supply this information in writing at a later stage.

The Department has defended the high cost by stating that the laptops were procured through the State Information Technology Agency, which is mandated to handle government information technology acquisitions. It further claimed that the laptops were necessary for the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) teams, citing the need for high-performance equipment to manage complex systems.

Despite these explanations, the PSA regards the procurement as excessive and deeply concerning, particularly against the backdrop of the Department's ongoing infrastructure challenges in schools throughout Mpumalanga. The absence of transparency, including undisclosed supplier information and vague details on the intended recipients, heightens suspicion of potential maladministration.

The PSA, therefore, calls for an investigation into this procurement. Accountability and transparency are critical, and any persons found to have engaged in wrongdoing must face the full consequences of the law.

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