



**CITY OF CAPE TOWN  
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA  
STAD KAAPSTAD**

## **ANNEXURE 36**

### **NATIONAL TREASURY MFMA CIRCULARS 126 AND 128 - MUNICIPAL BUDGET CIRCULARS FOR THE 2024/25 MTREF**

**2024/25 BUDGET (MAY 2024)**



**NATIONAL TREASURY**

**MFMA Circular No. 126**

**Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003**

## **Municipal Budget Circular for the 2024/25 MTREF**

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## Introduction

This budget circular provides guidance to municipalities with their compilation of the 2024/25 Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF). It is linked to the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations (MBRR) and the Municipal Standard Chart of Accounts (mSCOA) and strives to support municipalities' budget preparation processes so that the minimum requirements are achieved.

Among the objectives of this budget circular is to demonstrate how municipalities should undertake annual budget preparation in accordance with the budget and financial management reform agenda by focussing on key "game changers". These game-changers include ensuring that municipal budgets are funded, revenue management is optimised, assets are managed efficiently, supply chain management processes are adhered to, mSCOA is implemented correctly and that audit findings are addressed.

Municipalities are reminded to refer to the annual budget circulars of the previous years for guidance in areas of the budget preparation that is not covered in this circular.

## 1. The South African economy and inflation targets

The National Treasury forecasts real GDP growth of 0.8 per cent in 2023, compared with 0.9 per cent projected in the 2023 Budget Review. Growth is projected to average 1.4 per cent from 2024 to 2026. Relative to the 2023 Budget, the weaker projection for 2023 mainly reflects lower household consumption expenditure due to higher inflation and interest rates, and lower net exports. Power cuts are expected to continue for the remainder of this year and to gradually ease in 2024. Faster, determined implementation of energy and logistics reforms remains critical to boosting economic growth.

In the context of weaker global growth and risks to the domestic outlook, government is working to position the economy for sustained growth and resilience to shocks. A combination of a stable macroeconomic framework, the rapid implementation of economic and structural reforms, and improvements in state capability remains central to achieving higher growth, employment, and competitiveness.

Employment growth continues to lag South Africa's post-COVID-19 economic recovery, with 74 000 fewer people in employment in the second quarter of 2023 than in the fourth quarter of 2019. Improving employment growth sustainably over the long term requires faster GDP growth and improved education and skills development.

Headline inflation is expected to decelerate as the energy and food price shocks associated with global supply chain disruptions and the war in Ukraine dissipate. Headline consumer prices are expected to fall from an expected 6 per cent in 2023 to 4.9 per cent in 2024. Fuel prices have fallen since June 2023, largely reflecting base effects. Food price inflation, which peaked at 14.4 per cent in March 2023, slowed to 8.2 per cent by August 2023. However, the pace of deceleration has been slow relative to global food prices. This can be attributed to a weaker rand exchange rate and elevated production costs. Core inflation has remained near 5 per cent for most of 2023 due mainly to higher insurance and vehicle price inflation. Headline inflation is projected to return towards the mid-point of the 3 to 6 per cent target range in 2025.

Household consumption expenditure is expected to slow from 2.5 per cent in 2022 to 0.8 per cent in 2023 due to the cumulative effect of interest rate increases, elevated inflation and falling real disposable income, and generally weak consumer confidence. Growth in credit

extended to households continues to decelerate for both secured and unsecured credit. National Credit Regulator data shows that in the first quarter of 2023, banks rejected 70 per cent of credit applications – the highest rate on record – reflecting concerns over households' ability to repay loans. Household consumption expenditure is expected to average 1.6 per cent from 2024 to 2026.

The following macro-economic forecasts must be considered when preparing the 2024/25 MTREF municipal budgets.

**Table 1: Macroeconomic performance and projections, 2022 - 2027**

Fiscal year	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Actual	Estimate	Forecast		
CPI Inflation	6.9%	6.0%	4.9%	4.6%	4.5%

Source: Medium Term Budget Policy Statement 2023.

Note: the fiscal year referred to is the national fiscal year (April to March) which is more closely aligned to the municipal fiscal year (July to June) than the calendar year inflation.

The above economic challenges will place pressure on households' ability to pay municipal accounts and Eskom power cuts affect sustainability of small and large businesses. Both these factors have placed pressure on municipal own revenues.

It is therefore noted that variations in regional specifics are possible, however, any variation of assumptions must be explicitly set out and well explained in the budget narratives, in the absence of which the Treasuries will refer the budget back to council for alignment to the macroeconomic performance projections.

## 2. Key focus areas for the 2024/25 budget process

### 2.1 Local government conditional grants allocations

Over the 2024 MTEF, the local government equitable share and conditional grants will be reduced by a total of R12.8 billion, made up of R9.6 billion in the local government equitable share and R3.2 billion in direct conditional grants. The general fuel levy sharing with municipalities will be reduced by R5.1 billion. These reductions form part of the government's efforts to drive fiscal consolidation. The implication of these changes will be outlined in more detail in the 2024 Budget Review.

#### Notable changes to the conditional grants system

While the review of the conditional grants system is on-going and reforms envisaged to be implemented from 2025/26, changes will be considered for the *urban settlements development grant*, *integrated urban development grant*, and *the municipal infrastructure grant* to make better use of regulatory frameworks and improve the water business of urban municipalities from 2024/25.

We kindly advise municipalities to utilise the indicative numbers that were presented in the 2023 Division of Revenue Act when developing their 2024/25 MTREF calculations. It is crucial to also make considerations to the proposed reductions to baselines that were presented in the 2023 MTBPS, as they may have a significant impact. We recommend this be prioritised in all budgetary planning for the upcoming fiscal year. In terms of the outer year allocations (2026/27 financial year), it is proposed that municipalities conservatively limit funding allocations to the indicative numbers as presented in the 2023 Division of Revenue Act for 2024/25. The Division of Revenue Bill, 2023, which includes the annexures outlining allocations to each municipality is available at:

<http://www.treasury.gov.za/documents/national%20budget/2023/default.aspx>

### ***Division Of Revenue Amendment Bill, 2023 (DoRAB)***

**Declared underspending in the local government equitable share** – In January 2023, the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) approved a bulk electricity tariff increase of 18.7 per cent for the 2023/24 financial year. The subsidy for free basic electricity in 2023/24 was calculated to include an additional 2 per cent in anticipation of higher municipal tariff increases than that published in January, due to the difference in the financial years of Eskom customers and municipalities. A further R1.4 billion was left unallocated in the local government equitable share to enable additional funding for municipalities should the final municipal tariff increase that was expected to be published between March and June 2023, exceed the 20.7 per cent increase provided for. In June 2023, NERSA approved a municipal tariff increase of 15.1 per cent. The unallocated amount of R1.4 billion in the local government equitable share is therefore surrendered as declared under-expenditure.

**Fiscal consolidation reductions** – There is a total downward adjustment of R3.4 billion to direct municipal conditional grants. This is made up of reductions of R9 million from the *infrastructure skills development grant*; R58 million from the *programme and project preparation support grant*; R32 million from the *expanded public works programme integrated grant for municipalities*; R1.2 billion from the *municipal infrastructure grant*; R306 million from the informal settlements upgrading partnership grant for municipalities; R553 million from the *urban settlements development grant*; R180 million from the *integrated national electrification programme grant for municipalities*; R40 million from the *neighbourhood development partnership grant*; R600 million from the *public transport network grant*; R237 million from the *regional bulk infrastructure grant*; and R244 million from the *water services infrastructure grant*.

**Funds for post disaster repair and recovery** – An amount of R1.2 billion is added to the *municipal disaster recovery grant* to fund the reconstruction and rehabilitation of municipal infrastructure damaged by the floods that occurred between February and March 2023.

**Top-up of the municipal disaster response grant** – Due to the floods that occurred between February and March 2023, the *municipal disaster response grant* was depleted by June 2023. R372 million is added to this grant to enable immediate response by municipalities in the event that a disaster occurs in the remaining months of the 2023/24 financial year.

**Conversion of municipal infrastructure grant allocations** – R10 million from uThukela Local Municipality's allocation is converted to an indirect allocation for implementation of the Ekuvukeni Water Supply Project by the Department of Cooperative Governance on the municipality's behalf. The project entails the replacement of an asbestos rising main from the Oliphanskop water treatment works. Similarly, R20 million from Emfuleni Local Municipality's allocation is converted to an indirect allocation to address the outfall of sewer in Evaton and Sebokeng.

**Conversion of neighbourhood development partnership grant allocations** – R88 million in the neighbourhood development partnership grant is converted from the direct to the indirect component of the grant. This is to expedite project implementation in municipalities that are experiencing administrative and financial challenges.

**Reduction in the integrated national electrification programme (Eskom) grant** – As part of the fiscal consolidation reductions, the integrated national electrification programme (Eskom) grant is reduced by R250 million.

**Reprioritisation from the integrated national electrification (Eskom) grant** – An amount of R53 million is reprioritised from the integrated national electrification (Eskom) grant to the vote



of the national Department of Mineral Resources and Energy to fund the rehabilitation of derelict and ownerless mines.

**Shift of funds from the regional bulk infrastructure grant to the water services infrastructure grant** – R309 million has been shifted from the indirect component of the regional bulk infrastructure grant to the indirect component of the water services infrastructure grant. This is to enable the Department of Water and Sanitation to manage contractual obligations, budget pressures, accruals and payables for projects in several municipalities.

**Changes to the municipal disaster recovery grant framework** – The framework of the municipal disaster recovery grant is amended to ring-fence the additional funds for the repair and reconstruction of municipal infrastructure damaged by the floods that occurred between February and March 2023.

**Correction of an error in the indirect allocations of the regional bulk infrastructure grant** – An amount of R20 million for the Kirkwood Water project that was erroneously allocated to Dr Beyers Naude Local Municipality is corrected to an allocation to Sundays River Valley Local Municipality.

**Amendment to the framework of the *municipal disaster recover grant*** – Parliament has approved that the National Treasury amend the framework of the *municipal disaster recover grant* to ring-fence and conditionalize the fund added for the repair and recovery of infrastructure damaged by the floods that occurred in February and March 2023.

**Correction of an error in the indirect allocations of the regional bulk infrastructure grant** – Parliament has approved that the National Treasury correct an oversight in the indirect allocations of the *regional bulk infrastructure grant*. An amount of R20 million for the Kirkwood Water project that was erroneously allocated to Dr Beyers Naude Local Municipality is corrected to an allocation to Sundays River Valley Local Municipality.

## **2.2 Publication of allocations from the municipal disaster response grant and changes from the stopping and reallocation process**

National Treasury has through Government Gazette No. 49584 dated 30 October 2023 published in terms of the Division of Revenue Act, 2023, (Act No. 5 of 2023) (DoRA), and provided information regarding the disaster allocations and the conversion of disaster grants to municipalities in the 2023/24 financial year. The Gazette further provided for the stopping and reallocation of funds to municipalities and reallocated to their districts.

### **Allocation of disaster response funding**

#### ***Transfers in terms of section 27 of the 2022 DoRA***

Section 27 of the 2022 DoRA provides:

*“(1) Despite the Division of Revenue Act for the 2023/24 financial year not having commenced on 1 April 2023, the National Treasury may determine that an amount, not exceeding 45 per cent of the total amount of each —*

- (a) equitable share in terms of section 4(1), be transferred to the relevant province;*
- (b) equitable share in terms of section 5(1), be transferred to the relevant municipality;*
- (c) allocation made in terms of section 7(1) or 8(1), as the case may be, be transferred to the relevant province or municipality.*

*(2) An amount transferred in terms of subsection (1)(c) is, with the necessary changes, subject to the applicable framework for the 2022/23 financial year and the other requirements of this Act, as if it is an amount of an allocation for the 2022/23 financial year.”*

Using this section of the DoRA, immediate relief funds were transferred to municipalities from the 2023/24 Municipal Disaster Response Grant (MDRG) baseline in June 2023 (before the start of the 2023/24 municipal financial year). Section 27(2) requires that these funds be subject to the 2022/23 MDRG framework and the DoRA as if these were allocations for the 2022/23 financial year. The implications of this:

**MDRG condition 1: Funds from this grant must be utilised within six calendar months following the date of the transfer of the funds to the municipality**

By approving the release of these funds in June 2023, National Treasury implicitly approved the roll-over of these funds to the 2023/24 financial year. Therefore, the immediate relief funds transferred to municipalities on 15 June 2023 must be spent by 15 December 2023.

In terms of section 25(3)(d) of the Division of Revenue Act, 2023 (Act No. 5 of 2023 – herein referred to as “2023 DoRA”), which is now applicable to the immediate relief funds, the National Treasury may approve that, funds allocated in Schedule 7 be used at any time. In terms of section 25(3)(e) of the 2023 DoRA, funds approved in terms of paragraph (d) must be included in either the provincial adjustments appropriation legislation, municipal adjustments budgets or other appropriate legislation.

Expenditure need not wait for the passing of such adjustments budget as this is emergency spending or unforeseen and unavoidable expenditure, which is provided for in section 29 of the Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (“MFMA”).

