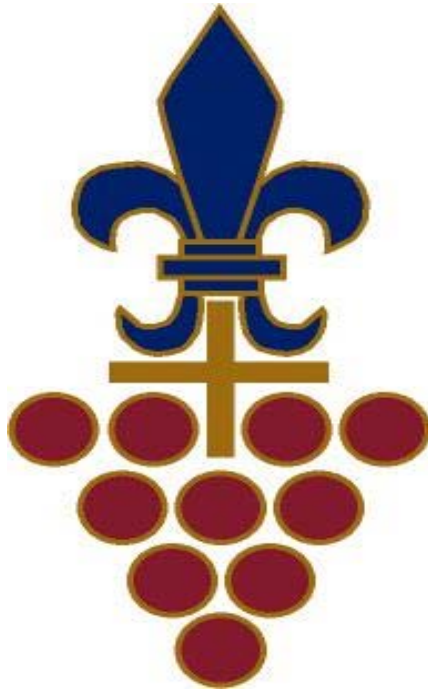


STELLENBOSCH MUNICIPALITY



MFMA Circular No.130

**MUNICIPAL BUDGET
CIRCULAR FOR THE 2025/2026
MTREF**



Municipal Budget Circular for the 2025/26 MTREF

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Introduction:

This budget circular provides guidance to municipalities with their compilation of the 2025/26 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 are not covered in this circular.

1. The South African economy and inflation targets:

GDP growth is expected to average 1.8 per cent from 2025 to 2027. Medium-term growth will be underpinned by household consumption on the back of rising purchasing power, moderate employment recovery and wealth gains. Continued investments in renewable energy and easing structural constraints are expected to support higher investment. Key factors for achieving faster economic growth and creating much-needed jobs include greater collaboration with the private sector in energy and transport, rapid implementation of structural reforms, easing of regulatory constraints and increased infrastructure investment.

The following macro-economic forecasts must be considered when preparing the 2025/26 MTREF municipal budgets.

Table 1: Macroeconomic performance and projections, 2023 - 2028

Fiscal year	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Actual	Estimate	Forecast		
CPI Inflation	6.0%	4.4%	4.3%	4.6%	4.4%

Source: National Treasury Budget Review 2025.

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 declined to 2.9 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2024, resulting in average inflation of 4.4 per cent for the year. Consumer inflation is projected to average 4.3 per cent in 2025 and 4.6 per cent in 2026, picking up slightly as the value-added tax (VAT) increase pushes up prices. The VAT effect is seen mainly in core inflation, which, after averaging 4.3 per cent in 2024, is projected to rise to 4.6 per cent in 2026. Lower global crude oil prices are expected to support muted fuel price inflation.

Due to weaker economic growth and other economic factors such as the current VAT increase which puts added pressure on households, households will likely struggle to pay municipal accounts which will impact negatively 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 or for clear articulation of all the factors affecting the tariffs.

VAT Increase

In the Minister's Budget speech on 12 March 2025, two increases in the standard rate of VAT were announced. The first-rate increase of 0.5 percentage point applies from 1 May 2025, and the second-rate increase of 0.5 percentage point will apply from 1 April 2026. SARS has issued the following guidelines in this regard:

- A Pocket Guide on the VAT rate increase on 1 May 2025; and
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to guide vendors and the public on the first rate increase effective from 1 May 2025 and to ensure consistency on certain practical and technical aspects of implementing the change to the VAT rate. More guidance on the second-rate increase will be communicated in due course.

Municipalities should also refer to **VAT 404 – Guide for Vendors**. These guidelines are available on the SARS website www.sars.gov.za.

2. Key focus areas for the 2025/26 budget process:

2.1. Local government allocations

Over the 2025 MTEF, the local government equitable share and direct conditional grants amount to a total of R552.7 billion, made up of R332.4 billion in the local government equitable share, R52.9 billion in the general fuel levy sharing with metros and R167.4 billion in direct conditional grants. Direct transfers to local government grow in line with inflation, increasing at an annual average of 4.4 per cent over the MTEF, with the local government equitable share growing at a slightly higher rate (5.2 per cent).

Review of the Municipal Capacity Building Programme

As part of the next phase of the ongoing review of local government capacity-building programmes, the National Treasury will consolidate its financial management support initiatives into a unified Local Government Financial Management Capability Development Programme. This integrated programme will provide a comprehensive framework for equipping municipalities with the tools, knowledge and resources needed to strengthen governance and improve service delivery. By streamlining existing initiatives and fostering collaboration, the programme aims to deliver targeted, impactful and sustainable support to municipalities across the country.

The programme will align with the National Treasury's Capability Development Framework and adopt a differentiated approach tailored to the unique needs and maturity levels of municipalities. Key features include pre-grant capacity assessments to identify gaps, multi-year grants to build sustainable in-house capabilities and a municipal scorecard to monitor progress and link it to grant allocations. Collaboration with partners such as South African Local Government Association (SALGA), the Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG) and academic institutions will ensure the design and delivery of customised capacity-building packages. Beyond financial management, the programme will serve as a foundation for a broader government-wide initiative to integrate capability development across all municipal functions, including governance and service delivery. This cohesive, long-term strategy underscores the importance of a unified effort to achieve sustainable municipal development and improve outcomes for communities nationwide.

Update on the conditional grant for smart prepaid meters

As indicated in the 2024/25 financial year, the National Treasury now oversees the smart meters grant as an indirect grant through a transversal contract to regulate distribution quality and costs. This grant aims to enhance energy efficiency and support the integration of renewable energy to better meet consumer needs.

Over the 2025 MTEF period, the grant will continue to support municipal debt relief efforts by focusing on municipalities already enrolled in the program. Over time, the grant is expected to expand to additional municipalities, aiming to enhance financial sustainability and management. This grant is allocated R2.3 billion over the 2025 MTEF.

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), municipal infrastructure grant (MIG) and the urban settlements development grant (USDG) 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 2024 MTBPS changes

Since the tabling of the 2024 MTBPS, additional changes have been proposed to local government allocations. These include:

- Shifting R245 million over the MTEF period from the MIG to the IUDG. This follows Alfred Duma Local Municipality qualifying to participate in the IUDG;
- Shifting R494 million in 2025/26 from the direct component of the MIG to the indirect component to address wastewater infrastructure issues in 21 municipalities;
- Introducing a new Urban Development Financing Grant (UDFG). The baseline of this grant is funded from the metro component of the neighbourhood development partnership grant (NDPG) (R924 million over the MTEF period) and 80 per cent of the programme and project preparation support grant (PPPSG) (R981 million over the MTEF period);
- Introducing a new Urban Development Financing Grant (UDFG). The baseline of this grant is funded from the component of the neighbourhood development partnership grant (NDPG) (R924 million over the MTEF period) and 80 per cent of the programme and project preparation support grant (PPPSG) (R981 million over the MTEF period);
- Expansion of the Water Financing Component in the 2024/25 Urban Settlement Development Grant to electricity and solid waste management, in addition to water and sanitation, in the Trading Services Component of the 2025/26 Urban Settlement Development Grant framework. This component introduces a condition that a minimum of 56 per cent of the USDG be allocated to water and sanitation, electricity and energy; and solid waste management services capital infrastructure projects aligned to metro-approved trading services investment plans of the grant;
- An additional R450 million in 2025/26, from the Public Employment Programme;
- Additional funding from the Budget Facility for Infrastructure that will flow through the UDFG is as follows:
 - City of Johannesburg: R578 million in 2026/27 and R533 million in 2027/28 for a wastewater project.

- eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality: R56 million in 2025/26, R109 million in 2026/27 and R101 million in 2027/28 for a project to address non-revenue water.
- Merging the non-metro component of the NDPG and the remaining 20 per cent of the PPPSG into a single grant (called NDPG), with a baseline of R1.4 billion over the MTEF period;
- A reduction of R435 million in 2025/26 and increases of R425 million in 2026/27 and R660 million in 2027/28 to the public transport network grant (PTNG) to align with the revised implementation plan and cash flow projections for the City of Cape Town's MyCiTi programme, funded from the Budget Facility for Infrastructure;
- An additional R225 million in 2026/27 to the regional bulk infrastructure grant (RBIG) allocation for Drakenstein Local Municipality. This adjustment, carried through from the 2024 Division of Revenue Amendment Act, aligns with the municipality's revised implementation plan and cash flow projections; and
- Discontinuing the municipal systems improvement grant (MSIG). Its baseline will be redirected to the Department of Cooperative Governance and earmarked for national government to support municipalities.

2.3. Review of the local government fiscal framework

The aim of the review is to critically examine the financial viability of the local government fiscal framework (LGFF) and identify key factors influencing its effectiveness, stability, and long-term sustainability. This will be achieved by conducting an in-depth examination of existing policies, practices, and mechanisms governing the allocation, management, and utilisation of fiscal resources at the local government level. The review will be mainly centred around the following thematic areas:

- Overall LGFF baseline profile of distressed and optimally functioning local governments institutions and refinement of LGFF problem statement;
- LGES formula;
- Local government expenditure reviews;
- Fiscal leakages in local government; and
- Additional revenue considerations, including existing revenues options, including those that are undersubscribed, and exploring new additional own revenue sources and improved municipal borrowing for strengthening infrastructure investment and maintenance.

2.4. Update on the review of the conditional grants

In September 2024, government concluded a comprehensive review of the conditional grant system and developed reforms based on the findings. These reforms, which will be implemented progressively over the next three years, are designed to rationalise the conditional grant framework, integrate certain grants into the provincial equitable share and national departments' budget vote, and enhance the overall effectiveness of the system. This initiative underscores government's commitment to improving service delivery while ensuring the prudent management of public resources.

The review process was underpinned by an extensive consultation phase conducted between July and December 2024 during which the National Treasury presented the findings and recommendations arising from the review. Most of the proposed reforms are intended for medium- to long-term implementation, with a select number of reforms being prioritised for the short-term and will be introduced during the 2025 MTEF period.

Further consultations are planned to follow the tabling of the 2025 Budget. These engagements will include impact assessments and preparatory work to ensure the successful rollout of the proposed changes. The reforms aim to address systemic challenges within the grant system and are guided by the principles of equity, efficiency, and sustainability. Key areas of reform include the following:

- I) *Enhancing differentiation and effectiveness in the grant system:* A central objective of the reforms is to introduce greater differentiation within the grant system to address the diverse needs of municipalities. This includes reducing the growing reliance on grants by metropolitan municipalities while providing targeted support to municipalities with limited capacity. By addressing service delivery challenges and locational disparities, the reforms aim to create a more responsive and equitable system. Specific measures under this initiative include refining allocation methodologies to balance equity and efficiency considerations, strengthening co-funding requirements to promote shared responsibility and sustainability, reducing restrictive earmarking and ring-fencing to allow for greater flexibility in the use of funds, introducing or enhancing performance-based incentives to drive accountability and improve outcomes, and improving the alignment of related grants to reduce fragmentation and duplication; and
- II) *Rationalising the number of grants:* As part of the reforms, the number of conditional grants allocated to subnational governments will be streamlined to address the duplication of grants and mitigate the administrative burdens associated with the proliferation of funding streams. By simplifying the grant system, government aims to improve efficiency and reduce reporting requirements, enabling municipalities to focus on service delivery. Proposed measures include:
 - Merging water reticulation grants to create a unified funding mechanism for water infrastructure;
 - Consolidating energy grants to streamline support for energy-related projects;
 - Combining urban development grants to enhance the coordination of urban infrastructure investments; and
 - Discontinuing grants that are better suited as provincial programmes, such as those for road maintenance, sports development, and capacity-building initiatives.

These reforms represent a decisive step towards a more efficient and effective intergovernmental fiscal framework. By addressing systemic inefficiencies and aligning resources with service delivery priorities, government reaffirms its commitment to fostering sustainable development and improving the quality of life for all citizens. The implementation of these reforms will be closely monitored to ensure that they achieve their intended objectives while maintaining fiscal discipline and accountability.

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 the creation of a 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. Metro Trading Services Reform Incentive

Background – the background to the metro trading services performance incentive grant was outlined in the 2024/25 Budget Circular under the heading 'Reforms to improve the efficiency and financial sustainability of metro trading services'. The local government grant review process and the metro trading services reform process are converging into an incentive grant to incentivise a turnaround in the performance of metro trading services.

Progress made – Over the last year metro municipalities have engaged in substantial preparatory work regarding turnaround and reform strategies in Water and Sanitation and Electricity and Energy. Metros have in respect of each of these trading services prepared Trading Services Reform Strategies (A) with annexures A1 (Institutional Road Maps), and A2 (Business and Improvement Plans). They are currently preparing Annexure A3 (Performance Improvement Action Plans)¹. All submissions are assessed by interdepartmental teams from the Departments of Water and Sanitation, Mineral Resources and Energy, DCoG, DHS, National Treasury and SALGA.

Programme planning and assessment framework – the incentive grant framework is currently planned to run for six years from 2025/26 (Year 1) to 2030/31 (Year 6). Year 1 focuses on establishing the necessary accountability, financial transparency, and strategic planning foundations for the five subsequent years (Years 2 to 6) of strategy implementation.

