



2017 PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW

Together towards a new beginning

Social Grants Crisis | State Capture | Motion of No Confidence

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INTRODUCTION BY JOHN STEENHUISEN

It is with great pleasure that I present a review of the parliamentary activities of the Democratic Alliance for 2017. As we have done in the past, we table this document with the purpose of accounting to the people of South Africa on what we have done as the Official Opposition during the course of the last year. Without a shadow of doubt, this year was dominated by President Zuma and his many acolytes who broke the law and violated the Constitution to capture our state institutions for their own nefarious purposes. Despite this, the Democratic Alliance has again emerged as the peoples' champion in Parliament; ensuring that the Executive is held to account, the rule of law is upheld and that the corrupt are criminally prosecuted.

The Democratic Alliance has remained at the forefront of curbing the ANC's concerted efforts to abuse their power and shield the rampant abuse of state resources without consequence. This is evidenced through our efforts during the Motion of No Confidence, which unequivocally revealed the deep divisions in the ANC, as well as our members' tireless work during the parliamentary enquiry into State Capture.

We will continue to ensure that government remains responsive and accountable to the needs of the people, as we have done through our determined work in Parliament to resolve the social grants crisis. The Democratic Alliance is serious about executing its constitutional duties without fear or favour and our activities in Parliament in 2017 is a testament to that.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Steenhuisen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

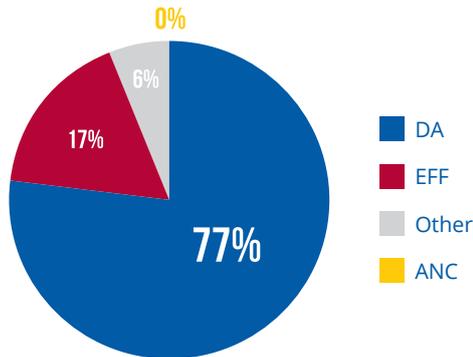
John Steenhuisen
Chief Whip of the Official Opposition

PARLIAMENTARY MECHANISMS – DOING IT RIGHT

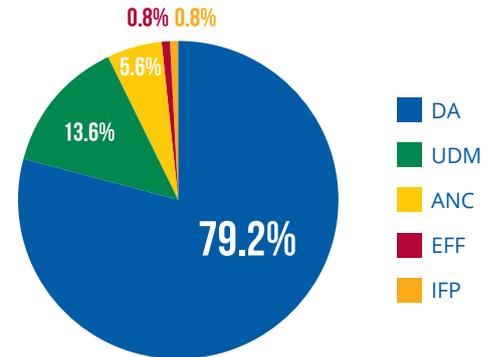
Parliament has many mechanisms which allow public representatives to exercise oversight of the Executive, and the DA remains at the forefront of utilising these important tools. Through committee work, questions and motions, the DA Caucus has brought national and local issues affecting millions of South Africans before Parliament for consideration and resolution. No party has done more or achieved more using these mechanisms.

Parliamentary questions

In 2017, the DA asked 2,955 (77%) of the 3,839 Written Questions in the National Assembly. In comparison, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) submitted 641 questions (17%) and the ANC submitted none (0%). In the National Council of Provinces, the DA accounted for 79.2% of all Written Questions, followed by the ANC (5.6%) and the EFF (0.8%).



Number of Questions Asked (National Assembly)
Up to November 2017



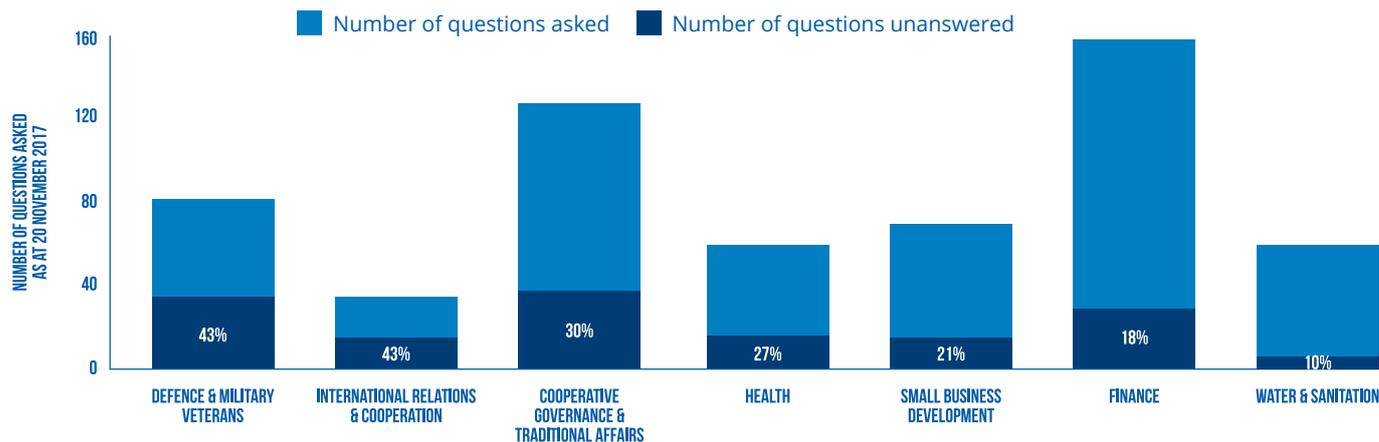
Number of Questions Asked (National Council of Provinces)
Up to November 2017