Municipalities must ensure that the disaster funding and expenditure are ring fenced (isolated) and classified correctly in terms of the *mSCOA* when budgeting and transacting, as per the guidance provided in *mSCOA* Circular No. 14 dated 16 May 2022.

### **3. Revenue Management**

The weak economic growth continues to impact municipal finances and as communicated in MFMA Circular No. 89 this has strained consumers’ ability to pay for services. Coupled with this conundrum is the marginal growth in national transfers as compared to the past. These two critical factors necessitate municipalities to function optimally suggesting that municipal operations, processes and procedures must be efficient. Inefficiencies in this space are guaranteed to manifest on municipal finances. Although some municipalities have managed these challenges well, others have fallen into financial distress and face liquidity challenges. Subsequently, municipalities are unable to meet their payment obligations to Eskom, water boards and other creditors. Therefore, municipalities must maximise their revenue generating potential and collect what is due to them and concurrently, eliminate wasteful and non-core spending. Municipal budgets will be scrutinised to ensure that municipalities adequately provide for their core mandate and to service their debt obligations. Municipalities must ensure that expenditure is limited to the maximum revenue collected and not spend on money that they do not have.

National Treasury encourages municipalities to maintain tariff increases at levels that reflect an appropriate balance between the affordability to poorer households and other customers while ensuring the financial sustainability of the municipality. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation is forecasted to be within the 4 to 6 per cent target band; therefore, municipalities are required to justify all increases in excess of the projected inflation target for 2024/25 in



their budget narratives and pay careful attention to the differential incidence of tariff increases across all consumer groups. In addition, municipalities should include details of their revenue growth assumptions for the different service charges in the budget narrative.

### **3.1 Maximizing the revenue generation of the municipal revenue base**

#### ***Property Rates***

Reference is made to MFMA Circulars No. 93, paragraph 3, 98 paragraph 4.1 and 123 paragraph 5.1. The emphasis in the above mentioned MFMA Circulars is to ensure that municipalities are using their entire revenue base as the basis for the revenue budget projections. The status quo remains. It is essential that municipalities reconcile their most recent consolidated valuation roll data to that of the current billing system data to ensure that revenue anticipated from property rates is realistic. The municipalities should implement a data management strategy and develop internal capacity to perform these reconciliations and investigations to improve completeness of billing.

#### ***Requirements of a billing report***

The Billing report must at a minimum provide the following per each property:

- Market value;
- Property category;
- Amount billed;
- Unique property identifier (linked to the Valuation Roll);
- Property owner;
- Rebate value;
- Exemption value; and
- Reduction value.

Although the format of the billing reports will vary across municipalities, the billing report will always have the above-mentioned specifics for any municipality regardless of the financial system used as they all use the valuation roll as the basis to update the municipal financial system. Municipalities are advised to engage their service providers in ensuring that there is a standardized billing report that considers the minimum billing report requirements.

#### ***Part A and Part B Register***

Reference is made to the Municipal Property Rates Act – section 23 of the MPRA reads as follows:

1. A municipality must draw up and maintain a register in respect of properties situated within that municipality, consisting of a Part A and a Part B;
2. Part A of the register consists of the current valuation roll of the municipality, including any supplementary valuation rolls of the municipality prepared in terms of section 78;
3. Part B of the register must specify which properties on the valuation roll or any supplementary valuation rolls are subject to – (a) an exemption from the rate in terms of section 15; (b) a rebate on or a reduction in the rate in terms of section 15; (c) a phasing-in of the rate in terms of section 21; or (d) an exclusion referred to in section 17 (1) (a), (e), (g), (h) and (i); and
4. The register must be open for inspection by the public during office hours. If the municipality has an official website or another website available to it, the register must be displayed on that website. (5) A municipality must at regular intervals, but at least annually, update Part B of the register. Part A of the register must be updated in accordance with the provisions of this Act relating to the updating and supplementing of valuation rolls.

Based on the cited section, municipalities are expected to comply with the provisions of section 23 of the MPRA to ensure that the latest information is used in the reconciliation process. All revenue foregone as supported by municipal policies due to municipal reductions rebates and exemptions must be accounted for in the Part B register and all subsequent supplementary rolls performed are accounted for using a Part A register.

Furthermore, municipalities are also advised and expected to comply with section 8(1) of the MPRA in terms of the billing methodology that should be specified within their policies to ensure that the correct categories (based on the selection made by the municipality) are used in the reconciliation process. A further test would be to reconcile this information with the Deeds Office registry.

In accordance with the MFMA Circular No. 93, municipalities are once more requested to submit their reconciliation of the Valuation roll/ Part A register to the billing system to the National Treasury on a quarterly basis by no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> working day after the end of the quarter. A detailed action plan must accompany the reconciliation where variances are noted.

The information must be uploaded by the municipality's approved registered user(s) using the GoMuni Upload Portal at: [https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi\\_apps/signin](https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin).

### **3.2 Setting the Cost reflective tariffs**

Municipalities must ensure that the capital repayment of loans are included in the cost when determining the tariff. In addition, they must ensure that the consumption charges for services are only based on consumption and all other variable costs. Therefore, fixed costs such as salary and wages, etc. should be covered by a fixed charge.

During the budgeting process, provision must be made for revenue to be generated by the tariffs levied for services to address the maintenance of infrastructure. New infrastructure developments in a municipal area of jurisdiction should be obliged to consider and incorporate energy efficiency sources of energy available such as solar or wind to respond to the ongoing global energy crisis.

### **3.3 Consumer Deposits and securities**

Credit control policies should be reviewed and amended to include the raising of consumer deposits, the authority to raise deposits should be deleted where it is still in the Electricity and Water by-laws, this should be included in the credit control and debt collection by-laws. Deposits should be equal or more than two months bulk accounts from water services authorities and Eskom.

### **3.4 Contracts with customers**

All municipalities should ensure that their service agreements with customers address the following matters:

- Requirements of POPIA;
- Digital and Physical Domicilium for the delivery of notices;
- Acceptance of liability in the case of proven tampering of services;
- Acceptance of Magistrates Court Jurisdiction if in arrears and legal action has been taken;
- Acceptance to adhere to Municipal policies and by-laws;

- Acceptance and approval to be handed over to third party if in arrears inclusive of credit bureau;
- Acceptance to give access to meter readers to read meters;
- Municipality accept to render promptly bills; and
- Municipality accept to limit the estimation of consumption on meters.

### **3.5 Indigent Management**

It is critical to progressively manage the restriction of free basic services to national policy limits. Therefore, free basic services to indigent households must be restricted. Where any unlimited supply or supply above national policy limits is provided, the budget narrative must explicitly articulate how this is funded also in a context of facilitating adequate asset management and adequate provision for related debt impairment and ability to maintain payment of Eskom, bulk water and other creditors.

**Establishing and maintaining credible indigent register** – It is important that the municipalities undertake the following actions to conduct quality control and monitor the indigents:

- Check accuracy and identify any overstatement of the indigent debtor which will enable municipalities to confirm the accuracy of the reported number of indigent debtors;
- Proactively identify indigent citizens and accelerate the registration process through data-driven indigency status verification, as a precursor to tabling applications to Council for approval;
- Verify the status of indigents on the current indigent register thereby reducing the risk of citizens benefiting from the indigent subsidy when they do not qualify for it anymore;
- Create a verifiable indigent register which reduces performance audit risk through the provision of monthly controls and credible, third party, data-driven evidence to support the validity of households registered as indigent;
- Utilise the insight provided regarding indigents to possibly make any necessary amendments to current Indigent Policy; and
- Municipalities are advised to work closely with their respective DCoG (also provincially) to simplify its indigent management registration processes – even considering qualifying criteria that can be independently checked without requiring a hefty administration burden on indigent households that are already financially constrained, including facilitating such on-site close to where indigents may reside. It is noted that the municipality needs to report on all indigent households for water and energy within its demarcation also in the Eskom supplied areas since the LGES: Free basis services (FBS) allocation is targeted at the demarcation as a whole. The municipality must therefore focus in its 2024/25 MTREF Schedule A submission to report on ALL indigent households (also in Eskom supplied areas).

### **3.6 Voluntary restriction of notified maximum demand (NMD)**

Municipalities are advised that Eskom agreed with NT that once a municipality in principle agreed to a Notified Maximum Demand (NMD) restriction with NT, Eskom will within 30 days of NT request advise on its ability to restrict the NMD at bulk supply points in that municipality. Eskom will restrict the NMD or not charge any NMD exceedance charges and penalties to the municipality until 30 June 2027 or earlier as may be agreed between NT and the municipality. Should any municipality with the electricity function not be able to maintain its Eskom bulk account, it is strongly urged to make an application to the National Treasury for such a

voluntary restriction of its NMD by Eskom. The application must include a council resolution to the effect that council approves and agrees to such a voluntary restriction and the effective date thereof. National Treasury will then make an application to Eskom for this purpose.

### **3.7 Pro-actively managing collection of municipal revenue in Eskom supplied areas**

NT notes that in the context of the Electricity Regulation Act, 2006 (ERA) existing section 21(5) prohibiting Eskom to cut supply in their areas to assist municipalities to collect on rates, water, wastewater and refuse removal – municipalities have no other tool but the restriction of water to collect in Eskom supply areas. Until ERA is amended it is critical that municipalities update their By-laws and policies to facilitate and legally allow the restriction of water as part of proper credit control for municipal revenue collection in Eskom supplied areas. The process before the supply of water is restricted/ limited, must honour the water supply rights of the indigent as well as the administrative processes and procedures, as contained in the municipal by-laws and policies read with section 4(3)(a) of the Water Services Act.

### **3.8 Maximising the revenue generation of the municipal revenue base Revenue on Property rates**

*(This section should be read in addition to the information provided on MFMA Circular No. 123 and previous circulars pertaining to this matter).*

It is important that municipalities who are performing a general valuation (GV) to implement a new valuation roll on 1 July 2024. Furthermore, it must as a best practice compare the current consolidated roll to the new valuation roll. This can identify any anomalies and errors of category of property and market values for review and investigation and the option of lodging an objection by the municipality, where applicable. This process should also identify outliers and shifts in market values by category and area so that tariffs on the new roll can be modelled and determined in an equitable manner to avoid rates shocks.

Municipalities should undertake this exercise as a routine practice during the budget process so that supplementary adjustments to the valuation roll are kept up to date. In order to ensure that the most updated information is used for the reconciliations, municipalities are reminded to adhere and comply with section 23(1) and section 23(2) of the MPRA and therefore use the Part A register as the basis for performing the reconciliations going forward.

### **3.9 Setting the Cost reflective tariffs**

Municipalities must ensure that when tariffs are designed, the capital repayment of loans are also included in the cost to determine the tariff.

Municipalities must ensure that when tariffs are designed that consumption charges for services are only based on consumption and all other variable costs. Fixed costs e.g. salary and wages, etc. should be covered by a fixed charge. The municipality must ensure its budgeting process address the requirement to maintain its infrastructure. New developments in/ a municipality should mandatorily make provision for alternative energy such as solar or wind or any other energy option available.

### **3.10 Critical Notice Affecting STS Meters and the RT29 Transversal Tender for Smart Meters**

As highlighted in MFMA Circulars No. 115 and 123 (dated 04 March 2022 and 03 March 2023 respectively) municipalities are once again alerted that there is still a pending business risk to the prepayment metering industry that requires urgency of action. The token identifiers (TID) used to identify each credit token will run out of available numbers in November 2024, at which point all STS meters will stop accepting credit tokens. The remedy is to enter a special set of key change tokens in order to reset the meter memory. Municipalities are advised that

the National Treasury, through the Office of the Chief Procurement Officer (OCPO), have issued a transversal contract for the provision of auditing, re-calibration and re-configuration services for standard transfer specification compliant prepayment meters that align to minimum and critical technical specifications for local government. In this respect the development of the transversal contract for smart prepaid meters as per NRS 049 (per latest approved version) is at an advanced stage.

Municipalities are cautioned against issuing their own tender to address the STS TID rollover and a smart solution for electricity and water meters as the RT29 tender should be available for municipalities to participate as early as January 2024 for participation.

### **3.11 Eskom Bulk Tariff increases**

The National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) is responsible for the price determination of the bulk costs of electricity. In the municipal financial year 2023/24, bulk electricity costs increased significantly at 15.1 per cent, compared to 8.61 per cent in the 2022/23 municipal financial year. There has been no change to the second year of the Multi-Year Price Determination (MYPD 5), as such bulk electricity costs are to be calculated using an increase of 12.7 per cent as per MYPD-5 in the 2024/25 financial year.

Given the absence of an approved tariff increase for the outer year of the MTEF, the increase is projected to be 15.7 per cent in 2025/26. This is the average of the approved increases for the two years of the MYPD-5 period. Municipalities in arrears with Eskom should ensure that their payment arrangements are included in the 2024/25 MTREF budget.

### **3.12 Consumer Deposits and securities**

Credit control policies should be reviewed and amended to include the raising of consumer deposits, the authority to raise deposits should be deleted where it is still in the Electricity and Water by-laws, this should be included in the credit control and debt collection by-laws. Deposits should be equal or more than two months bulk accounts from water services authorities and Eskom.