Metros will have three planning opportunities

Development of version 1 of the Annexure A3: Performance Improvement Action Plan (A3: PIAP v1) (indicative targets for all indicators, accompanied by firm targets to achieve minimum commitments in year 1) to be approved by Council alongside metro budget documents by June 2025.

Development of version 2 of the A3: PIAP v2 (with minimum commitments achieved, and realistic annual targets for all indicators) to be approved by Council with metro budget documents by June 2026.

Development of version 3 of the A3: PIAP v3 (with minimum commitments retained and an opportunity to reset annual targets) to be approved by Council with metro budget documents by June 2028 (details provided in Guidance Note 4).

The intention of the incentive programme is that incentive grant allocations should be awarded to metros according to independently assessed performance against the targets of their reform strategies as set out in the relevant A3-PIAP.

Special arrangements are necessary to determine the provisional incentive allocations provided for under the Division of Revenue Bill (2025) for years 1 and 2 of the programme. In these

¹ See <https://mfma.treasury.gov.za/Guidelines/Documents/Trading%20Services> for Guidance Notes and Resource Documents issued to assist.

cases, performance will be assessed against the commitment to (year 1) and achievement of (year 2) minimum commitments as follows:

- **YEAR 1:** Metro Councils who in Year 0 (2024/25, i.e. by the end of this municipal financial year), pass a satisfactory A3 PIAP v1 with minimum commitments, will be awarded the Year 1 allocation as finalised in the National Adjusted Budget process;
- Draft submissions from participating metros were reviewed during the 2025 Mid-year Budget, and final submissions will similarly be assessed during 2025 Budget and Benchmarking engagements during April to May 2025. Assessment and independent confirmation will be undertaken and submitted to the National Treasury;
- **YEAR 2 and 3:** Similarly, Metro Councils who in Year 1 (2025/26, i.e. by the end of June 2026) achieve the eight minimum commitments and pass a satisfactory A3 PIAP v2, will be awarded the Year 2 and Year 3 allocations as finalised. This is appropriate since planned spending for those years will by then be based upon well-substantiated business turnaround and financial strategies;
- Draft and final submissions will be reviewed and assessed during the Mid-year Budget and Performance and Budget and Performance engagements, and final submissions to metro Council will need NT approval. Assessment and independent confirmation will be undertaken and submitted to the National Treasury; and
- **YEARS 4, 5 and 6:** Once strategy implementation is underway, incentive allocations for any year (Y) will depend upon metro performance against numerical targets set for year (Y-2). This must be assessed after financial year end, but early enough during year (Y-1) to enter the budget process for Year (Y). The earliest this can apply is for Year 4, based on assessed performance in Year 2. This arrangement will determine incentive allocations for Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Independent assessments will be conducted annually, to confirm that minimum commitments remain in place, and to assess performance against targets.

Indicative incentive allocations

The indicative incentive allocations per metro per financial year are based on poverty-weighted population formula. Annexure W1 to the 2025 division of revenue sets out indicative figures which represent the maxima potentially available to metros currently participating in the programme, based on the assessed status of each metro trading services strategy as at 15th of January 2025 (they include solid waste management from Year 2 (2026/27)).

The indicative allocations are not yet actual budget allocations. Firm announcements regarding Year 1 (2025/26) incentive grant allocations will be included in the National Adjusted Budget in October 2025 and confirmed in allocation letters. Metros will accommodate these incentive allocations in their own adjustments budget as soon as possible but not later than the 28th of February 2026.

Adverse or disclaimed audit findings

No metro which has received an adverse or disclaimed financial audit for the previous financial year will be eligible to access their incentive grant award in the forthcoming year.

Re-opening of incentive grant window

As previously communicated, Solid Waste Management is scheduled for inclusion in the incentive programme from Year 2 (2026/27) onwards. Metros wishing to include solid waste

management in their trading services reform strategies should submit the necessary documentation according to the following schedule:

- a. **Council-approved Trading Services Reform Strategy (A)** which is due on 31st of July 2025 which includes Annexure A1 (Institutional Road Map) and Annexure A2 (Business and Improvement Plan);
- b. **Draft Annexure A3 version 1 (Performance Improvement Action Plan)** at the Mid-year review stage which is due in January 2026;
- c. **Final draft Annexure A3-PIAP version 1** at the Budget and Benchmark stage during April 2026; and
- d. **Council approved A3-PIAP version 1** due by June 2026.

Note: This re-opening of the incentive grant window also applies to metros which (a) have not previously met eligibility requirements in the water and sanitation or electricity and energy trading services, and (b) seek another opportunity to enter the programme. Such metros should follow the same schedule as above.

2.7. Alignment between the Metro Trading Service Reform and MFMA Circular No.88

The implementation of MFMA Circular No. 88 continues in all categories of municipalities. In December 2024, Addendum 6 of the MFMA Circular No. 88 was published providing an update on the preparation of statutory planning and reporting documents required for the 2025/26 Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF). Addendum 6 provided guidance to the municipalities on in-year changes to indicators in the Service Delivery Budget and Implementation Plan (SDBIP) and guidance for 'estimate' values in indicator reporting. Further guidance on indicator revisions and definitional clarification was also provided.

Selected MFMA Circular No. 88 indicators are also being used to track the performance of the metros as part of the A3 PIAP: Performance Improvement Action Plan of the Metro Trading Service Reform (MTSR). In line with the rationalisation and standardisation objective of the MFMA Circular No. 88 reform, this ensures that there is alignment and line of sight across various reporting frameworks. Furthermore, this promotes consistency in planning, budgeting, and reporting while reinforcing the overall objectives of the reform agenda. The MTSR targets water and sanitation, electricity and energy and solid waste management in the metropolitan municipalities focusing on institutional performance and accountability, financial performance, governance and operational or service delivery performance. Although the MFMA Circular No. 88 reporting and the MTS reforms are complementary reforms, the MTS is a targeted reform linked to a performance incentive grant. Where possible the MTSR utilises the MFMA Circular No. 88 indicators, as reflected in MTSR Guidance Note 4 Addendum that was circulated to the metros on the 3rd of March 2025. However, noting the targeted business operations turnaround required of MTS, several performance indicators outside the MFMA Circular No. 88 process have been developed for operational monitoring and reporting distinct from the statutory plans and reports in which all MFMA Circular No. 88 indicators find expression.

Future reporting on the selected MFMA Circular No. 88 indicators that form part of the A3 PIAP should be sourced from the MFMA Circular No. 88 reporting platform to ensure seamless integration between the two reforms. At this stage, the exact modalities and protocols to derive reporting efficiencies between the A3 PIAP and the MFMA Circular No. 88 reporting platform are still being confirmed, and municipalities should expect further guidance from the National Treasury on the coordination and synchronisation of reporting.

This section should be read in conjunction with paragraph 2.3 of the MFMA Circular No. 88 Addendum 6.

