

'Stability is at core of Sars' success'

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A STABLE environment and the common pursuit of integrity are the reasons why the South African Revenue Service (Sars) has excelled over the years.



Former Finance Minister Trevor Manuel. Picture by Robert

Tshabalala and Tyrone Arthur

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Sars deputy commissioner Ivan Pillay says the reason why the taxman has been able to improve over time was the stability provided by the ministry of finance and within Sars itself.

"We had one minister in Trevor Manuel for many many years and one commissioner for many years," Pillay said.

"Stability allows you to experiment, make mistakes and make improvements over time.

"The one value we hold dearly is that of integrity. We have no tolerance for corrupt activity. Our staff knows we take action. Another value we have is that one is prepared to learn continuously."

As revenue collector Sars is at the heart of government performance and its efficiency means the government has more money to spend on improving the lives of South Africans.

Last week Sars once again walked away with a total of four Public Sector Excellence (PSX) Awards.

The PSX Awards are given independently and as voted for by taxpayers.

"Our vision is to do the right thing for our people ... Our vision is to uplift the country. We need to address the historical imbalances and we are driven by that vision, " he said.

"You must have a team of people that have the right value set, who want to do the right thing. People who are driven by some of the ideals we had during the liberation struggle."

Pillay said the unit had a particular system of dealing with cadre recruitment and that they did not show bias for or against cadres.

"There are good members of ANC and cadres and the not so good ones. I would not reject someone because they are a cadre, but I would not hire somebody because they are a cadre," he said.

In the same way, he said, there were good and bad people among all faiths.

Pillay said Sars looked for people with the right values and those who wanted to serve and were "not just bureaucrats".

Pillay said success at Sars was not just about using new technology, but having the right management that understands what technology is needed and has the capacity to use the technology.

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