## **4. Funding choices and management issues**

Given the current economic crisis the country faces, Municipalities are under pressure to generate revenue. The ability of customers to pay for services is declining and this means that less revenue will be collected. Municipalities are advised to consider all the advice provided in MFMA Circular No 123 and other previous circulars under this topic to ensure the adoption of surplus and funded budgets.

### **4.1 Employee related costs**

The *Salary and Wage Collective Agreement* for the period 01 July 2021 to 30 June 2024 has come to an end and a new agreement is under consultation, which is anticipated to consider the current fiscal constraints faced by government. Therefore, in the absence of any information in this regard from the South African Local Government Bargaining Council (SALGBC), municipalities are advised to consider their financial sustainability when considering salary increases. It has been observed over the previous years that salary increases were above inflation and has posed challenges to most municipalities' sustainability. In addition, municipalities that could not afford such increases did not apply for exemption as provided by SALGBC.

Therefore, municipalities are urged to consider projecting salary and wage increases that would reflect their affordability given the current economic challenges. Municipalities that are



already not in a position to afford the current wage cost, would have to limit the increase in the 2024/25 MTREF and to exercise the option for exemption for any negotiated increase above the level of their affordability.

## **4.2 Remuneration of Councillors**

Municipalities are advised to budget for the actual costs approved in accordance with the Government Gazette on the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act: Determination of Upper Limits of Salaries, Allowances and Benefits of different members of municipal councils published annually between December and January by the Department of Cooperative Governance. It is anticipated that this salary determination will also take into account the fiscal constraints. Municipalities should also consider guidance provided above on salary increases for municipal officials during this process. Any overpayment to councillors contrary to the upper limits as published by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs will be irregular expenditure in terms of section 167 of the MFMA and must be recovered from the councillor(s) concerned.

# **5. FUNDING MUNICIPAL BUDGETS**

## **5.1 Approval of deficit budgets**

National/ Provincial Treasuries encourage municipalities to prepare a surplus budget to avoid placing the municipality's resources in financial difficulties. The adoption of a credible budget starts with the preparation of a surplus budget. With effect from 1 July 2024 all municipal Councils are advised not to approve a deficit budget, as such Mayors who table budgets to Council must be aware of the implications of a deficit budget.

Accounting Officers and their Chief Financial Officers are responsible for preparing budgets and accordingly are tasked with ensuring that the Mayor is guarded against submitting a deficit budget to Council for adoption. Failure thereof may result in Councils implementing section 171 of the MFMA to both the Accounting Officer and Chief Financial Officer.

## **5.2 Funded Budget**

Subsequently, the National Treasury would like to re-emphasise that municipalities must not adopt an unfunded budget. The emphasis is on municipalities to comply with section 18 of the MFMA and ensure that they fund their MTREF budgets from realistically anticipated revenues to be collected. Municipalities are cautioned against assuming collection rates that are unrealistic and unattainable as this is a fundamental reason for municipalities not attaining their desired collection rates. Municipalities are encouraged to limit expenditure according to the anticipated revenue projections. Should their collection rate improve during the financial year, municipalities may bring back initial expenditure items omitted. Municipalities should note that the Office of the Auditor General will soon start auditing those municipalities that have tabled and adopted unfunded budgets over an extended period given that this practice is not only illegal but also compromise their financial sustainability.

## **5.3 Credible Funding Plans**

Municipalities must adopt a credible funding plan in cases where the budget is unfunded (an unfunded budget is not encouraged). Where a funding plan lacks credibility, they will be required to correct the funding plan and ensure that it is credible. The credible funding plan must be immediately adopted by the Municipal Council and the changes to budget must be effected in the mid-year adjustments budget to ensure compliance with section 18 of the MFMA. The funding plan must show progressive improvement in the funding of the budget.



#### **5.4 Budgeting for Debt Impairment Loss, Write Off of irrecoverable debt and Reversal of Impairment Loss**

Assessment of the funding position of 2023/24 tabled and adopted municipal budgets revealed that a large number of municipalities incorrectly accounted for debt impairment and the write off of irrecoverable debt with the result that their budgets were assessed as unfunded. The two common mistakes made by most municipalities were:

- Provision for impairment losses was budgeted as Irrecoverable Debt Written Off on Table A4; and
- Provision to write off irrecoverable debt was budgeted for on Table A4 without any adjustment to the Accumulated Provision for Debt Impairment by way of a concomitant reversal of the impairment loss.

Any write off of irrecoverable debt previously impaired and accounted for as an impairment loss should be adjusted as a reversal of impairment loss when the write-off takes place. Failure to adjust the previous impairment loss by the reversal will impact negatively on the net receivables and therefore the funding of the budget. The receivables will be reduced by the amount of the debt written off whilst still providing for the impairment of the receivables already written off.

Municipalities should consider the following when budgeting for the annual Debt Impairment Loss, Write Off of Irrecoverable Debt and Reversal of Impairment Loss. The *mSCOA* chart includes data strings for:

- **Impairment loss** – contribution to the provision for annual non-payment based on the realistic collection rate for the municipality. Any increase in impairment is accounted for per debt type. This is treated as a loss in the Statement of Financial Performance;
- **Reversal of Impairment loss** – used to facilitate the reversal of overstated impairment losses. Any decrease in impairment is accounted for per debt type. This is treated as a gain in the Statement of Financial Performance. The reversal of impairment loss enables the reduction of debt impairment provision. Therefore, the data strings for impairment loss and reversal of impairment loss are aggregated to populate debt impairment on table A4; and
- **Irrecoverable Debts Written Off** – this is no longer written off against the Accumulated Provision for Debt Impairment but is expensed in the Statement of Financial Performance. Therefore, municipalities must record the reversal of impairment loss to reduce the Accumulated Provision for Debt Impairment with the irrecoverable Debts Written Off. The previous versions of the *mSCOA* chart provided for a single expenditure account for the recognition of any bad/ irrecoverable debt written off. However, in version 6.8 the *mSCOA* chart was expanded to include the write off of irrecoverable debt by debt type.

#### **5.5 Burial of councillors using public funds**

In terms of National Treasury's Budget Circulars No. 122 and 123 municipalities were urged to ensure that public funds are not used for burial of councillors. The issuance of this requirement in both circulars would have required in certain cases amendment of Council approved policies dealing with these matters.

Therefore, municipalities are reminded to ensure that any policies to this effect are rescinded as this matter will be referred to the Auditor General South Africa (AGSA) to verify during the 2023/24 audit if there have been no instances where public funds are utilised for burial of councillors. If such activities occurred in the municipality w.e.f. the 2023/24 financial year,

each Accounting Officer and Chief Financial Officer will be held responsible, and each Council can deal with such instances in terms of section 171 of the MFMA.

## **5.6 The use of mayoral discretionary accounts and any other council discretionary accounts**

In the previous Budget Circulars municipalities were cautioned against the tendency of utilising Mayoral Discretionary accounts. The risk or danger herein is that public funds are availed/ allocated or given out to other bodies or institutions or individuals by the Mayors of a municipality outside the budget process.

These allocations are at times not known by the Council as they were not disclosed in the budget approved by Council, meaning that there was a lack of transparency during the budgeting processes. Municipalities are reminded that this practice of utilising “Mayoral Discretionary Accounts is not supported by the National Treasury. Therefore, if there are policies developed by municipalities allowing or promoting such activities, those policies must be rescinded when the Council approves the 2024/25 MTREF budget.

Any further use of public funds in that manner will be audited by the AGSA with effect from 1 July 2024 with an intention of ensuring that Accounting Officers/ Executive Mayors and Chief Financial Officers, that allow such practices to continue in their municipalities will be held personally responsible.

## **5.7 Development charges**

Development charges are important components of a sustainable municipal infrastructure financing system, especially for cities and large urban municipalities, as they are used to finance land intensification. Despite their potential as an alternative option for financing infrastructure, municipalities have not fully used development charges due to uncertainty surrounding the regulatory frameworks. To address this uncertainty, amendments to the Municipal Fiscal Powers and Functions Act (2007) are proposed. The Municipal Fiscal Powers and Functions Amendment Bill proposes new, uniform regulations for levying development charges, so strengthening municipalities’ revenue-raising framework. This will allow municipalities to mobilise own revenue resources to fund their infrastructure needs and support economic growth.

Once enacted, these amendments will create legal certainty for municipalities to levy development charges, regulate their applicability and create a more standardised, equitable, and sustainable framework for development charges. The Bill was approved by Cabinet for tabling in Parliament on 17 August 2022 and subsequently introduced in Parliament on 08 September 2022. The Bill is currently being processed in line with the Parliamentary processes. Once the Bill has been enacted, the amendments will take effect from the next municipal financial year (commencing 1 July) or on a date prescribed by the President.

The National Treasury will clearly articulate the budgeting and accounting requirements upon the completion of the Parliamentary processes.

# **6. Municipal Standard Chart of Accounts (*mSCOA*)**

## **6.1 Release of Version 6.8 of the Chart**

On an annual basis, the *mSCOA* chart is reviewed to address implementation challenges and correct chart related errors. Towards this end, Version 6.8 is released with this circular. Version 6.8 of the chart will be effective from 2024/25 and must be used to compile the 2024/25 MTREF. The linkages to chart version 6.8 can be downloaded from GoMuni on the following link under the *mSCOA*/ List *mSCOA* WIP account linkages menu option:

[https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi\\_apps/signin](https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin)

The reports on the Local Government and Reporting System (LGDRS) are populated from financial and non-financial data strings. Municipalities must use of the linkages on GoMuni referred to above and not the formulas in the regulated Municipal Budget and Reporting (MBRR) Schedules when generating their data strings.

The Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations (MBRR) Schedules (A to F) and non-financial data string (A1S) was also aligned to chart version 6.8. A protected version of the MBRR Schedules for version 6.8 of the chart and A1S is available on the MFMA Webpage on the link below:

<http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/RegulationsandGazettes/Municipal%20Budget%20and%20Reporting%20Regulations/Pages/default.aspx>

Municipalities must verify that the A1S data string does not contain spaces and special characters prior to submission to the GoMuni Upload portal as this will result in the data not pulling through on table A10 of the A1 system generated schedule.

All municipalities must prepare their 2024/25 MTREF budgets using the budget modules of their ERP systems, generate their financial and non-financial data string and produce the Schedule A1 directly from the ERP system. The manual preparation of these documents outside the ERP system is not allowed in terms of the *mSCOA* Regulations.

For the National Treasury to consider a new chart change in version 6.9 of the chart, the issue must be logged with all relevant detail, supporting documents and screenshots (where applicable) on the *mSCOA* Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) portal by 31 August 2024. The *mSCOA* FAQ portal can be accessed by all registered GoMuni users on the following link:

[https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi\\_apps/signin](https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin)

Importantly, when a FAQ is logged, it is considered by the FAQ committee after it has been investigated. If the FAQ members do not find grounds for a chart change, the FAQ will be closed with an explanation. If there is merit for a chart change in the next version of the chart, the matter is referred to the *mSCOA* Technical and Steering Committees for recommendation and approval. This process only concludes by the end of October annually. The FAQ process will therefore not provide quick responses to queries.

If a query pertains to GoMuni related issues (such as the **A**, **B** and **C** Schedules) and not a chart change, then an email with all relevant detail, supporting documents and screenshots must be send to [lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za](mailto:lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za).

Please note the following errata in MFMA Circular No.123 on page 5 in relation to property categories that were approved by the Minister of Cooperative Governance for Bitou and Drakenstein municipalities. It was **incorrectly** indicated that the approval was in accordance with section 8(2)(j) of the Municipal Property Rates Act (MPRA) as amended in 2014, and that municipalities may apply for categories other than the categories in 8(2)(a) to (i).

**The paragraph is corrected as follows:**

Kindly note that, in accordance with section **8(4)** of the Municipal Property Rates Act (MPRA) as amended in 2014, municipalities may apply to the Minister for the authorisation to sub-categorise the property categories in subsection (2). Towards this end the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs approved the following categories:

- Sports Clubs and Fields for Bitou Municipality and

- Residential sectional title garages for Drakenstein Municipality.

## 6.2 Improving *m*SCOA data strings credibility

The credibility of the *m*SCOA data strings that have been submitted by municipalities to the GoMuni Upload portal has improved over the last financial year. However, the following areas of concern remain:

- Municipalities continue to **transact against line items without budgets** and as a result exceed the annual budget already in month 1 to 3 (quarter 1) of the new financial year;
- **Opening balances** for the previous year are **not transferred** in the first month (M01) of the current year, and all adjustments made during the preparation of the annual financial statements in periods 14 and 15 are not transferred through journals to the opening balances of the current year in the month of the current year that the adjustments are done;
- **Cash flow tables** (Tables A7, B7 and C7) are still **not populating correctly** and fully. This can be attributed to the fact that several municipalities still do not use balance sheet budgeting and movement accounting. Guidance on the use of balance sheet budgeting and movement accounting to populate tables A7, B7, and C7 correctly was provided in MFMA Budget Circular No. 107 (dated 04 December 2020) and *m*SCOA Circular No. 11 (dated 04 December 2020);
- Budget and transacting for **water inventory** is **not done correctly** in terms of the guidance given in MFMA Budget Circular No.115 (dated 04 March 2022) and MFMA Budget Circular No. 122 (dated 12 December 2022); and
- Some municipalities **do not budget and transact correctly** or completely **for irrecoverable debt written off and impairment loss** as well as the reversal of impairment loss of consumer debtors that have a significant impact on the funding of budgets.