2.8. Three-year and one-year capital appropriations

To facilitate the delivery of large capital projects, section 16(3) of the MFMA allows a municipality to appropriate capital budgets for three financial years, i.e. the budget year and the following two years of the MTREF. The aim of such multi-year capital appropriations is to:

- lock the council into funding the full cost of large capital projects so as to ensure their successful completion;
- facilitate the forward planning of capital projects and programmes; enable the municipality to initiate procurement processes for capital projects in the two outer years of the MTREF (given the funds are appropriated) and so ensure improved levels of capital spending; and
- enable funding for such capital projects to be brought forward in terms of section 31 of the MFMA to facilitate more rapid project implementation (although National Treasury would prefer municipalities to the use of the mid-year adjustments budget for this purpose).

Municipalities are encouraged to use these provisions of the MFMA appropriately, and ensure they divide their capital budgets correctly between the 'multi-year expenditure' and the 'single year expenditure' sections on Tables A5A and A5. Further information can be obtained in MFMA Circular No. 58.

2.9. Criteria for the release of the Equitable Share

The criteria for the release of the equitable share which were covered in MFMA Circulars No. 122 remains relevant, and are still applicable for the release of equitable share instalments in the 2025/26 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.

2.10. Criteria for the rollover of conditional grant funds

In terms of Section 21 of the Division of Revenue Act, 2024 (Act No.24 of 2024) (DoRA) in conjunction with the Division of Revenue Amendment Act, 2024 (Act No. 48 of 2024), any conditional allocation or a portion thereof that is not spent at the end of the 2024/25 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 2024 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 2024 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 31 March 2025; or
 - b) Proof of project tender and tender submissions published and closed before 31 March 2025 or with the appointment of contractor or service provider for delivery of service before 30 June 2025 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 2025 (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 2025, 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 2024 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 2025;
3. Accurate disclosure of grant performance in the 2024/25 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 2024/25 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 2025 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 2024/25 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 2024/25 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 2025. All invoices issued to the municipality before 31 March 2025 should be paid within the same year against the allocated conditional grants. i.e. invoices must be paid within 30 days.

2.11. Unspent conditional grant funds for 2024/25

The process to ensure the return of unspent conditional grants for the 2024/25 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 2025 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 2025. 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 2024 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 2025.

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 2025;
- Step 5: National Treasury will communicate the unspent conditional grants amount by 12 November 2025. A municipality must return the remaining unspent conditional grant funds that are not subject to a specific repayment arrangement to the National Revenue Fund (NRF) by 19 November 2025; and
- Step 6: Any unspent conditional grant funds that should have but has not been repaid to the National Revenue Fund (NRF) by 19 November 2025, and for which a municipality has not requested a repayment arrangement, will be offset against the municipality's December 2025 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.

2.12. Rollover of the Urban Development Financing Grant : metro trading services component

The normal rules regarding rollovers will apply to the incentive grant. Essentially the Budget allocated during the National MTEF and reflected in the annual Division of Revenue Bill will make provision that the cash flows be synchronised to achievements in line with the Annexure A3: Performance Improvement Action Plan (A3: PIAP).

Municipalities must submit all rollover applications and queries related to the conditional grants to Rolloverapplication@treasury.gov.za.

3. Revenue Management

3.1. Prioritise funding the Electricity Revenue Protection Program

Past years' increasing electricity tariffs continue to strain consumers' ability to afford this service. Municipalities as a result are at higher risk of non-technical losses particularly related to theft and illegal by-passing. Many municipalities do not have dedicated Revenue Protection staff in place or have reduced their operational funding for Revenue Protection culminating in an overall reduced collection and related strain on cash flow and the ability to pay creditors. Municipalities are advised to prioritise the following Revenue Protection measures in the 2025/26 and future MTREFs:

- A dedicated Revenue Protection Unit for Electricity administered by the senior manager responsible for the municipal Electricity Infrastructure Directorate taking into consideration the recommendations and standards the recommendations and standards set-out in NRS055 (Code of Practice for Revenue Protection);
- Allocating adequate funds in the budget to fund the municipality's Electricity Revenue Protection Unit's operational needs;
- In allocating funding, the business threat of increasing non-technical losses to the municipality's particular specifics must be considered to achieve a balance, while ensuring the Revenue Protection staff organogram and operational program is adequately funded and able to fulfil its role; and
- The municipality to demonstrate in its MTREF submission that a percentage of the revenue from the Energy function is ring-fenced to fund the municipal Revenue Protection Program operational need(s) towards developing the program to fruition.

3.2. Revenue Management Assessment Tool

Every municipality, in anticipation of the annual budget process and the review of critical revenue management related policies should assess and review its revenue management value chain to identify any gaps, duplications and / or inefficiencies for alignment with the approved organogram and related delegations. Refer to MFMA Budget Circular No. 126 (Annexure B: Submission checklist: Revenue Management Documents) and MFMA Budget Circular No. 128 (Item 7.3 contained in Annexure A). The municipality must submit its review to the National Treasury in the format of the Municipal Revenue Management Assessment Tool – to be uploaded to the National Treasury GoMuni upload portal annually as part of the Revenue Management Documents that are required.

The Revenue Assessment Tool was developed through the collaboration of the National Treasury, the Department of Cooperative Governance (DCoG) and SALGA. The initiative created the opportunity for stakeholders to acknowledge the fragmented and diverse nature of support provided to municipalities in this area often resulting in duplicated efforts and little

systemic change across municipalities and the need for a Single Integrated Revenue Management Framework (SIRMF).

The SIRMF is a national framework for revenue management that guides and outlines the intervention and leadership role both municipalities and oversight bodies should play in addressing challenges relating to the revenue management value chain and ultimately financial sustainability. The SIRMF emphasises the significant role of National and Provincial Government in supporting municipalities in the process of revenue management improvement and how the relevant departments will coordinate their support and their monitoring and evaluation role(s).

The SIRMF was designed on the existing statutory framework, with an emphasis on compliance. Within the scope of related tasks and responsibilities, the SIRMF provides direction on how municipalities may enhance revenue management as a major approach for increasing the municipality's viability and sustainability. Completing the Municipal Revenue Assessment Tool can assist the municipal council, senior management team and oversight bodies to assess, understand and improve critical revenue management practices of the municipality.

The tool provides an indication of gaps, flaws, duplications, inefficiencies and risks in the existing revenue value chain that could compromise or affect whether the revenue component of the budget sufficiently caters for long-term planning and is credible and funded. It further provides a comprehensive overview of current revenue management processes by identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas that need improvement. The tool focuses on eighteen (18) critical areas within the revenue management value chain and helps pinpoint specific areas for optimising revenue collection processes.

