

Media Releases 2007

SARS Suspends Officials

Pretoria, 14 March 2007 - In a joint sting operation today two South African Revenue Service (SARS) officials were arrested for allegedly taking a bribe from a taxpayer. The officials are based at a SARS office in Gauteng. They are believed to have approached the taxpayer under the auspices of undertaking an audit. The officials apparently asked for money in exchange for "making the problem go away".

The taxpayer cooperated with SARS, who together with the organisation's Internal Corruption Unit and the South African Police Service, were able to arrest one official following the handover of money at a restaurant. An alleged accomplice was arrested in the vicinity of the restaurant shortly after lunch today. Both men have been suspended from their jobs with immediate effect.

The public are reminded that any audit must be accompanied by a notice on an official SARS letterhead with the SARS's contact details. Moreover, SARS auditors are not allowed to discuss payments before the completion of an inspection.

The sting operation forms part of SARS effort to root out corruption within its ranks. At SARS the integrity of its officials is non-negotiable. We want to encourage the public to report any irregularities to the SARS anti-corruption and fraud hotline on 0800 00 28 70.

ENDS

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