National and provincial treasuries analyse the data strings of municipalities monthly to identify errors and communicate these findings to municipalities. Municipalities must use the feedback received to correct recurring errors in subsequent periods. Going forward, the National Treasury will not allow data string errors made in a previous month to be corrected in the next open period as this skew the monthly figures on the National Treasury Local Government Database and Reporting System (LGDRS). Municipalities must therefore **verify** the credibility and accuracy of the information in their financial system **prior** to submitting the *m*SCOA data strings to the LGDRS. The data on the LGDRS is used by various stakeholders such as the South African Reserve Bank (SARB), STATSSA, SARS, Department of Water Affairs (DWA), NERSA, DCoG, SALGA, AGSA, World Bank universities and the public.

## 6.3 *m*SCOA reporting on Value Added Tax (VAT)

In terms of the VAT Act, 1991 (Act No. 89 of 1991) and its amendments, municipalities must be VAT registered and must declare Output tax on the taxable supply of goods and services and claim Input tax credits on expenses incurred in the course or furtherance of the enterprise (the taxable supplies). The output tax is declared, and the input tax claimed by completing a VAT 201 return.

The guidance provided in *m*SCOA Circular No. 12 must be followed when reporting on VAT. It should be noted that the South African Revenue Services (SARS) will be using the data on the LGDRS submitted by municipalities to verify the VAT 201 return in 2024/25. It is therefore

crucial that municipalities report their VAT transaction correctly on their ERP systems and in their *mSCOA* data strings.

#### **6.4 Use of function segment to achieve GRAP 18 segmental reporting**

GRAP 18 is applicable to all entities on the accrual basis of accounting. The standard applies to separate (or individual) financial statements of an entity, as well as to consolidated financial statements of an economic entity. Municipalities control significant public resources and provide a wide variety of goods or services in different geographic areas with different socio-economic conditions. Consolidated financial statements provide an overview of assets, liabilities, revenues and costs etc. of an entity, but a greater level of aggregation is necessary to provide information which is relevant for accountability and decision-making purposes.

The objective of the disclosures is to enable users of the financial statements to evaluate the nature and financial effects of the activities in which it engages and the economic environment in which it operates. To achieve the objective, disclosures are required on two levels, namely:

- Specific segment disclosures
- Geographic disclosures

Detailed guidance on GRAP 18 reporting was provided by the National Treasury in the Accounting Guideline on GRAP 18 Segment Reporting (February 2020) which is available on the following link:

<https://ag.treasury.gov.za/>

The *mSCOA* function and region segments must be used to comply with the GRAP 18 reporting requirements.

The function segment records the major activities that generate the most economic benefits or service potential of the municipality. The implication will be that all income and expenditure transactions related to a specific trading service (function) must be budgeted for and transacted within that function. Therefore, where grants are allocated to trading services, the grant must be budgeted for and transacted in the Trading Services function. Municipalities must review their classification of the function segment as to whether the function is correctly identified as a core or non-core function.

The region segment identifies the lowest relevant geographical regional indicator of the intended contributor or beneficiaries that will contribute/ benefit directly from the given service or capital investment. Municipalities must ensure that they identify the lowest geographical regional indicator in the region segment when they budget, transact and report to provide data on the geographic disclosures required in GRAP 18.

Municipalities are also reminded to include the GPS Longitude for capital projects on supporting table SA36 on the A Schedule.

#### **6.5 Period closure and reconciliation of General Ledger**

Section 65 (2)(j) of the MFMA states that the accounting officer must take all reasonable steps to ensure that all financial accounts of the municipality are closed at the end of each month and reconciled with its records.

Annexure B of MFMA Circular No. 80 (08 March 2016) provides guidance on the minimum system requirements in this regard, namely that the ERP system must contain the functionality for:



- Period closures (i.e. budget process, month-end and year-end) and certification within the statutory reporting dates;
- Reconciliations and balancing of the sub-system and the General Ledger of the core ERP System with control accounts as a condition of all period closures;
- System generated transfer of opening balance to month 1 in the following year subsequent to the year-end closures period 12 as at 30 June (of the current year);
- Automated roll-over of the closing balance from month 12 into period 13 of the current financial year and month 01 of the new financial year; and
- Automated roll-over of the closing balance from period 13 to 14 and 15 of the current financial year and the corresponding month in the new financial year.

Guidance on the required period closures will be provided in *mSCOA* Circular No. 15 that will be issued in 2024.

## **6.6 *mSCOA* governance and implementation**

Municipalities that have not yet achieved the required level of *mSCOA* implementation, must develop and implement a road map (action plan) to fast track the implementation of *mSCOA*. The focus areas that should be considered (at a minimum) when developing the road map are articulated in **Annexure A** attached to this circular.

## **6.7 Regulating the minimum business processes and system specifications for *mSCOA***

The National Treasury will regulate the minimum business processes and system specifications for *mSCOA* towards the end of 2025/26. This project will also include the following outputs:

- Review and update the set of minimum business processes and system specifications for *mSCOA* (currently articulated in MFMA Circular No. 80) to incorporate new legislative requirements that have been issued since the circular was published;
- Update and develop the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for *mSCOA*;
- Align the current ICT due diligence assessment for *mSCOA* to the new Regulations;
- Consultation with key stakeholders on draft regulations; and
- Training on the new Regulations to ensure that there is a fair understanding of the new regulation by stakeholders.

Further communication will be issued on the consultation processes and training in due course.

## **6.8 Training Initiatives**

The National Treasury has introduced several training initiatives to capacitate municipalities, government departments, system vendors and other stakeholders on *mSCOA*. In 2024, these training initiatives will include:

- **Virtual Master classes:** This training is hosted by CIGFARO at no cost via zoom on a monthly basis and deals with technical and accounting aspects of the use of *mSCOA* chart;



- **Provincial training on mSCOA:** This is a new training initiative and will be hosted at a physical venue by CIGFARO at a cost (to cover expenses) and will include the fundamentals (part 1) and technical and accounting aspects (part 2) of mSCOA. Delegates will be required to pass a test on each part of the training to receive a certificate of completion;
- **mSCOA eLearning:** This self-paced web-based course hosted by the National School of Government (NSG) at no cost (until further notice) aims to equip learners with the fundamental of mSCOA. Municipal and government officials can register for the course at on the following link:

<https://www.thensg.gov.za/elearning>

- **Annual CIGFARO/mSCOA workshop:** This annual workshop provides a platform to share lessons learnt, best practices, technical aspects of mSCOA implementation and planned new developments by the National Treasury.

The full training program for 2024 is available on the GoMuni/ Go Training portal) on the following link:

[https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi\\_apps/portal](https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/portal)

## **7. The Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations**

### **7.1 Assistance with the compilation of budgets**

If municipalities require advice with the compilation of their respective budgets, specifically the budget documents or Schedule A, they should direct their enquiries to their respective provincial treasuries or to the following National Treasury officials:

Province	Responsible NT officials	Tel. No.	Email
Eastern Cape	Matjatji Mashoeshoe	012-315 5553	<a href="mailto:Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za">Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za</a>
Buffalo City	Pitso Zwane	012-315 5171	<a href="mailto:Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za">Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za</a>
	Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5807	<a href="mailto:Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za">Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za</a>
Free State	Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5952	<a href="mailto:Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za">Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za</a>
	Cethekile Moshane	012-315 5079	<a href="mailto:Cethekile.moshane@treasury.gov.za">Cethekile.moshane@treasury.gov.za</a>
Gauteng	Matjatji Mashoeshoe	012-315 5553	<a href="mailto:Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za">Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za</a>
	Pitso Zwane	012-315 5171	<a href="mailto:Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za">Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za</a>
	Oreal Tshidino		<a href="mailto:Oreal.Tshidino@Treasury.gov.za">Oreal.Tshidino@Treasury.gov.za</a>
City of Tshwane and City of Johannesburg	Willem Voigt	012-315 5830	<a href="mailto:WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za">WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za</a>
	Makgabo Mabotja	012-315 5156	<a href="mailto:Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za">Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za</a>
	Enock Ndlovu	012-315 5866	<a href="mailto:Enock.Ndlovu@treasury.gov.za">Enock.Ndlovu@treasury.gov.za</a>
City of Ekurhuleni	Kgomotso Baloyi		<a href="mailto:Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za">Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za</a>
KwaZulu-Natal	Kgomotso Baloyi	012-315 5866	<a href="mailto:Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za">Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za</a>
	Kevin Bell	012-315 5725	<a href="mailto:Kevin.Bell@treasury.gov.za">Kevin.Bell@treasury.gov.za</a>
eThekweni	Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5952	<a href="mailto:Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za">Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za</a>
Limpopo	Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5952	<a href="mailto:Sifiso.Mabaso@treasury.gov.za">Sifiso.Mabaso@treasury.gov.za</a>
Mpumalanga	Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5807	<a href="mailto:Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za">Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za</a>
	Lesego Leqasa		<a href="mailto:Lesego.Leqasa@treasury.gov.za">Lesego.Leqasa@treasury.gov.za</a>
Northern Cape	Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5807	<a href="mailto:Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za">Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za</a>
	Sibusisiwe Mchani	012-315 5539	<a href="mailto:Sibusisiwe.Mchani@treasury.gov.za">Sibusisiwe.Mchani@treasury.gov.za</a>
North West	Willem Voigt	012-315 5830	<a href="mailto:WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za">WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za</a>
	Makgabo Mabotja	012-315 5156	<a href="mailto:Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za">Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za</a>
Western Cape	Willem Voigt	012-315 5830	<a href="mailto:WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za">WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za</a>
	Enock Ndlovu	012-315 5385	<a href="mailto:Enock.Ndlovu@treasury.gov.za">Enock.Ndlovu@treasury.gov.za</a>
Cape Town	Kgomotso Baloyi	012-315 5866	<a href="mailto:Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za">Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za</a>
George	Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5807	<a href="mailto:Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za">Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za</a>
Technical issues on GoMuni Website	Data management		<a href="mailto:lqdataqueries@treasury.gov.za">lqdataqueries@treasury.gov.za</a>

## 8. Submitting budget documentation and A schedules for the 2024/25 MTREF

### 8.1 Time frames for submission

The LGDRS will be locked at 00:00 on the 10th working day of every month for the submission of data strings due, as required in terms of section 71 of the MFMA. Closed periods will not be opened to correct errors or to accommodate non-submission of data strings, regardless of whether a Schedule G application was done or not.

Municipalities must therefore verify the credibility and accuracy of the information in their financial system prior to closing the month on the ERP system and submitting the *mSCOA* data strings to the LGDRS.

Annexure A (attached) provides a list of the deadline dates for the submission of *mSCOA* data strings and documents to the GoMuni Upload portal in the 2024/25 MTREF. The GoMuni Upload portal can be accessed by registered users on the following link:

[https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi\\_apps/signin](https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin)

**Since the 2020/21 MTREF, municipalities are no longer required to submit hard copies of all required documents including budget related, Annual Financial Statements and Annual Reports to National Treasury via post or courier services. PDF versions of documents must be submitted to the GoMuni Upload portal.**

## **8.2 Updating of contact details on GoMuni**

Municipalities must ensure that their contact details on GoMuni are updated as soon as changes occur. Often emails containing important information and deadlines do not reach the intended GoMuni users due to outdated users contact information.

To update the contact details, municipalities (registered users) must download the excel report from GoMuni under Database/Contacts/Reporting/Contact information on the following link:

[https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi\\_apps/signin](https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin)

Changes/ additions made must be forwarded to [lgdocuments@treasury.gov.za](mailto:lgdocuments@treasury.gov.za).

## **8.3 Submission of monthly sign-off**

From 2024/25, municipalities will be required to sign off on the *m*SCOA data strings submitted for section 71 and grant reporting monthly. Currently this is being done manually on a quarterly basis. These monthly sign-off certificates will be system generated from the LGDRS and must be uploaded monthly with the data string submission to the GoMuni Upload portal.

## **8.4 Training on GoMuni**

The training schedule and GoMuni links for 2024 to assist those users that require new or refresher training on how to draw reports on the LGDRS, is available on the GoMuni/ Go Training portal on the following link:

[https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi\\_apps/portal](https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/portal)

## Contact



**national treasury**

Department:  
National Treasury  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## Annexure A

The following focus areas should be considered (at a minimum) when developing the road map and the road map should detail action steps, assign responsibilities, and specify time frames to address the implementation gap:

- a. **ICT Architecture**, which includes the hardware, servers, software, licences required to run the ERP management systems.
- b. **Governance and Institutional Requirements** - which includes:
  - A functioning *mSCOA* steering committee or equivalent structure to monitor and report on progress against the road map. This committee consist of the heads of all business units and meet regularly (at least quarterly).
  - Regular reporting on *mSCOA* implementation to Management and Executive Committees and Council.
  - Appointment of a *mSCOA* champion to drive the *mSCOA* implementation at the municipality.
  - Appointment of a suitably qualified System Administrator.
  - The development and adoption of the required IT policies and securities.
  - Establishment of data back-up and disaster recovery procedures.
- c. **System Functionality** - which includes:
  - The ERP modules and 3rd party systems used. These must give effect to the minimum business processes and system requirements specified in MFMA Circular No. 80. Municipalities must budget adequately to procure the required functionality and upgrade to the *mSCOA* enabling version of the ERP.
  - Seamless and full integration of data in the ERP system, including 3rd party systems used by the municipality and its entities. The ERP system vendor sets the requirements for the integration.