National Treasury is in the process of institutionalising and implementing the tool, this includes conducting training throughout provinces.

The tool is comprehensive and must be completed by all municipalities during the 2025/26 MTREF with a thorough review of the revenue value chain, thereafter this exercise will only be necessary in every alternate year. However, municipalities with revenue collection rates below 85 per cent and all municipalities participating in Debt Relief must annually undertake this exercise until they achieve an average annual collection of 95 per cent as outlined in MFMA Circular No. 71.

The tool was already rolled out during the 2024/25 financial year and the National Treasury provided training. The Municipal Revenue Assessment Tool is attached as **Annexure A** of this Circular.

3.3. Cost Reflective Tariff Tool

As part of the budget process, the municipality must annually undertake an assessment to determine if the intended / implemented tariffs are cost reflective, whether all critical cost components were considered in the tariff calculation(s), whether the Local Government Equitable Share component relating to basic services were allocated to the actual service(s) and to demonstrate that the Revenue Component of the budget is credible and funded; etc. To facilitate this exercise, the municipality must complete and submit this calculation(s) / tariff assessment in the format of the National Treasury Tariff Tool as part of its tabled, adopted and adjustment MTREF submissions to the National Treasury GoMuni portal. The Cost Reflective Tariff Tool outcomes must also be reported to and approved by Council as part of the respective tabled and adopted MTREF submissions.

If the Tariff Tool indicates significant tariff shortfalls, any major tariff increases should be phased-in over two to three years and can be approved for the outer years (2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29). Thus, the indicative tariffs can be phased in over a period of three years.

The latest format of the National Treasury Tariff Tool that must be used and submitted is attached as **Annexure B** of this circular.

3.4. Electricity Tariffs

Cost of Supply Study (COS) for electricity tariff applications

On 20 October 2022, the Nelson Mandela Bay Chamber of Business issued a ruling outlining the requirements that municipalities must comply with when determining tariffs. The ruling found NERSA's Guideline and Benchmark method for approving municipal electricity tariffs unlawful and invalid. The court ordered that all electricity tariff applications from 2024/25 Financial Year, should be supported by a Cost of Supply (COS) study. Municipalities are reminded of the critical importance of complying with the court order, failing which, municipalities would be in breach of the court order and in contempt of court. The need for conducting a COS timeously and adhering to the timelines set by NERSA for the submission of applications is imperative as these cannot be approved by NERSA without the COS.

NERSA has indicated that it will be able to process and decide on municipal tariff applications based on Cost of Supply (COS) studies for the financial year 2025/26 by the end of June 2025 for the implementation in the new Financial Year. However, the Minister of Finance will engage NERSA to conclude this process sooner, to allow municipalities sufficient time to take account of the approved tariffs in the finalisation of their budgets. Tariff applications will not be considered unless they are supported by a Cost of Supply study. NERSA has indicated that the approval of Eskom's Retail Tariff Plan (RTP) and Eskom's Retail Tariff Structural Adjustment (ERTSA) for FY2025/26 is anticipated prior to 15 March 2025. Following the ERTSA decision, municipalities will be informed of the outcome to assist them in formulating their individual tariffs, which will then be approved for implementation in FY2025/26.

From the 2025/26 MTREF, municipalities will be required to submit the following documents pertaining to electricity tariff applications to the GoMuni Upload portal:

- NERSA D Form and COS study submitted to NERSA. For the 2025/26 tariff increase, municipalities with the tabled budget and thereafter 31 October 2025 (i.e. applications pertaining to 2026/27 tariff increases and beyond); and
- NERSA tariff approval with the tabled budget.

3.5. Municipal Valuation Roll Reconciliation Tool

Reference is made to MFMA Circulars No. 93 (paragraph 3), No. 98 (paragraph 4.1), No. 123 (paragraph 5.1), and particularly No. 126, (paragraph 3.1). To ensure the municipality's rates base is complete, and aligns to the business process and system requirements articulated in Annexure B of MFMA Circular No. 80 (08 March 2016) and the Municipal Property Rates Act (MPRA) (section 23): Part A: Register of the latest consolidated general valuation roll (GVR), and the MPRA categories, the municipality need to monthly perform the reconciliation in the format of the National Treasury Municipal Valuation Roll Reconciliation Tool.

The municipality must submit the completed tool together with the related documentation to the National Treasury GoMuni portal as follows:	Timeframe
1. The municipality's list of Property Rates tariffs approved by council for the financial year reported on together with the Council resolution that approved such.	Annually

2.	The municipality's time schedule for implementing its new general valuation roll (GVR) (aligned to the MPRA).	Annually
3.	The Municipal Property Rates Act (MPRA) (section 23): Part A Register of the latest consolidated general valuation roll (GVR).	Annually
4.	Municipality Valuation Roll Reconciliation – undertake monthly but only required to submit quarterly.	Quarterly
5.	Property Rates Transaction List (for the 3rd month of every quarter).	Quarterly

To assist municipalities in complying with these requirements, the National Treasury will provide follow-up training.

3.6. Prohibition on vending system(s) / third party vending solutions without consulting the National Treasury

Recently there have been several iterations on private service offerings of vending system(s) / solution(s) offered to municipalities. These include service provider(s) funding metering solutions for municipalities parallel to a pre-paid solution (requiring a vending platform) – these service providers then collect on behalf of the municipality in exchange for a fee. However, in several cases, the service provider does not pay over to the municipality what is collected and / or claim a fee that is out of proportion to what is reasonable. This is worsened by many municipalities not weekly / monthly undertaking the appropriate reconciliation of what they provide / sell (also via pre-paid) against what revenue they receive in return from the service provider(s). *As an Example:* Most recently a municipality in Eastern Cape was victim to an arrangement where the service provider offered the municipality R60 million funding but will takeaway almost R540 million at the end of the arrangement causing significant harm to the community and official(s) of that municipality and may leave the municipality worse off than initially.

The MFMA, read together with the recently assented Public Procurement Act, provide a clear framework for procurement in local government. The MFMA regulatory framework in terms of section 116 read with MFMA Circular No. 62 furthermore provide clear guidance on how amendments to contracts should be undertaken. Any offerings beyond the initial scope of the contract, in our view, should not be considered as a contract amendment, but rather a change or extension of scope, which warrants a whole new or separate procurement process.

The National Treasury therefore confirms that with immediate effect, no municipality may enter into and / or extend any related vending system(s) / solution(s) without consulting and obtaining the written input of the National Treasury and the relevant Provincial Treasury. Should any municipal official and / or political office bearer fail to honour this prohibition, she/ he could render themselves personally liable for any related financial loss over and above potential criminal liability for financial misconduct.

