

# Labour inspectors leave no stone unturned - Oliphant

by [Lloyd Ramutloa](#) — last modified 2011-05-23 17:04

20 May 2011

The last 12 months saw heightened activity among the Department of Labour's inspectors as they criss-crossed the country to ensure compliance with all pieces of legislation, Labour Minister, Nelisiwe Oliphant, said in her first Budget Vote Speech to Parliament today (Tue).

The process bore fruit with 72 percent of workplaces found to be complying with the law, she said.

The Minister said notices have been issued to recalcitrant employers, with 283 cases having been referred to the Labour Court while a further 328 were sent to Magistrates' Courts.

"We hope that those who flout the laws will be successfully prosecuted," she said.

Oliphant said the blitz inspections had targeted "high-risk and problematic" sectors such as wholesale and retail – agriculture and forestry – hospitality – private security and several shopping malls. She told Parliament that 15 833 inspections were conducted – thereby exceeding the Department's target of 7 250.

Turning to the new Public Employment Services Bill, the Minister said this division registered 497 714 job seekers up to December 31 last year. "The service was able to link 70 percent of these registered job seekers to career counselling, skills development interventions, work placement opportunities, unemployment insurance fund (UIF) and compensation fund benefits. As if that was not enough, our career guidance services were undertaken for the nursing colleges in Gauteng – saving up to R2 million in recruitment costs. It was also extended to ex-offenders, co-operatives and small businesses," the Minister said.

Oliphant said the UIF paid benefits to 693 000 people with a total value of R4.1 billion. She said the fund had invested 68 percent of its portfolio in central government, municipal and parastatal bonds as well as money market instruments that support infrastructure projects aimed at creating jobs.

"The Fund has identified a number of projects in pursuit of the Decent Work agenda in South Africa. The contribution of the Fund comprises both commercial and social responsible investment. This is the investment of R35 billion of the R52 billion portfolio," she said.

The Minister said as with the UIF, the Compensation Fund had invested R9 billion in support of investment in infrastructural projects that will create and sustain jobs.

Oliphant used the occasion to reiterate government's commitment to the Decent Work agenda based on "the need to increase the level of employment as well as improving the quality of those jobs. Decent work is therefore a package deal – an integrated way of looking at work in our society in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity."

She said her department was planning a number of initiatives for the 2011/12 financial year in order to contribute to job creation. "Various branches and public entities have outlined plans to create 54 000 jobs, saving 156 800 jobs in identified distressed companies and sectors and placing over two million work seekers in jobs for the same period through to 2013/14.

Oliphant said interventions by the department would involve training, re-skilling of workers to enable them to compete in the open economy."

Issued by: Mzobanzi Jikazana

Ministerial Spokesperson

083-641-2355