An ICT due diligence assessment must be conducted 6 months before the Service Level Agreements (SLA) with an existing system vendor comes to an end to determine if an ERP system changes or extension of the existing SLA is required. Municipalities must follow the due diligence processes set out in MFMA Budget Circulars No. 93, 98, 123 and *mSCOA* Circulars No. 5 and 6 prior to procuring a new ERP system. Guidance on procurement processes were also provided in MFMA Circular No. 107 (4 December 2020).

*The ERP system represents the General Ledger. Any 3<sup>rd</sup>-party system with a direct impact on the General Ledger must integrate fully and seamlessly with the ERP system in terms of the mSCOA Regulations. This means that data contained in the 3<sup>rd</sup> party system must synchronise without any human or manual intervention integrate to the ERP system without human or manual intervention in real time or at least daily and drill down from the ERP system to the General Ledger of the 3<sup>rd</sup> party system must be possible.*

- d. **User Proficiency and Training**

- The relevant municipal officials and interns must be sufficiently capacitated on the

mSCOA chart, basic accounting, balance sheet budgeting and movement accounting and all system modules and functionalities to use the ERP systems solution. Consideration should be given to training, the establishment of User Support Groups and the availability of user manuals on the system.

- Change management initiatives to ensure that mSCOA is institutionalised as an organisational reform and not only a financial reform.



**Annexure B**

**SUBMISSION CHECKLIST 2024/25 MTREF BUDGET DOCUMENTS:**

Category	Documents Required	mSCOA Data Strings Required	Due Date	Date for Closing LGDRS Submission
<b>BUDGET DOCUMENTS</b>				
<b>Tabled Budget</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A1 Schedule Draft</li> <li>2. Budget Document Draft</li> <li>3. Council Resolution Draft</li> <li>4. Quality Certificate Draft</li> <li>5. IDP Draft</li> <li>6. SDBIP Draft</li> <li>7. Spatial Development Framework Draft</li> <li>8. Long Term Financial Strategies Draft</li> <li>9. Service Standards Draft</li> <li>10. Rates Billing Draft</li> <li>11. Tariff List Draft</li> <li>12. Property Rates and Tariffs List Draft</li> <li>13. Draft Tariff Policies on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Property Rates and Service charges</li> <li>b. Borrowing</li> <li>c. Budget Implementation and Management</li> <li>d. Cash Management and Investment</li> <li>e. Credit Control and Debt Collection</li> <li>f. Funding and Reserves</li> <li>g. Indigents</li> <li>h. Long-term Financial Planning</li> <li>i. Management and Disposal of Assets Draft</li> <li>j. Infrastructure Investment &amp; Capital Projects</li> <li>k. Supply Chain Management</li> </ol> </li> <li>14. mSCOA Road Map Draft</li> <li>15. Fixed Asset Register Draft</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. TABB – Tabled Budget</li> <li>2. PRTA – Tabled Project Details</li> <li>3. A1D – Tabled non-financial data</li> </ol>	Immediately (within 24 hours) after tabling by council	15 April 2024

Category	Documents Required	mSCOA Data Strings Required	Due Date	Date for Closing LGDRS Submission
	16. Funding Plan Draft 17. Indigent Register Draft 18. General Valuation Roll (GVR) Draft			
<b>Adopted Budget</b>	1. A1 Schedule Final 2. Budget Document Final 3. Council Resolution Final 4. Quality Certificate Final 5. Budget locking certificate Final 6. IDP Final 7. SDBIP Final 8. Spatial Development Framework Final 9. Long Term Financial Strategies Final 10. Service standards Final 11. Rates Billing Final 12. Tariff List Final 13. Property Rates and Tariffs List Final 14. Final Tariff Policies on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Property Rates and Service charges</li> <li>b. Borrowing</li> <li>c. Budget Implementation and Management</li> <li>d. Cash Management and Investment</li> <li>e. Credit Control and Debt Collection</li> <li>f. Funding and Reserves</li> <li>g. Indigents</li> <li>h. Long-term Financial Planning</li> <li>i. Management and Disposal of Assets</li> <li>j. Infrastructure Investment &amp; Capital Projects</li> <li>k. Supply Chain Management</li> </ul> 15. mSCOA Road Map Final 16. Fixed Asset Register Final	1. ORGB – Original (adopted) Budget 2. PROR – Project Details Original Budget 3. A1F – Final non-financial data	10 working days after approval by council	12 July 2024

Category	Documents Required	mSCOA Data Strings Required	Due Date	Date for Closing LGDRS Submission
	17. Funding Plan Final 18. Indigent Register Final 19. General Valuation Roll (GVR) Final 20. D Schedule (entities) 21. MTREF Budget Schedule Time Table			
<b>Adjustment Budget</b>	1. Mid-Year Budget Perform Assessment S72 2. Resolution Mid-Year Budget Perf Assess S72 3. Adjusted Budget 4. B Schedule 5. Council Resolution 6. Quality Certificate 7. Budget locking certificate Revised 8. E schedule (entities)	1. ADJB - Adjusted Budget 2. PRAD - Project details Adjusted Budget	10 working days after approval by council	14 March 2024
<b>In-year Reporting</b>	1. S71 monthly report 2. Monthly C Schedule 3. Monthly Quality Certificate 4. Monthly Primary Bank Statements 5. Monthly Primary Bank Recon 6. Monthly Trial Balance 7. Signed S71 Monthly Report to Council 8. Signed Conditional Grant Monthly Report to Council 9. Monthly F Schedule (entities) 10. Quarterly mSCOA Implementation Progress Reports 11. Quarterly S52d Performance Reports	1. M01 – M12 - Monthly Actuals 2. CR01 – CR12 - Monthly Creditors 3. DB01 – DB12 - Monthly Debtors 4. BMQ1 – BMQ4 – Quarterly Borrowing Monitoring 5. IMQ1 – IMQ4 - Quarterly Investment Monitoring	10 working days after the end of month/quarter	15 August 2024 13 September 2024 14 October 2024 14 November 2024 13 December 2024 15 January 2025 14 February 2025 14 March 2025 14 April 2025 15 May 2025 13 June 2025 14 July 2025
<b>YEAR-END DOCUMENTS</b>				
<b>Pre-audit</b>	1. Pre-audited AFS	PAUD - Pre-audited AFS CRPA – Creditors DBPA - Debtors	Immediately (within 24 hours) after submission to AGSA	13 September 2024
<b>Audit</b>	2. Audited AFS	1.AUDA - Audited AFS 2.CRAU – Creditors	Immediately (within 24 hours) after conclusion of audit	14 March 2025

Category	Documents Required	mSCOA Data Strings Required	Due Date	Date for Closing LGDRS Submission
		3.DBAU - Debtors		
<b>Restated</b>	4. Restated AFS	RAUD - Restated AFS	Immediately (within 24 hours) after approved by Council	2022/23: 15 August 2024
<b>Annual Report</b>	5. Annual Report 6. Council Oversight Report	Not applicable	Within nine months after the end of a financial year deal	15 May 2025
<b>REVENUE MANAGEMENT DOCUMENTS</b>				
<b>Revenue</b>	1. Tariff Tool Draft and Final 2. Tariff Tool Final 3. Bulk Suppliers (water and electricity) proof of payment-M01 to M12 4. Proof of payment 3rd party (Staff benefits, SARS)- M01 to M12 5. Bulk Suppliers - repayment plans 6. Repayment plan (with any of its creditors excluding bulk suppliers) 7. Municipality Valuation Roll Reconciliation-Q1 to Q4 8. Revenue Enhancement Strategy 9. Municipality Revenue Assessment Tool 10. Schedule for the new general valuation roll 11. Supplementary Valuation Roll 12. Municipal Debt relief Application	Not applicable	1. Annually 2. Monthly 3. Monthly 4. As applicable* 5. As applicable* 6. As applicable 7. Quarterly 8. Every 3 years* 9. Every 3 years* 10. Annually 11. Annually	
<b>MFRS DOCUMENTS</b>				
<b>MFRS</b>	1. Mandatory FRP Progress Report-M01 to M12	Not applicable	Monthly*	Not applicable



**NATIONAL TREASURY**

**MFMA Circular No. 128**

**Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003**

## **Municipal Budget Circular for the 2024/25 MTREF**

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## Introduction

This budget circular is a follow-up to MFMA Circular No. 126 that was issued on 07 December 2023. It aims to provide further guidance to municipalities with the preparation of their 2024/25 Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF) budgets and should be read together with the budget circulars that have been issued previously.

The grant allocations as per the 2024 Budget Review and the 2024 Division of Revenue Bill are also key focus areas in this circular. Municipalities are reminded to refer to the annual budget circulars of the previous years for guidance in areas of the budget preparation that are not covered in this circular.

## 1. The South African economy and inflation targets

Over the next three years, South Africa's economy is forecast to grow at an average of 1.6 per cent, a moderate improvement on the 1.4 per cent average expected at the time of the 2023 MTBPS. The outlook is supported by an expected recovery in household spending as inflation declines, and an increase in energy-related fixed investments.

Power cuts and operational problems in freight rail and ports continue to disrupt economic activity and limit the country's export potential. Comprehensive reforms are underway in these sectors, although it will take time to see recovery in growth. Household consumption is under pressure from high living costs, and investment remains low due to weak confidence and challenging business conditions linked to structural constraints.

South Africa has experienced over a decade of weak economic growth, GDP has averaged only 0.8 per cent annually since 2012, entrenching high levels of unemployment and poverty. To turn the tide and raise economic growth sustainably, government is prioritising energy and logistics reforms, along with measures to arrest the decline in state capacity. Successful efforts to improve the fiscal position, complete structural reforms and bolster the capacity of the state will, in combination, reduce borrowing costs, raise confidence, increase investment and employment, and accelerate economic growth.

The National Treasury estimates real economic growth of 0.6 per cent in 2023. This is a decrease from growth of 0.8 per cent projected in the 2023 MTBPS due to weaker than expected outcomes in the third quarter of 2023, resulting in downward revisions to household spending growth and spending on gross fixed investment. GDP growth is projected to average 1.6 per cent from 2024 to 2026 as the frequency of power cuts declines, lower inflation supports household consumption, and employment and credit extensions recover gradually. New energy projects will improve fixed investments and business sentiment.

To accelerate GDP growth after an extended period of weak economic performance, South Africa needs large-scale private investment. Government is working to improve the fiscal position, complete structural reforms and bolster the capacity of the state to reduce borrowing costs, raise confidence, increase investment, and put the economy on a higher job creating growth path.

The following macro-economic forecasts must be considered when preparing the 2024/25 MTREF municipal budgets.



**Table 1: Macroeconomic performance and projections, 2022 – 2027**

Fiscal year	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Actual	Estimate	Forecast		
CPI Inflation	6.9%	6.0%	4.9%	4.6%	4.6%

Source: 2024 budget review.

Note: the fiscal year referred to is the national fiscal year (April to March) which is more closely aligned to the municipal fiscal year (July to June) than the calendar year inflation.

Headline inflation is projected to moderate from 6 per cent in 2023 to 4.9 per cent in 2024 and 4.6 per cent in 2025 and 2026 as food and fuel inflation continue to decline. In 2023 food inflation slowed less than expected due to power cuts and rand depreciation, keeping imported food costs high. An avian influenza outbreak also increased the costs for poultry and eggs. These factors are expected to dissipate over the medium term.

The current economic challenges in the country place pressure on households' ability to pay municipal accounts, therefore municipal own revenue generation gets affected.

It is noted that variations in regional specifics are possible, however, any variation of assumptions must be explicitly set out and well explained in the budget narratives, in the absence of which the Treasuries will refer the budget back to council for alignment to the macroeconomic performance projections.

### ***Fiscal strategy to contain debt (fiscal consolidation) through reduction of budgets and reprioritisation***

The 2024 budget balances development and sustainable public finances. In the context of persistent low economic growth, government will protect critical services, support economic growth through reforms and public investment and stabilise public debt. Although South Africa continues to confront difficult economic conditions, a moderate recovery is forecast in the economic outlook. Broad reforms are underway in energy, freight, water and telecommunications. Yet it will take time to reverse the consequences of operational, maintenance and government failures at state owned companies responsible for electricity, rail and ports. Rapid growth in debt- service costs choke the economy and the public finances. Government is staying the course to narrow the budget deficit and stabilise debt. This year, for the first time since 2008/09, government will achieve a primary budget surplus. Debt will stabilise in 2025/26.

The balances approach to fiscal consolidation includes expenditure restraint and moderate revenue increases, while continuing to support the social wage and ensuring additional funding for critical services. Government will after extensive consultation propose a binding fiscal anchor for future sustainability. In the interim, the debt stabilisation primary surplus will anchor fiscal policy.