In addition, third party vending solutions used by municipalities must align to the integration requirements set out in Annexure B of MFMA Circular No. 80 (08 March 2016). In terms of the requirements, third party solutions must, without (manual) intervention or manipulation, integrate and constantly balance with the core financial system solution. The rules for integration are determined by vendor of the core system solution. Where the core system solution already provides the necessary functionality offered by the third-party vendor and the municipality has already paid for the functionality and / or are paying annual licencing fees to access this functionality, such expenditure will constitute wasteful and fruitless expenditure and should be dealt with accordingly.

The municipality should send any request for the written input of the National Treasury together with the signed and / or proposed contract for such a service offering to: both RevenueManagement@treasury.gov.za and mfma@treasury.gov.za for the attention of Mr. Sadesh Ramjathan, Director: Local Government Budget Analysis: Revenue Section, and Mr. Wayne McComans, Chief Director: MFMA Implementation and parallel to the relevant Provincial Treasury.

3.7. Training Tools by the National Treasury

Revenue Management Assessment Tool

Municipalities must submit the Revenue Management Assessment Tool annually as set-out above. Training was already undertaken across all provinces during the 2024/25 financial year. The National Treasury will facilitate follow-up training during 2025/26 upon request only to municipalities, provincial treasuries and technical advisors deployed to municipalities and provincial treasuries. Municipalities and provincial treasuries can request training via the relevant Provincial Treasury who is responsible to coordinate requests for training. It is noted that any National Treasury deployed technical advisor may directly request training from the National Treasury as may be required. Requests for training and any related queries must be directed to RevenueManagement@treasury.gov.za and Sadesh.ramjathan@treasury.gov.za for the attention of Mr. Sadesh Ramjathan.

Tariff Tool

Municipalities must undertake a tariff assessment in the format of the National Treasury Tariff Tool as explained above. The National Treasury will facilitate follow-up training during the first quarter of the financial year 2025 and thereafter upon request only to municipalities, provincial treasuries and technical advisors deployed to municipalities and provincial treasuries. Training must be scheduled for a **full day** and would be more relevant towards municipal processes if scheduled:

- Before and/ or during the **Adjustments Budget preparation** (for re-allocations);
- Before and/ or during the **Tabled Budget process** (to evaluate tariff changes); or
- Before the **final MTREF submission** to Council for approval.

Municipalities and provincial treasuries can request training via the relevant Provincial Treasury. Any National Treasury deployed technical advisor may directly request training as may be required. Requests for training and any related queries must be directed to RevenueManagement@treasury.gov.za and Sadesh.ramjathan@treasury.gov.za for the attention of Mr. Sadesh Ramjathan.

Municipal Valuation Roll Reconciliation Tool

The National Treasury confirms the guidance already provided in MFMA Circular No. 129 to the effect that municipalities must reconcile valuation rolls monthly and submit such quarterly to the National Treasury together with the related documentation set-out above.

The National Treasury will facilitate follow-up training during the first quarter of the financial year and thereafter upon request only to municipalities, provincial treasuries and technical advisors deployed to municipalities and provincial treasuries on Municipal Valuation Roll Reconciliation Tool. Training must be scheduled for at least **two full days** and can be facilitated at any time since municipalities perform this task monthly. Municipalities and provincial treasuries can request training via the relevant Provincial Treasury. Any National Treasury deployed technical

advisor may directly request training as may be required. Requests for training and any related queries must be directed to RevenueManagement@treasury.gov.za and Sadesh.ramjathan@treasury.gov.za for the attention of Mr. Sadesh Ramjathan.

4. Budget and other management issues:

4.1. 2025/26 Municipal Budget Tabling Timelines

The National Treasury would like to advise the municipalities that late tabling of the 2025 National Budget in Parliament does not really affect the timelines of the preparations/ conclusion of the municipal budget process. The 2025 National Budget was tabled by the Minister of Finance on 12 March 2025 which implies that Provincial Governments have two weeks thereafter to table the 2025 Provincial Budgets in the Provincial Legislatures, i.e. 31 March 2025. This is in line with the PFMA – Treasury Regulations. Municipalities have sufficient time to accommodate the allocations in the DOR Bill in their 2025/26 MTREF Budgets before tabling on 31 March 2025, that is 19 days or two weeks to table the budget before 31 March 2025.

The transfers from provinces to municipalities which are supposed to be included in provincial budgets and gazetted by provinces, should for all practical reasons also be available on the 27 March 2025. Given that municipalities have 10 months to prepare their upcoming budgets prior to tabling it in Council for consideration, National Treasury has previously advised municipalities to use the outer years of the Annual DoRA as projections, add inflation to calculate the third year of the MTREF, when finalising the tabled budget.

For those municipalities where the budgets were already in an advance stage of preparations, they will have between tabling and the adoption stage of the budget (end of May 2025) to include and accommodate all the transfers for both national and provincial governments. This will allow National and Provincial Treasuries to verify and reconcile the transfers with the DoR Bill and provincial Gazettes.

4.2. Management of Water Tankers

There is a growing trend of water challenges in most municipalities in the country which is spiraling out of control. This is a direct threat to municipalities' financial sustainability and could lead to a lack of trading in this key source of municipal revenue.

Most municipalities have tried to procure water tankers to close the gap in areas which are increasingly experiencing sporadic water supply challenges. As a result, the municipalities are not able to trade, leading to less revenue and an unprofitable water business.

It has emerged in the recent Mid-year Budget and Performance Review engagements that contracted water tankers have developed as a business rather than a stop gap measure.

As such, municipalities are encouraged to protect their revenue through avoiding protracted long contracts of water tankers. Where possible the municipality should use its internal water tankers as a temporary measure with a clear intention to restore the service.

If the municipality provides a long-term service, such as water for informal settlements, it is advised that tanks should be purchased and refilled with municipal water tankers. The aim should always be to strike a balance between the provision of service and protecting municipal revenue. Proper checks and balances must be considered as well as internal controls to avoid abuse in this regard and to ensure that in the event that the Office of the Auditor General Africa of South investigates these services, the use of water tankers and water tanks is based on sound business principles.

4.3. Asset Management

According to Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations (Table A9), the municipalities were advised to allocate 60 per cent of the total Capital Expenditure budget to new acquisition while the remaining 40 per cent to renewal and upgrading of the new assets.

Given the current challenges of aging and dilapidated infrastructure faced by the municipalities, which contributes to high level of losses, municipalities are advised **to allocate at least 60 per cent** of the capital expenditure to renewal/ upgrading of the existing assets while 40 per cent should acquire new assets.

The National Treasury realised that year-on-year, municipalities priorities the acquisition of new assets and the existing assets are being neglected to a dilapidated condition. Another factor which causes a factor is lack of maintenance during the lifespan of the assets which National Treasury encourages the municipalities to allocate at least 8 per cent towards repairs and maintenance as outlined in MFMA Circulars No. 55 and 71.

