



#YouthAtSea

Marking Youth Day on the 16 June, the Royal Cape Yacht club and the South African International Maritime Institute hosted a Youth Day Sailing Regatta that gave a young sailors from a variety of backgrounds to enjoy the experience of racing in Table Bay.

There is no longer anything particularly pleasurable about sitting down to read the Sunday Newspaper with a good cup of coffee. From page one onwards we are confronted with stories of alleged corruption across government departments and State Owned Entities.

It's hardly the message we should be sending to our youth during Youth Month; themselves beginning to become disillusioned by the lack of prospects that await them in the "real world" once leaving their respective institutions of learning.

Just the other Friday, I started a weekend with a number of forwarded internal documents circulated amongst staff at the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) that highlights the lack of cohesive leadership between the Director General and the Deputy Director General.

What ensued would have been quite amusing had it not been for the Department's recent track record in handling FRAP; the implication of fisheries officials in abalone crime and the imperative for DAFF to stave off potential litigation from fishing companies seeking to appeal decisions.

The first document to find its way into my inbox was signed off by the Director General, Mike Mlengana, who took up the position in 2016. It informed staff that he had placed Deputy Director General, Siphokazi Ndudane, on precautionary suspension based on a total of 12 allegations of misconduct.

It did not take long for a second, rather more comprehensive memo, to land in my inbox in which Ndudane painstakingly addressed each allegation with the aim of quelling any misinformation that she felt may be in circulation as well as addressing the rather unorthodox delivery of the notice of suspension.

What could have ended in a stalemate was quickly circumvented by the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, Senzwa Zokwana, who sided in favour of the DDG and simply withdraw any powers conferred on the DG. In doing so, he effectively reversed the suspension notice. Interestingly, his haste to send out the memo saw it circulated with a rather unfortunate misspelling of his Department's name at the close of the document.

Speaking to a number of people close to the action, it is clear that more depth to this story is likely to surface in due

course, but in the meantime, the Department will need to focus on damage control.

Having stumbled into the weekend contemplating the blurred lines of allegations and politically motivated posturing at DAFF, I intended to exit that same weekend relaxing over a cup of coffee and the *Sunday Times*. I guess it's not unusual to expect scandalous headlines on the front page, but it seemed that sheet after sheet contributed to an overall dismal picture - and the maritime sectors were not spared the spotlight.

Not far into the paper I encountered a story by Bobby Jordan (who incidentally has been known to focus on the marine industry in his articles) about Pamela Bosman's conduct within the Eastern Cape Development Corporation. One of the allegations made in the article is that Bosman failed to disclose her business relationship with FTC Engineering (Tide Marine) that was awarded a substantial loan to build a plough tug for Transnet.

Right next door to this article was one that aimed to outline incidents of fronting within the fishing industry. One of the trade unions in the fishing industry has voiced concerns over the recent approval for Sea Harvest to acquire the fishing rights of Viking Fishing.

The same newspaper also rekindled talk about the infamous Arms Deal and former president Jacob Zuma's alleged corrupt dealings with Thales. Oh - and don't get me started on what is being written about Brian Molefe.

All of these articles made me take stock of some of the storylines that I am currently working on that may only see the inside of this magazine in a few months time. Sadly many highlight less than exemplary ethics and certainly do not provide the next generation of maritime professionals with a good template from which to operate.

So amongst the horrible headlines, as a magazine charged to seek the examples of honest hard work that is paying dividends for economic growth as well as job creation on the continent, we hope to anchor the content going forward in a good balance of positive developments - without ignoring the reality of what needs to be changed.

You're welcome to send me information that relates to either side of the coin.

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