The consolidate budget includes the main budget framework and spending by provinces, social security funds, public entities including municipalities finances from their own revenue sources. Government remains committed to fiscal consolidation that balances the needs of the most vulnerable in society and protects the public finances for future generations.

## **2. Key focus areas for the 2024/25 budget process**

### **2.1. Local government conditional grants and unconditional grants allocations**

Net reductions of R80.6 billion to main budget non-interest expenditure are identified across the three spheres of government over the MTEF in comparison to the 2023 budget estimates. Among these 2024 MTEF fiscal consolidation reductions, local government has the smallest contribution. Over the 2024 MTEF, the local government equitable share and direct conditional grants will be reduced by a total of R15.5 billion, made up of R9.6 billion in the local government equitable share and R5.9 billion in direct conditional grants. Despite reduction, local government equitable share growth remains high with transfers to local government significantly increasing by 5.2 per cent annually, driven mainly by the strong growth of local government equitable share by 6.1 per cent. National revenue share increases by 2.6 per cent annually, while transfers to provinces grow by 3.8 per cent annually, with the equitable share growing faster than conditional grants. There were no proposed reductions on the sharing of the general fuel levy to the metropolitan municipalities.

### ***Notable changes to the conditional grants system***

Given the ongoing review of the conditional grants system, very minimal changes were proposed to local government conditional grants. The proposed changes indicate a continued focus on enabling municipalities to improve service delivery to communities.

### ***New conditional grant for smart prepaid meters***

A new indirect grant, which will be managed by the National Treasury will be introduced in 2024/25. This grant will present an important opportunity for municipalities in the debt relief programme. While debt relief is a critical component of supporting struggling municipalities, it is important to also provide the municipalities with the tools and the necessary funding to improve their operations and long-term sustainability.

This new indirect conditional grant for smart prepaid meters is a meaningful step towards providing municipalities with the financial support they need to better manage their utilities, by ensuring timely and accurate billing; reducing losses; and enhancing operational sustainability. Municipalities will be able to manage their utility services and provide to water and electricity services effectively and efficiently. The grant will initially focus on providing debt relief for Eskom and will be implemented targeting specific municipalities in its initial years.

### ***Improving regulatory levers and reforms***

By enhancing the usage of regulatory frameworks in the conditional grants system, the government is taking steps to ensure that municipalities prioritise critical projects and utilise resources effectively. The use of results from the Department of Water and Sanitation's Watch Reports in the prioritisation of water and sanitation projects funded from general-purpose grants such as the integrated urban development grant (IUDG), and municipal infrastructure grant (MIG), will improve the quality and impact of these projects. Further, requiring municipalities to use the results of green drop, blue drop and no drop assessments in planning and prioritising projects will drive greater accountability and transparency in the use of grant funds, promoting sustainable and effective service delivery.

## **2.2. Post 2023 MTBPS changes**

A number of reductions that were proposed in the 2023 MTBPS have been reversed but revised downwards, and several further cuts and other reprioritisations effected to make funds available for other government priorities. These include:

**Reductions reversed:** Previous reductions proposed on the sharing of the general fuel levy to the metropolitan municipalities, the rural roads asset management systems and the water services infrastructure grants have been reversed.

**Reductions revised downwards:** The previous reduction of R218 million to the integrated national electrification programme municipal grant is revised to R204 million; the previous reduction of R49 million to the municipal disaster response grant is revised to R35 million; and the previous reduction of R48 million to the municipal systems improvement grant is revised to R27 million.

**Further reductions:** To make funds available for other government priorities, reductions have been made to some municipal conditional grants over the 2024 MTEF period. These include an additional reduction of R3.5 billion to the integrated national electrification programme Eskom grant; an additional reduction of R73 million to the integrated urban development grant; an additional reduction of R14 million to the energy efficiency and demand-side management grant; an additional reduction of R4 million to the public transport network grant; an additional reduction of R127 million to the direct component of the regional bulk infrastructure grant; and an additional reduction of R852 million to the indirect component of the regional bulk infrastructure grant.

**Reprioritisations:** Reprioritisations over the MTEF period include the following: R58.3 million from the direct component of the municipal infrastructure grant is converted to the indirect component of the grant; R587 million from the direct component of the regional bulk infrastructure grant is converted to the indirect component; R91 million from the integrated urban development grant and R1.4 billion from the municipal infrastructure grant are shifted to the municipal disaster recovery grant to fund the repair and reconstruction of municipal infrastructure damaged by the floods that occurred between February and March 2023; R400 million from the first two years of the MTEF period are shifted to the outer year in the public transport network grant; R2 billion is reprioritised from the integrated national electrification programme municipal grant to fund the baseline for the new smart meters grant; and R432 million is reprioritised from the integrated national electrification programme Eskom grant to fund other priorities in the energy sector.

### **2.3. Review of the local government fiscal framework**

Government's five-year programme of action to improve local governance, as endorsed by the Budget Forum, includes efforts to improve the funding model for local government. The National Treasury is reviewing a draft report for regulating municipal surcharges on electricity and identifying alternative sources of revenue to replace these. The next step will be consultation with external stakeholders.

The local government equitable share formula is being updated in various ways, including improving its responsiveness to the different functions assigned to district and local municipalities. In addition, the formula will be refined with reforms such as exploring the feasibility of introducing a cost differential model, community services components for health services and firefighting functions, objective criteria for benchmarking municipalities in relation to their administrative functions. The Department of Cooperative Governance, the National Treasury, the South African Local Government Association, the Financial and Fiscal Commission and statistics South Africa are identifying areas for refinement over the 2024 MTEF period.

### **2.4. Update on the review of the conditional grants**

The South African government initiated a review of the existing grant system amid concerns of its effectiveness, including underspending on infrastructure grants and fragmentation in

the provincial and municipal grant systems. The review involved stakeholder consultations and literature reviews of conditional grant programmes to gain insights and make evidence-based recommendations for reform.

In April and May 2024, multiple consultation platforms will be set up to share the preliminary findings with the multi-stakeholder team. While some changes resulting from the review were reflected in the 2024 Budget, further proposed reforms are likely to be considered in the 2025 budget process and implemented gradually in a phased manner.

## **2.5. Funding for Local Economic Development (LED) Programmes**

National Treasury is mindful of the essential role played by municipalities in driving economic development and job creation to mitigate inequality and attract private investment. In addition to the infrastructure grants, municipalities also receive about 66 per cent of their allocations in unconditional grants, which can be utilised to fund operational parts of the LED initiatives. However, it is important to note that economic development does not rely solely on a single funding pot, but on various forms of government programmes and grants. This includes support and initiatives from the Department of Trade, Industry and competition funded by provinces through their equitable share.

Whilst there is a call for creation of conditional grant, it is worth noting that the creation of a dedicated grant for LED initiatives comes with its challenges. In the past, when such grants were introduced, government institutions reprioritised funds that were initially funding the LED programmes, leading to over-reliance on conditional grants. This dependence undermines the purpose and sustainability of these programmes, as their funding is primarily dependent on the availability of funds from the fiscus and the performance of the economy. Therefore, there is a need to align conditional grants with economic development areas while also ensuring their integration with other government spheres to support the developmental mandate effectively.

In addition, it is also crucial for municipalities to provide essential services such as electricity, water, and sanitation efficiently. The efficient provision of these services is crucial for attracting private investment, fostering economic growth, and promoting a conducive environment for businesses to thrive. Therefore, National Treasury urges municipalities to prioritise the provision of these services to enhance economic development and improve the quality of life for their residents.

## **2.6. Reforms to improve the efficiency and financial sustainability of metro's trading services**

Due to years of neglect and inadequate infrastructure maintenance, South Africa's municipalities face severe utility services issues, including in water, wastewater, and electricity. A loss of essential management and technical skills has also contributed to the decline in service quality and reliability. Metro water services alone suffer from an investment gap of R9 billion per year. These inefficiencies threaten economic growth and job creation and increases poverty. Government transferred substantial monetary allocations to local government in the successive Budgets to support water services, but the outcome and value for money of these transfers is low. To address this, an incentive grant system is being explored for 2025/26 to increase investments, change management and governance structures, promote professional management, and ensure transparency, starting with metros.

These reforms are commencing in the 2024/25 municipal financial year with the conditions being introduced in the Urban Settlement Development Grant (USDG). Thereafter, the reform will be extended to other revenue-generating trading services.

### **2024/25 USDG Financing Component for Trading Services**

Municipalities must submit the following to the transferring officer and the National Treasury to qualify for making an application for the financing component:

- A council approved turnaround strategy to the Department of Human Settlement (DHS) and the National Treasury by 31 July 2024;
- A roadmap on the institutional reforms for improved management and governance to be submitted to DHS and National Treasury by 30 September 2024; and
- A business and investment plan that is consistent with the services development plan by 30 September 2024.

In support of these conditions, National Treasury will issue a guidance note by 1 April 2024, on requirements for turnaround strategies, institutional reforms and business plans for the financing component on trading services.

### **2025/26 onwards Improving the efficiency of urban utility services**

Beyond 2024/25, the intention is to extend the reform agenda beyond water services to other revenue-generating trading services, including electricity and solid waste management. The Explanatory Memorandum, **Annexure W1**, to the 2024 Division of Revenue Bill provides the following direction on future work on municipal fiscal frameworks linked to trading/ utility services.

The grant reforms will aim to:

- Increase the level of investments in utility services (water, wastewater, electricity and solid waste) by leveraging grant finance with loan finance, linked to improved operational and financial performance of services providers;
- Catalyse changes in the structure, management, and governance of utility services businesses to support improvements in operational, technical and financial performance;
- Promote professional management with a single point of management accountability for utility services in cities, suitable managerial autonomy and the technical skills necessary to manage an effective service; and
- Promote and ensure full financial transparency, including by making the financial relationship between municipalities and the utility services explicit.

#### **2.7. Criteria for the release of the Equitable Share:**

- The criteria for the release of the equitable share were covered in Circulars No. 122 remains relevant and are still applicable for the release of equitable share instalments in the 2024/25 financial year.
- Failure to comply with the criteria will result in National Treasury invoking Section 38 of the MFMA which empowers National Treasury to withhold a municipality's equitable share if the municipality commits a serious or persistent breach of the measures established in terms of Section 216(2) of the Constitution which includes reporting obligations set out in the MFMA and National Treasury requests for information in terms of Section 74 of the MFMA.

## **3. Revenue Management**



### **3.1. Update on Municipal Debt Relief (MFMA Circular No. 124)**

#### ***Accounting Guidance***

Municipalities whose Municipal Debt Relief applications were approved must fully account for and correctly report on the write-off of their Eskom arrear debt and related benefits. Municipalities should note the guidance in this regard provided in *MFMA Circular No. 124: Supplementary Guide on the accounting- and mSCOA reporting requirements* that can be accessed on the MFMA website at the following link: <http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/Circulars/Pages/default.aspx>.

It is recommended that all municipalities familiarise themselves with the guidance as far as it relates to correctly budgeting- and accounting for free basic services as well as raising and paying their bulk accounts.

#### ***Debt relief reporting requirements***

Municipalities approved for debt Relief (in terms of their National Treasury approvals), must ensure that their MFMA s.71 statements, over-and-above the normal MFMA s.71 requirements, include the following as a minimum:

- The municipality's self-assessment in the format of the compliance certificate issued in MFMA Circular No. 124: Annexure A2 (signed by the Municipal Manager) – municipalities should use the latest format of the compliance certificate issued during February 2024 available under MFMA Circular No. 124 and included as **Annexure B** to this circular;
- The municipality's progress towards restricting free basic services to the national policy limits (condition 6.6) and in the format included as **Annexure C** to this circular;
- The municipality's progress towards achieving a minimum average quarterly collection of 80 per cent (condition 6.7) and in the format included as **Annexure D** to this circular;
- If the municipality's 2023/24 and/ or 2024/25 MTREF is not funded, the MFMA Section 71 statement must monthly include the municipality's progress against its approved Budget Funding Plan – if the municipality has an approved the Financial Recovery Plan (FRP), the monthly FRP progress report must include the municipality's progress against the components of the FRP aimed to achieve a funded budget and revenue enhancement initiatives;
- The high-level summary of its monthly property rates reconciliation (in the National Treasury template format already shared with the municipality during the application process); and
- The municipality's progress in addressing any variances evident from its monthly property rates reconciliation; etc.

### **3.2. Smart Meter Grant**

With regard to the smart meter grant referred under 2.1 above, the National Treasury has targeted MFMA Circular No. 124 debt relief applicants for the initial implementation of this grant.

The potential beneficiaries of the smart meter grant will be invited by National Treasury and a compulsory template will be circulated for completion by municipalities. This invitation will be sent out before 15 March 2024. Furthermore, the grant conditions require a council resolution endorsing the application.



A completed template with supporting documentation and council resolution must be submitted to [revenuemanagement@treasury.gov.za](mailto:revenuemanagement@treasury.gov.za) and [sadesh.ramjathan@treasury.gov.za](mailto:sadesh.ramjathan@treasury.gov.za) before 30 April 2024.