5. Municipal Standard Chart of Accounts (*mSCOA*):

5.1. Go Live on Version 6.9 of the Chart

mSCOA version 6.9 will go live on 24 March 2025, whereafter municipalities will be able to upload their tabled budget (TABB) and tabled project files (PRTA) data strings for the 2025/26 MTREF on the GoMuni portal.

After going live on version 6.9 of the chart, all the reports available on the LGDRS will be aligned to *mSCOA* chart version 6.9. This includes the format of the Section 71 report for Q3 and Q4 of 2024/25 and the adjustments budget for 2024/25.

The Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations (MBRR) Schedules (A to F) and non-financial data string (A1S) was also aligned to version 6.9 of the chart. A **protected** version of the MBRR Schedules for version 6.9 of the chart and A1 Schedule 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 and both strings are required for the data to pull through correctly on the reports available on the LGDRS. 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 integrated financial system solutions and not import or captured it on their system solutions at a later stage. This is necessary to ensure that there is 'one version of the truth', namely the data in the integrated financial system solutions is the same as the report tabled and adopted by Council and the information submitted to the National Treasury and other stakeholders.

5.2. *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

5.3. Submission of virement information

From the 2025/26 MTREF, municipalities will be required to report on their virements through the submission of a separate data string, as well as a report on virements done by the municipality. This submission must be done monthly to the GoMuni Upload Portal and should be generated from the core financial system. The validation rules applicable to the monthly IYM submission will also be applied to the virement data strings.

The attached **Annexure D** provides guidance on the layout and information required on the virement budget report, while **Annexure E** provides the layout of the virement data strings.

This will enable national and provincial treasuries to keep track of the virements done when they do their Section 71 analysis. The virements will be reflected in a separate report and will not form part of the consolidated Section 71(7) reporting to provincial legislatures or the consolidated Section 71 publication issued by the National Treasury. For the consolidated S71 reporting and publication, performance will only be compared to the adopted budget in the first eight months of the year and the adjustments budget in the last four months of the year.

Municipalities must review their virement policy annually and ensure that it aligns with the principles and guidance in MFMA Circulars No 12, 51 and 88 and *mSCOA* Circular No. 8 (29 April 2020). Virements may only be made between existing budget provisions and must be included in an adjustments budget. The Council approved virement policy must be submitted as part of the budget documents on Go Muni. Please note that documents must be submitted individually and not as a batch.

5.4. Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP)

Cabinet has recently approved the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) for 2024 to 2029. The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) will issue the MTDP in due course. These revised priorities, reflecting the new administration's vision, will be integrated into *mSCOA* version 6.10. For *mSCOA* budgeting and reporting in the 2025/26 MTREF, municipalities should continue using the IUDF and MTSF priorities as per *mSCOA* version 6.9.

5.5. Upgrading and procurement of *mSCOA* system solutions and/or functionality

From March 2023, the National Treasury has alerted municipalities that the minimum business processes and system specifications for *mSCOA* will be regulated and that municipalities should exercise extreme caution when changing or upgrading their integrated financial system solutions to avoid procuring system functionality that might not comply with the said regulations. Municipalities are reminded to implement the due diligence processes set out in MFMA Budget Circulars No. 93, 98, 107, 112, 123 and *mSCOA* Circulars No. 5 and 6 **prior** to procuring new or upgrading system functionality to protect them from making incorrect decisions in this regard.

This also applies when 3rd party system functionality is procured that is required to integrate with the core system solution.

Importantly, if an open tender process is not followed (e.g. when Section 33 or 116 of the MFMA and SCM Regulations 36 (deviations) are utilised), **the market must be tested prior to embarking on procurement**. The municipality must be able to substantiate that the product, service or similar offering is not available elsewhere in the market at a cheaper cost and that using these procurement vehicles have significant economic or financial value benefits to the municipality. Where legislation requires that the views of the National Treasury must be sought, the relevant documentation must be emailed to mfma@treasury.gov.za. If the processes required in term of legislative are not followed, a contract might be found invalid by a court of law.

5.6. Issues pertaining to the regulations on the minimum *mSCOA* requirements

National Treasury is currently in the process of developing business processes, standard operating procedures (SOPs) and minimum system specifications to underpin the Regulations of the minimum business processes and system specifications for *mSCOA*.

All the required business processes, procedures and systems functionality pertaining to the Regulations will be made available to municipalities **at no cost** in a format that can be imported, customised and utilised in a process modelling tool of their choice. Municipalities are cautioned against incurring unnecessary expenditure to procure specialised software and tools or appoint service providers to adapt and customize their business processes, especially as the requirements have not been finalised yet.

It must further be emphasized that the documents released for comments on the MFMA Webpage are the sole property of the National Treasury and may only be used for the intended purpose of providing comments on the proposals. **Any company that sells or distributes these documents or parts thereof for any other purposes without the explicit written permission of the National Treasury will be blacklisted on the basis of Intellectual Property Violations (i.e. unauthorized distribution of government documents).**

It should also be noted that the intention of the recent demonstrations on the systems used by municipalities that was conducted by the National Treasury was to determine key implementation gaps as per MFMA Circular No. 80 (dated 08 March 2016). These gaps must be addressed by the respective municipalities in their *mSCOA* municipal road maps. National Treasury shared the observations with system vendors with a view that gaps in system functionality should be further explored and addressed by them. The demonstrations were not on any specific systems in the market but on modules used by a specific municipality to give effect to the requirements of MFMA Circular No 80. **It will therefore be unacceptable and a misrepresentation for any system vendor to claim that their respective system was found compliant by the National Treasury.**

5.7. Special adjustments budget to authorise unauthorised expenditure

In terms of regulation 23(6)(b) of the MBRR, council may authorise unauthorised expenditure in a special adjustments budget tabled in council when the mayor tables the annual report in terms of section 127(2) of the MFMA. This special adjustments budget **may only deal with unauthorised expenditure from the previous financial year which the council is being requested to authorise in terms of section 32(2)(a)(i) of the MFMA**. This process may not be used to condone poor planning, budgeting, or financial management after the adoption of the budget.

Detailed guidance in this regard was provided in MFMA Circular No. 68 (dated 13 October 2021).

Further development work with regard to this matter will be undertaken during 2025 and proper guidance will be provided in subsequent MFMA Budget Circulars. For now, municipality should continue with the current practices until further notice. Under no circumstances should municipalities require their systems vendors to open their financial systems especially where the Auditor General of South Africa have already signed off on their annual audited financial statements.

