

President assents to Correctional Services, Forestry and Agriculture Bills

The Correctional Services Amendment Act, National Veld and Forest Fire Amendment Bill and the Agricultural Product Standards Amendment Bill, 2023 have been signed into law by President Cyril Ramaphosa.



Image source: Andriy Popov – 123RF.com

Correctional Services Amendment Act

According to the Presidency, the Correctional Services Amendment Act “complies with the 2020 Sonke judgment of the Constitutional Court, in providing for an adequate level of independence of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services (JICS)”.

“The amendments include changes to section 30(7) to provide for an inmate that is subjected to solitary confinement, to be informed of their right to appeal.

“The amended section further provides that the Head of the Correctional or Remand Detention Facility must, upon request, provide all relevant information relating to an appeal to the Inspecting Judge within 24 hours of receiving such information,” the Presidency said.

The amended act further provides for:

- The appointment of the Chief Executive Officer of the JICS by the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services instead of the National Commissioner of Correctional Services.
- The expenses incurred by the Judicial Inspectorate will be covered from budgets appropriated by Parliament. These costs were previously covered from the Department of Justice and Correctional Services budget.

- Mandatory reporting obligations by the Department to the Inspecting Judge.

National Veldfire Act

The amended act provides for provisions, including:

- The facilitation of the formation of fire protection associations by a municipality and a traditional council
- Compel a municipality, state-owned enterprise, public entity or other organ of State which owns land to join the fire protection associations.
- Extend the powers of entry, search, seizure and arrest to peace officers and traditional leaders.
- Amend the title of the Act to the National Veldfire Act.

Agricultural Product Standards Amendment Act

“The Agricultural Product Standards Amendment Act, will, amongst other provisions, empower the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to designate a person, an entity, undertaking, body, institution, association or board, who or which, as the case may be, has particular knowledge of the product concerned, or particular knowledge of the relevant management control systems, with no direct or indirect personal or financial interest, as an assignee to inspect the commodity for quality control and audit management control system,” the Presidency said.

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