Sita works to regain clients' confidence

The State Information Technology Agency (Sita) has been quietly cleaning up its business to rid itself of the rot that has troubled it in the past.

By Thabiso Mochiko 25 Nov 2012

Under the leadership of chief executive Blake Mosley-Lefatola, the entity, which procures information technology hardware software and services for all government departments and municipalities, is working tirelessly to restore the confidence of clients.

Sita has been mired in controversy over mismanagement of funds, tender irregularities, conflicts of interest and alleged wrongdoing in human resources and payroll.

But in the past 20 months, since Mosley-Lefatola was appointed, Sita has made progress in implementing a turnaround that has seen it reduce the tender backlog, the turnaround time for awarding tenders and the payment period to service providers.

Sita procurement has been transformed into a supply-chain management function with new processes and systems.

"There are improvements but we are not where we want to be yet, but the journey to excellence is our direction," Mosley-Lefatola told *Business Day* in an interview last week.

Sita has enhanced its procurement auditing process and systems. For example, on all tenders of R10m and above an integrity audit is done before a tender is awarded. This means all the processes linked to the short-listed bidders are audit to prevent corruption.

A random selection audit is done on tenders below R10m.

The agency is clawing its way back to being competitive and will spend a minimum of R2bn in procuring IT hardware, software and related services for the year to March.

Mosley-Lefatola says he aware there is a negative perception of Sita, hence some government departments procure technology services directly, rather than using Sita. He says the agency is working hard to show value for money for its clients, which include the national and provincial governments, and municipalities.

"The government won't be able to operate without Sita," he claims.

The agency also runs government transferal systems, including the payroll, payment of bills and asset management. It is working with the South African Police Service to modernise its systems.

Another multimillion-rand project Sita is working on is to develop systems to facilitate the integration of all government IT systems.

The project, called the integrated financial management system, has been under way since 2007.

Sita has partnered with the private sector to help with the roll out of new technologies.

The integrated financial management system will remove duplication and manual processes of documentation. It fits in with the state's objective to create a single public service, Mosley-Lefatola says.

Upon completion, it will provide a "total view of the citizens and provides a seamless process of documents", he says.

In future, Sita would like to have one government domain system that will provide a single entry point to all departments - local, provincial and national.

"That is on our radar. It forms part of the overall e-government project that we need to accelerate," Mosley-Lefatola says.

"We need integrated planning and to intensify collaboration," he adds.

Source: *Business Day* via I-Net Bridge

For more, visit: https://www.bizcommunity.com