Municipalities are also reminded of the guidance provided in our email dated 21 August 2024 on the *Submission of the 2023/24 Annual Financial Statements (AFS) – (Pre-Audit Information)* and mSCOA Circular No. 15 (08 July 2024) on the period closures controls for the following periods.

- **Month 12:** The financial year ends in month 12 (as at 30 June of the financial year). Month 12 (4th Quarter section 71 reports) represents the **preliminary outcome** information. The closing balances of month 12 must be programmatically transferred in the core financial system to the opening balances of the new financial year in month 01 of the new reporting period;
- **Period 13** when the AFS are prepared during July and August annually. Period 13 represents the **pre-audit outcome** information (the AFS as submitted to the AG);
- **Period 14** represents the **audit outcome** information (the AFS on which the AGSA has expressed an opinion. Audit approved journals must be processed in period 14; and
- **Period 15** when the adjustments to the AFS following the approval of the adjustments budget to authorise and legalise unauthorised expenditure referred to in Regulation 28(6) of the MBRR is effected.

The AFS submitted to AGSA must reconcile with the pre-audited (PAUD, CRPA and DBPA), audited (AUDA, CRAU, DBAU) and restated (RAUD) data strings submitted to the GoMuni Upload portal and these data strings must be submitted as end-results and NOT movements when submitting the mSCOA data strings. Importantly, any transactions that were processed as part of the preparation and auditing of the AFS after year-end (month 12) in period 13, 14 and 15 must be reflected in the corresponding month of the new financial year by using net movements. The net movements will result in either an increase or decrease in the new financial year in the corresponding month of month 01 to 03 of the current financial year. E.g. changes in period 13 must be reflected in month 02 or 03 of the new financial year. A similar process is applicable when restatements of previous financial year figures occur and when material errors are identified which impacts on the previous years' AFS and must be corrected in period 15.

With regards to year-end information, the aim is to collect three sets of information (preliminary, pre-audited and audited). This ensures that the latest outcome information is always available to inform planning and budget decision making process for national, provincial and local government.

6. Submitting documents to the GoMuni Upload Portal:

6.1. Submission of additional reports

In addition to the virement policies that must be uploaded to GoMuni Upload portal from 01 July 2025, the following changes pertaining to document submissions to the GoMuni Upload portal must be noted:

Uploading of Section 41 Reports on prices and payments for bulk resources

From the 2025/26 MTREF, the Department of Water and Sanitation, Eskom, and Water Boards will be required to upload their monthly Section 41 reports on the GoMuni Upload portal to enhance transparency and oversight. This will replace the current email submission process. Training on the upload procedure will be provided to all relevant stakeholders to ensure a smooth transition.

Municipal Procurement Plans

MFMA Circulars No. 62 (dated 20 August 2012) and 94 (dated 08 March 2019) requested for the submission of annual municipal procurement plans. From the 2025/26 MTREF, municipalities will be required to upload their annual procurements plans in PDF format on the GoMuni Upload portal. These plans should encompass comprehensive information on planned procurements, estimated costs, and the proposed procurement strategies. Both draft and final procurement plans should be submitted with the annual tabled and adopted budget documentation.

Revenue related and debt relief documentation

All municipalities are required to annually upload the Revenue Management related documents as per the Document Submission Checklist attached as **Annexure C** to the GoMuni Upload Portal. These documents must be submitted in the specified format and within the timeframes indicated. Also note that items 15 and 17 in **Annexure C** are only relevant to Municipal (Eskom) Debt Relief participants and item 19 to both Municipal (Eskom) and Water Debt Relief participants. In relation to items 15, 17 and 19, all other municipalities must submit a “Not Applicable” form to prevent these items reflecting as outstanding.

6.2. Submission and sign-off of key tabling dates

In the past, the National Treasury requested information on an annual basis from municipalities on the actual tabling dates of legislated processes such as the various budget processes, AFS and Annual Report. This information was submitted through an excel spreadsheet. From 01 July 2025, municipalities will be required to enter the legislative tabling dates directly on the GoMuni portal, replacing the manual spreadsheet process.

Additionally, the Accounting Officer of each municipality will be required to sign-off on the accuracy of the captured dates on the LGDRS.

Further guidance on the submission and sign-off procedures will be provided in due course.

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 Buffalo City	Matjatji Mashoeshoe Pitso Zwane Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5553/ 0609242914 012-315 5171 012-315 5807/0661198036	Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za

Free State	Cethekile Moshane	012-315 5079	Cethekile.moshane@treasury.gov.za
Gauteng	Matlatji Mashoeshoe	012-315 5553	Matlatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za
City of Tshwane and City of Johannesburg	Pitso Zwane	012-315 7538	Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za
	Willem Voigt	012-315 5830	WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za
City of Ekurhuleni	Makgabo Mabotja	012-315 5156	Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za
	Kgomotso Baloyi	012-315 5866/082 887 2968	Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za
	Lunathi Dumani		Lunathi.dumani@treasury.gov.za
KwaZulu-Natal	Kgomotso Baloyi	012-315 5866	Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za
	Lunathi Dumani		Lunathi.dumani@treasury.gov.za
eThekweni	Kevin Bell	012-315 5725	Kevin.Bell@treasury.gov.za
uMhlathuze	Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5952/060 923 7343	Sifiso.mabaso@treasury.gov.za
	Matlatji Mashoeshoe	012-315 5553/060 326 6885	Matlatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za
	Pitso Zwane	012 315 7538	Pitso.Zwane@Treasury.gov.za
Limpopo	Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5952/060 923 7343	Sifiso.Mabaso@treasury.gov.za
	Jabulile Ngwenya		Jabulile.ngwenya@treasury.gov.za
Mpumalanga	Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5807	Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za
Northern Cape	Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5807	Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za
North West	Willem Voigt	012-315 5830	WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za
	Makgabo Mabotja	012-315 5156	Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za
Mafikeng	Khanyisile Khosa		khanyisile.khosa@treasury.gov.za
	Cethekile Moshane	012-315 5079	Cethekile.moshane@treasury.gov.za
Western Cape	Willem Voigt	012-315 5830	WillemCordes.Voigt@treasury.gov.za
	Khanyisile Khoza	012-315 5385	khanyisile.khosa@treasury.gov.za
	Kgomotso Baloyi	012-315 5866/082 887 2968	Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za
Cape Town	Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5952/ 060 923 7343	Sifiso.Mabaso@treasury.gov.za
George			
Technical issues on GoMuni	Data management		lqdataqueries@treasury.gov.za
Local government Conditional Grants			Sello.mashaba@treasury.gov.za Pretty.mavhungu@treasury.gov.za Marvin.ngobeni@treasury.gov.za Akanyang.modise@treasury.gov.za Sandra.adams@treasury.gov.za

Contact



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JH Hattingh

Chief Director: Local Government Budget Analysis

19 March 2025