The applications will be evaluated before 31 May 2024 and allocations will be completed determined the commencement of the municipal budget year.

### **3.3. Transversal tender RT-29**

The National Treasury is finalising the RT-29 transversal tender for a smart metering solution, and the appointed panel is available to all municipalities from March 2024. The transversal tender is targeting smart meter solutions for the water and electricity functions, STS meters compliance and load reduction systems. It will also enable municipalities to implement bi-directional smart metering systems. Municipalities are once again cautioned not to contract any smart metering systems or solutions without considering the RT-29 transversal tender which provides a competitive pricing comparison and cost saving on procurement. Municipalities wishing to participate in the RT-29 transversal must make their interest known to the Office of the Chief Procurement Officer (OCPO) on the email [TCcontract1@treasury.gov.za](mailto:TCcontract1@treasury.gov.za). These municipalities must show evidence of a budget allocation in the current budget as well as future budgets for participation.

## **4. Conditional Grant Transfers to Municipalities**

### **4.1. Criteria for the rollover of conditional grant funds**

In terms of Section 21 of the Division of Revenue Act, 2023 (Act No.5 of 2023) (DoRA) in conjunction with the Division of Revenue Amendment Act, 2023 (Act No. 24 of 2023), the Act requires that any conditional allocation or a portion thereof that is not spent at the end of the 2023/24 financial year reverts to the National Revenue Fund (NRF), unless the rollover of the allocation is approved in terms of subsection (2). Furthermore, the receiving officer, provincial treasury and national transferring officer is required to prove to National Treasury that the unspent allocation is committed to identifiable projects, in which case the funds may be rolled over.

When requesting a rollover in terms of Section 21(2) of the 2023 DoRA, municipalities must include the following information with their submission to National Treasury:

1. A formal letter, signed by the accounting officer addressed to the National Treasury requesting the rollover of unspent conditional grants in terms of Section 21(2) of the 2023 DoRA;
2. A list of all the projects that are linked to the unspent conditional grants and a breakdown of how much was allocated, spent and the balance per project;
3. The following evidence indicating that work on each of the projects has commenced, as applicable to the specific rollover(s):
  - a) Proof that the service provider was appointed for delivery of the project before 29 March 2024; or
  - b) Proof of project tender and tender submissions published and closed before 31 March 2024 or with the appointment of contractor or service provider for delivery of service before 30 June 2024 in cases where additional funding was allocated during the course of the financial year of the project;
  - c) Incorporation of the Appropriation Statement; and
  - d) Evidence that all projects linked to an allocation will be fully utilised by 30 June 2024 (attach cash flow projection for the applicable grant).

4. A progress report (also reflecting percentages) on the status of each project's implementation that includes an attached legible implementation plan);
5. The value of the committed project funding and the conditional allocation from the funding source;
6. Reasons why the grants were not fully spent during the year on the original allocation per the DoRA;
7. Rollover of rollovers will not be considered. Municipalities must therefore not include previous year's unspent conditional grants as rollover request;
8. An indication of the time period within which the funds are to be spent if the rollover is approved; and
9. Proof that the Municipal Manager and Chief Financial Officer are permanently appointed.

No rollover requests will be considered for municipalities with vacant or acting Chief Financial Officers and Municipal Managers for a period exceeding 6 months from the date of vacancy; this also includes acting appointments because of suspensions of either MM or CFO that are more than 12 months.

**If any of the above information is not provided or the application is received by National Treasury (Intergovernmental Relations Division) after 31 August 2024, the application will be declined.**

In addition, National Treasury will also consider the following information when assessing rollover applications; and reserves the right to decline an application should there be non-performance by the municipality in any of these areas:

1. Compliance with the in-year reporting requirements in terms of Sections 71 and 72 of the MFMA and Section 12 of the 2023 DoRA, **including the Municipal Manager and Chief Financial Officer signing-off on the information** sent to National Treasury;
2. Submission of the pre-audited Annual Financial Statements to National Treasury by 31 August 2024;
3. Accurate disclosure of grant performance in the 2023/24 pre-audited Annual Financial Statements, (i.e. correct disclosure of grant receipts and spending in the notes to the AFS);
4. Despite the fact that local government is required to comply with different norms and standards prescribed by different legislations, municipalities are expected to fully comply with the provisions of DoRA that relate to rollover processes and disclose conditional grant performance in the 2023/24 pre-audited Annual Financial Statements (i.e. Cash coverage and unspent conditional grants in the Statement of Financial Position) in order to verify grant expenditure; and
5. Cash available reflected in the Statement of Financial Position and Cash Flow Statements and the bank (net position including short term investments) as at 30 June 2024 is equivalent to the unspent amount at the end of the financial year. If the amount that is requested for rollover is not entirely cash-backed, such a rollover will not be approved. National Treasury will also not approve portions of rollover requests.

It should be noted that under no circumstances will the National Treasury consider requests to rollover:

1. The entire 2023/24 allocation to the municipality. In cases where the rollover request is more than 50 per cent of the total allocation, National Treasury will approve the rollover amount up to 50 per cent of the 2023/24 allocation;

2. Rollover request of the same grant for the third consecutive time. In a case where a municipality is applying for rollover as a result of additional funding, the application will be carefully considered;
3. Funding for projects procured through Regulation 32 and 37 of the Municipal Supply Chain Management Regulations (Gazette No.27636) – Projects linked to additional funding and disasters are exempted; and
4. A portion of an allocation where the proof of commitment for the rollover application is linked to invoices that were issued before or on 31 March 2024. All invoices issued to the municipality before 31 March 2024 should be paid within the same year against the allocated conditional grants. i.e invoices must be paid within 30 days.

#### **4.2. Unspent conditional grant funds for 2023/24**

The process to ensure the return of unspent conditional grants for the 2023/24 financial year will be managed in accordance with Section 21 of the DoRA. In addition to the previous MFMA Circulars, the following practical arrangements will apply:

- Step 1: Municipalities must submit their June 2024 conditional grant expenditure reports according to Section 71 of the MFMA reflecting all accrued expenditure on conditional grants and further ensure that expenditure reported to both National Treasury and national transferring officers reconciles;
- Step 2: When preparing the Annual Financial Statements, a municipality must determine the portion of each national conditional grant allocation that remained unspent as at 30 June 2024. The unspent grant values must be determined based on the guidance that was provided in mSCOA Circular No. 13 in as far as VAT, retention and interest is concerned; and
- Step 3: If the receiving officer wants to motivate in terms of Section 21(2) of the 2023 DoRA that the unspent funds are committed to identifiable projects, the rollover application pack must be submitted to National Treasury by no later than 31 August 2024.

***National Treasury will not consider any rollover requests that are incomplete or received after this deadline.***

- Step 4: National Treasury will confirm in writing whether or not the municipality may retain any of the unspent funds as a rollover based on criteria outlined above by 22 October 2024;
- Step 5: National Treasury will communicate the unspent conditional grants amount by 12 November 2024. A municipality must return the remaining unspent conditional grant funds that are not subject to a specific repayment arrangement to the National Revenue Fund by 18 November 2024; and
- Step 6: Any unspent conditional grant funds that should have but has not been repaid to the National Revenue Fund by 18 November 2024, and for which a municipality has not requested a repayment arrangement, will be offset against the municipality's 04 December 2024 equitable share allocation.

*All other issues pertaining to Appropriation Statement and reporting on approved rollovers are addressed in the Annexure to MFMA Circular No. 86.*

## **5. Funding choices and management issues**

Given the current economic crisis the country faces, Municipalities are under pressure to generate revenue. The ability of customers to pay for services is declining and this means that less revenue will be collected. Municipalities are advised to consider all the advice

provided in MFMA Circular No 126, 123 and other previous circulars under this topic to ensure the adoption of surplus and funded budgets.

### **5.1. Employee related costs**

The *Salary and Wage Collective Agreement* for the period 01 July 2021 to 30 June 2024 has come to an end and a new agreement is under consultation, which is anticipated to consider the current fiscal constraints faced by government. Therefore, in the absence of any information in this regard from the South African Local Government Bargaining Council (SALGBC), municipalities are advised to consider their financial sustainability when considering salary increases. It has been observed over the previous years that salary increases were above inflation and this has posed challenges to most municipalities' sustainability. In addition, municipalities that could not afford such increases did not apply for exemption as provided by SALGBC.

Therefore, municipalities are urged to consider projecting salary and wage increases that would reflect their affordability given the current economic challenges. The 2022 State of Local Government Finance Report revealed that 157 municipalities are in financial distress. These municipalities need to ensure that they seek an early exemption from this dispensation of this salary agreement. Municipalities should also avoid paying out leave in cash while having major financial challenges.

### **5.2. Remuneration of Councillors**

Municipalities are advised to budget for the actual costs approved in accordance with the Government Gazette on the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act: Determination of Upper Limits of Salaries, Allowances and Benefits of different members of municipal councils published annually between December and January by the Department of Cooperative Governance. It is anticipated that this salary determination will also consider the fiscal constraints. Municipalities should also consider guidance provided above on salary increases for municipal officials during this process. Any overpayment to councilors contrary to the upper limits as published by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs will be irregular expenditure in terms of Section 167 of the MFMA and must be recovered from the councilor(s) concerned.

### **5.3 Governance, performance, and investment matters**

South Africa has reached a stage where all of government including municipalities need to play a pivotal role in igniting the economy of the country. There is a need for a concerted effort to put initiatives that will attract the investments which will stimulate the economy. The investments take place in the local government and municipalities in particular as the custodian of the spatial planning and enabling infrastructure.

Critical infrastructure such as water, sanitation and electricity to stimulate the economy is owned, maintained and developed by the municipalities. In the last 30 years, there has been investment in ensuring that access to basic services – water, electricity and refuse - is improved markedly.

However, there has been little to no investment on bulk infrastructure such as water treatment works, wastewater treatment works and electrical substations which are the backdrop for enabling investment in municipalities.

Of concern is that budget for operation and maintenance have been negligible. If the trends continue without arresting the decline, the municipalities will in all likelihood not experience

growth. This will reduce the prospect for economic growth leading to high unemployment and less economic activities in general.

As such, the municipalities need to take the responsibility to create initiatives which will attract more investment. Key initiatives to improve this are investing in bulk and connector infrastructure as well as strengthening good governance.

The budget allocation to address infrastructure requirements are not sufficient. As such, the municipalities should improve governance and the overall financial health which will allow for the financier to be attracted to borrow municipalities to finance enabling infrastructure.

Urban management and in particular cleaning of the environment is critical for ensuring that municipal area is attractive. Thus, ability to attract investment should also include clearly defined initiatives that ensure the city is continuously clean. This will retain existing investors and also enable the municipalities to attract new investors who wishes to locate in the municipal area.

*A firm's decision to invest is influenced by factors such as infrastructure and land availability, the institutional and regulatory environment, skills availability and innovation levels and the availability of enterprise support and finance. Municipalities have key roles that influence a decision to invest and expand in a particular space. Poorly performing spaces – such as industrial parks, CBDs, logistics hubs, townships – discourage investment and encourage disinvestment. Poorly performing economic assets, such as roads, ports, rail, communications, do the same. Many of the reasons for poor performing spaces and assets lie within the ambit of the public sector, but not all within the local sphere. In some instances, municipalities are directly responsible for what needs to be done, in other areas the municipality needs to mediate inter-governmental solutions.*

To turnaround these spaces and unlock their economic potential the immediate focus must be on getting the basics right first –

- Ensure reliable and sustainable service delivery – water, sanitation, stormwater, roads, lighting and waste management;
- Ensure effective land governance – urgently resolve inter-governmental issues that inhibit performance;
- Undertake bulk infrastructure repair and maintenance;
- Address business and community safety issues;
- Operationalise and manage public open spaces and assets; and
- Manage the spaces – at minimum put in place municipal transversal teams responsible for ensuring the basics are in place.

The quality and transparency of municipal governance has a direct impact on economic performance. Dysfunctional municipalities discourage new investment and result in job loss. Ensuring the effective management of municipal businesses through evidenced-based decision making and sound financial management is essential to attract and retain firms. Improving the efficiency and transparency of municipal business processes that impact on the private sector – such as registering property, getting electricity connections, construction permits, obtaining wayleaves, getting a water connection, and issuing an informal trader permit – goes a long way to building business confidence and municipal credibility.

## **5.4 Environmental Pollution**

The deteriorating quality of water resources in urban and rural areas due to pollution, failing infrastructure such as wastewater treatment and the lack of enforcement of by-laws, legislation and urban management, exacerbates water scarcity, and increases costs of providing potable water.



Municipalities are urged to anticipate the imminent approval of the water pricing strategy, which introduces a waste discharge charge. This penalty underscores the need for municipalities to ensure that they comply with and enforce all legislation and by-laws governing urban and environmental management. This requires municipalities to prioritise effective and efficient service delivery, including sufficient investment in asset maintenance, expansion and renewal for solid waste management, wastewater treatment, as well as by-law enforcement to mitigate the continuous pollution of streams and rivers.

Collaboration among municipalities, sector departments, NGOs, citizens, and the private sector are essential for mobilising resources to prevent further deterioration and restoration of water resources. Such efforts need to only prevent pollution at source but also safeguard water quality for future generations, making the strategic investment in water resources a cornerstone of sustainability, economic growth and healthy environments.

## **6. Municipal Standard Chart of Accounts (*mSCOA*)**

### **6.1. Go Live on Version 6.8 of the Chart**

*mSCOA* version 6.8 will go live on 20 March 2024, whereafter municipalities will be able to upload their tabled budget (TABB) and tabled project files (PRTA) data strings for the 2024/25 MTREF on the GoMuni portal.

After going live on version 6.8 of the chart, all the reports available on the LGDRS will be aligned to *mSCOA* chart version 6.8. This includes the format of the Section 71 report for Q3 and Q4 of 2023/24.

The Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations (MBRR) Schedules (A to F) and non-financial data string (A1S) was also aligned to version 6.8 of the chart. A **protected** version of the MBRR Schedules for version 6.8 of the chart and A1S is available on the on the MFMA Webpage on the link below:

<http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/RegulationsandGazettes/Municipal%20Budget%20and%20Reporting%20Regulations/Pages/default.aspx>

The reports on the Local Government and Reporting System (LGDRS) are populated from financial and non-financial data strings. Municipalities must use the linkages on GoMuni referred to above and not the formulas in the regulated Municipal Budget and Reporting (MBRR) Schedules when generating their A schedule from the financial system.

In terms of the *mSCOA* Regulations, municipalities must generate the regulated MBRR schedules that is tabled and adopted by Council directly from their financial ERP systems and not import or captured it on the system at a later stage. This is necessary to ensure that there is 'one version of the truth', namely the data in the financial ERP system is the same as the report tabled and adopted by Council and the information submitted to the National Treasury and other stakeholders.

### **6.2. *mSCOA* data strings credibility**

Municipalities must verify the credibility and accuracy of the tabled budget (TABB) and project file (PRTA) data strings **prior and post** to uploading it to the National Treasury Local Government Database and Reporting System (LGDRS). These data strings will be the sole source used by National and Provincial Treasuries to analyse and determine if the municipality's budget is funded and the credibility is therefore of utmost importance.



Registered users from municipalities, provincial treasuries and National Treasury have full access to their data on the LGDRS and can draw the information to verify the accuracy of the figures for their respective municipalities or province (in the case of provincial treasuries). The LGDRS reports can be accessed by registered users on the following link:

[https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi\\_apps/signin](https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin)

From 2025/26, the National Treasury will open the access to all reports available on the LGDRS to the public. Municipalities should make a concerted effort to resolve their *mSCOA* data strings credibility issues as soon as possible to avoid facing the consequences of financial misconduct in terms of Section 171(1)(d) of the MFMA.

The LGDRS also provides information on municipal budgets and performance to the public through the Municipal Money portal. The information on the Municipal Money portal is sourced from the Consolidated Section 71 Reports published quarterly by the National Treasury. The Municipal Money portal is part of South Africa's Open Government Partnership (OGP) 5<sup>th</sup> National Action Plan to improve transparency and public participation in government processes and a link to the Municipal Money portal is available on the OGP website (76 countries and 104 municipalities are members).

### **6.3. Regulating the minimum business processes and system specifications for *mSCOA***

The National Treasury commenced with the work to regulate the minimum business processes and system specifications for *mSCOA* towards the end of 2025/26. The following working groups will be established to ensure that relevant stakeholders are consulted during the review processes:

- a. **Corporate governance** including internal and external audit, oversight committees, performance management, IT system requirements and management, municipal websites, document management, reporting mechanisms;
- b. **Municipal budgeting, planning and financial modelling** including IDP, Budgets Management, Revenue, Human Resources (HR) /Payroll, Assets;
- c. **Financial accounting** including general ledger, accounts receivables and payables, financial reporting, AFS reporting, insurance management, consolidation reporting;
- d. **Costing and reporting** including cost planning and cost management and reporting;
- e. **Project accounting** including project creation and planning, project management and reporting, contract management;
- f. **Treasury and cash management** including cash management and reporting, grant management and reporting, investment management and reserves, borrowings management, provisions and contingent liabilities;
- g. **Supply chain management** including supply chain management and inventory;
- h. **Full asset life cycle management** including maintenance management and asset management;
- i. **Real estate management** including property register and rental management and general processes;
- j. **Human resource and payroll management** including human resources, time management, payroll management and reporting;
- k. **Revenue management**, customer care, credit control and debt collection including revenue management and billing, credit control, customer management, debt collection, indigent management;
- l. **Valuation roll management**; and
- m. **Land use building control** including land use and building control.

Municipalities are urged to ensure that the officials that participate in the working groups have the technical knowledge and experience to participate meaningfully in these forums. Integrated Consultative Forums will also be held quarterly to keep **all** stakeholders informed and provide them with an opportunity to provide inputs on the business processes and system specification that will be regulated. A dedicated email address will be created for comment and inputs relating to the review processes underpinning these Regulations.

## **7. Submitting documents to the GoMuni Upload Portal**

### **7.1. Submissions to the National Treasury**

Municipalities are reminded to submit documents and queries to the correct portals/ mailboxes. These portals/ mailboxes are:

- **[https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi\\_apps/welcome](https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/welcome)** (GoMuni Upload Portal) – All documents required in terms of legislation by approved registered users, including: • *mSCOA* Data Strings; • Budget-related, in-year and year-end documents and schedules (A, B and C); and • Revenue and MFRS Documents (as per MFMA Circular No. 126);
- **[lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za](mailto:lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za)** – Database related and submission queries; and
- **[lgdocuments@treasury.gov.za](mailto:lgdocuments@treasury.gov.za)** – Only Provincial Treasuries may send contact details to [lgdocuments@treasury.gov.za](mailto:lgdocuments@treasury.gov.za).

Any document/ queries that are submitted to the incorrect portal/ mailbox will not be processed and the submission status report will continue to reflect the documents as outstanding.

### **7.2. Updating of contact details on GoMuni**

From 1 April 2024, municipalities (registered users) will be able to make changes/ additions to their own contact details directly on the LGDRS. To municipalities and their respective provincial treasury must select and update the relevant details on GoMuni under Database/Contacts/Reporting/Contact information on the following link:

[https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi\\_apps/signin](https://lg.treasury.gov.za/ibi_apps/signin)

Municipalities must ensure that their contact details on GoMuni are updated as soon as changes occur.

### **7.3. Submission of additional reports**

From 14 March 2024, municipalities whose debt relief applications were approved will be required to submit reports to the GoMuni Upload portal as indicated in MFMA Circular No 124 dated 31 March 2024. The list of the required debt relief reports is attached as **Annexure A**.

### **7.4. Procurement spend reporting**

In order for government to fulfil its social responsibility to channel procurement spending towards certain designated groups and to unlock economies of scale in government procurement expenditure, a single standardised view needs to be created into the

procurement spend information across all spheres of government on a transactional level for spend and trend analysis purposes.

The OCPO designed and built a Data Warehouse that serves as common repository for procurement related data with the necessary capabilities to produce standardised information in a dashboard format via various Business Intelligence tools. Currently procurement spend data of all National and Provincial departments from 2017 to date is hosted and analysed in the Data Warehouse.

From 1 March 2024, municipalities must on monthly basis report all goods and services related payments at a transactional level monthly. Towards this end, municipalities must complete and submit the template attached as **Annexure E** and submit it to the GoMuni Upload portal under the folder Documents/ Other. These reports are due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month that follows the reporting month. The first report is therefore due on 15 April 2024. This information is only required for municipalities and not for municipal entities.

A Data Upload Tool is also available that allows municipalities to capture their spending data manually or extract the relevant information from the municipality's payment system automatically. Information captured on the Data Upload Tool will be submitted directly into the OCPOs Data Warehouse once the various online input validations to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data has been passed. To access the tool, an email request must be sent to [ocpodatarequest@treasury.gov.za](mailto:ocpodatarequest@treasury.gov.za) to obtain a User ID and Password that is institution specific. Training on the use of the OCPO Data Upload Tool as well as technical integration information will be provided after the institution has received a User ID and Password.

The submission status of the OCPO Spend Report will be included on the status report of document submissions available on the LGDRS. Municipalities that opt to use the Data Upload Tool instead of submitting the excel template to GoMuni must submit a 'not applicable form' to the GoMuni Upload portal for their non-submission is not classified as outstanding.

## **8. The Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations**

### **8.1 Assistance with the compilation of budgets**

If municipalities require advice with the compilation of their respective budgets, specifically the budget documents or **Schedule A**, they should direct their enquiries to their respective provincial treasuries or to the following National Treasury officials:

Province	Responsible NT officials	Tel. No.	Email
Eastern Cape Buffalo City	Matjatji Mashoeshoe Pitso Zwane Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5553 012-315 5171 012-315 5807	<a href="mailto:Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za">Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za">Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za">Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za</a>
Free State	Sifiso Mabaso Cethekile Moshane	012-315 5952 012-315 5079	<a href="mailto:Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za">Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Cethekile.moshane@treasury.gov.za">Cethekile.moshane@treasury.gov.za</a>
Gauteng  City of Tshwane and City of Johannesburg  City of Ekurhuleni	Matjatji Mashoeshoe Pitso Zwane Oreal Tshidino Willem Voigt Makgabo Mabotja Enock Ndlovu Kgomotso Baloyi Lunathi Dumani	012-315 5553 012-315 5171  012-315 5830 012-315 5156 012-315 5385 012-315 5866	<a href="mailto:Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za">Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za">Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Oreal.Tshidino@Treasury.gov.za">Oreal.Tshidino@Treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za">WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za">Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Enock.Ndlovu@treasury.gov.za">Enock.Ndlovu@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za">Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Lunathi.dumani@treasury.gov.za">Lunathi.dumani@treasury.gov.za</a>
KwaZulu-Natal Msunduzi eThekweni uMhlathuze	Kgomotso Baloyi Lunathi Dumani Sifiso Mabaso Kevin Bell	012-315 5866 012-315 5866 012-315 5952 012-315 5725	<a href="mailto:Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za">Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Lunathi.dumani@treasury.gov.za">Lunathi.dumani@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za">Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Kevin.bell@treasury.gov.za">Kevin.bell@treasury.gov.za</a>
Limpopo	Sifiso Mabaso Jabulile Ngwenya	012-315 5952	<a href="mailto:Sifiso.Mabaso@treasury.gov.za">Sifiso.Mabaso@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Jabulile.ngwenya@treasury.gov.za">Jabulile.ngwenya@treasury.gov.za</a>
Mpumalanga	Mandla Gilimani Sibusisiwe Mchani	012-315 5807 012-315 5539	<a href="mailto:Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za">Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Sibusisiwe.Mchani@treasury.gov.za">Sibusisiwe.Mchani@treasury.gov.za</a>
Northern Cape	Mandla Gilimani Sibusisiwe Mchani	012-315 5807 012-315 5539	<a href="mailto:Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za">Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Sibusisiwe.Mchani@treasury.gov.za">Sibusisiwe.Mchani@treasury.gov.za</a>
North West	Willem Voigt Makgabo Mabotja	012-315 5830 012-315 5156	<a href="mailto:WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za">WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za">Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za</a>
Western Cape  Cape Town George	Willem Voigt Enock Ndlovu Kgomotso Baloyi Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5830 012-315 5385 012-315 5866 012-315 5807	<a href="mailto:WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za">WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Enock.Ndlovu@treasury.gov.za">Enock.Ndlovu@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za">Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za">Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za</a>
Technical issues on GoMuni Website	Data management		<a href="mailto:lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za">lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za</a>
Local government Conditional Grants	Conditional Grants team	012-315 5183	<a href="mailto:Sello.mashaba@treasury.gov.za">Sello.mashaba@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Unathi.lekonyana@treasury.gov.za">Unathi.lekonyana@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Pretty.mavhungu@treasury.gov.za">Pretty.mavhungu@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Marvin.ngobeni@treasury.gov.za">Marvin.ngobeni@treasury.gov.za</a> <a href="mailto:Akanyang.modise@treasury.gov.za">Akanyang.modise@treasury.gov.za</a>

## Contact



**national treasury**

Department:  
National Treasury  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Post** Private Bag X115, Pretoria 0001  
**Phone** 012 315 5009  
**Fax** 012 395 6553  
**Website** <http://www.treasury.gov.za/default.aspx>

**JH Hattingh**  
**Chief Director: Local Government Budget Analysis**  
**08 March 2024**

**ANNEXURE A – LIST OF REQUIRED REPORTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO NATIONAL TREASURY FOR DEBT RELIEF PROGRAMME (TEMPLATE)**

**ANNEXURE B – MUNICIPAL CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE FOR DEBT RELIEF PROGRAMME (TEMPLATE)**

**ANNEXURE C – MUNICIPAL DEBT RELIEF – MONTHLY REPORTING – INDIGENT HOUSEHOLDS INFORMATION (TEMPLATE)**

**ANNEXURE D – MUNICIPAL DEBT RELIEF – MONTHLY REVENUE COLLECTION REPORTING (TEMPLATE)**

**ANNEXURE D – PROCUREMENT SPENT REPORTING (TEMPLATE)**