Beyond the numbers, the effective use of Written and Oral Questions allowed the DA to reveal a number of things previously hidden or unknown to the public, including that:

- the ANC government is withholding the transfer of 1.4 million hectares of land, worth R8.6 billion to its rightful owners;
- there are 38,000 vacancies in the public healthcare system;
- less than 1% of warrants for domestic abuse led to arrests with the police failing to carry out 223,306 warrants;
- more than 11,000 police officers have no gun licenses and 2,500 police firearms have either been lost or stolen;
- the government spent nearly R42 million on luxury vehicles for ministers and their deputies;
- R48 million has been budgeted to acquire six additional Ministerial Houses this year alone;
- Shabir Shaik is still “terminally ill”, eight years after he was released on medical parole; and
- 94% of Zuma’s Cabinet claim to have “never met” with Guptas, despite evidence to the contrary.

Despite a legislative imperative to do so, not all Written Questions are answered.

WORST OFFENDING DEPARTMENTS WITH HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF UNANSWERED QUESTIONS



Motions and Draft Resolutions

The DA has been at the forefront of driving issues affecting South Africans in Parliament this year through the considered use of motions and draft resolutions.

In 2017, we called for debates of urgent matters of national public importance on four occasions. These included debates on:

- the threat to the distribution of social grants due to the shambolic institutionalisation of grants payment;
- the scourge of violence against women and children;
- the crisis at South African Airways (SAA); and
- the Heher Commission's report into funding of higher education

We also tabled five draft resolutions calling for:

- the establishment of an ad hoc committee to investigate the SASSA crisis;
- the establishment of an ad hoc committee to investigate State Capture;
- the dissolution of the National Assembly, in terms of section 50(1) of the Constitution;
- the portfolio committees on Defence, Police and International Relations to investigate #GraceMugabeGate; and
- the removal of the Deputy Speaker on the National Assembly

The DA tabled nearly 70 subjects for discussion in 2017, calling for debates on crucial matters related to the economy, unemployment, social grants, State Capture, education and crime. Some of those were debated in the House in terms of the party rotation system included 'government's failure to improve the lives of young South Africans with regards to employment, education and training' and 'the scourge of murders affecting all South Africans on a daily basis'.

Crucially, the DA moved a Motion of No Confidence in President Jacob Zuma, in terms of section 102 of the Constitution, which, on 8 August, was narrowly defeated with 177 voted for and 198 against.

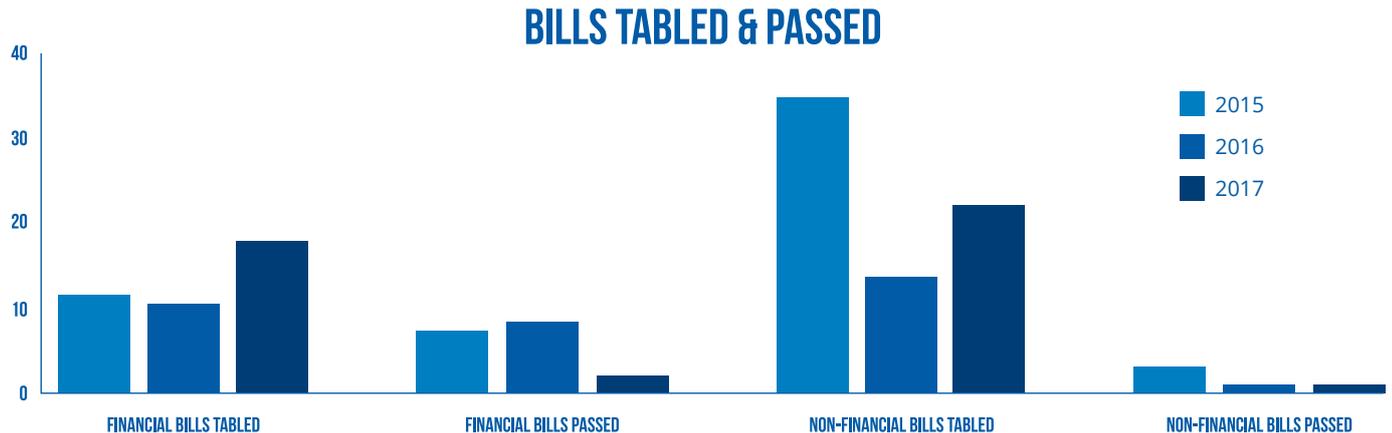


LEGISLATION – PASSING THE BILL

As a primary role of Parliament, the introduction and processing of new and amended legislation ought to dominate the legislative programme. However, in a year dominated by ANC infighting, self-generated crises, and endless revelations of State Capture, the business of making laws has once again fallen to the wayside.

In 2017, a total of 28 bills were introduced of which 21 were substantive bills not related to the Fiscal Framework. While nine bills were promulgated as acts of Parliament in the course of 2017, six of these were tabled in previous years and another two were procedural 'financial' bills, leaving only the Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill. This appalling turnover rate continues the recent trend of the ANC's MPs doing the bare minimum in attending to their legislative responsibilities.

While the number of bills brought to the Legislature by government has at least increased from 2016, it is clear that there is no intention to deal with the proposals with any kind of urgency.





RESPONDING TO CRISES

South Africa was beset with unprecedented crises in 2017. Nearly all of these were self-generated by an ANC-led government at war with itself, headed by a compromised president, and aided and abetted by those obsessed with succeeding him.

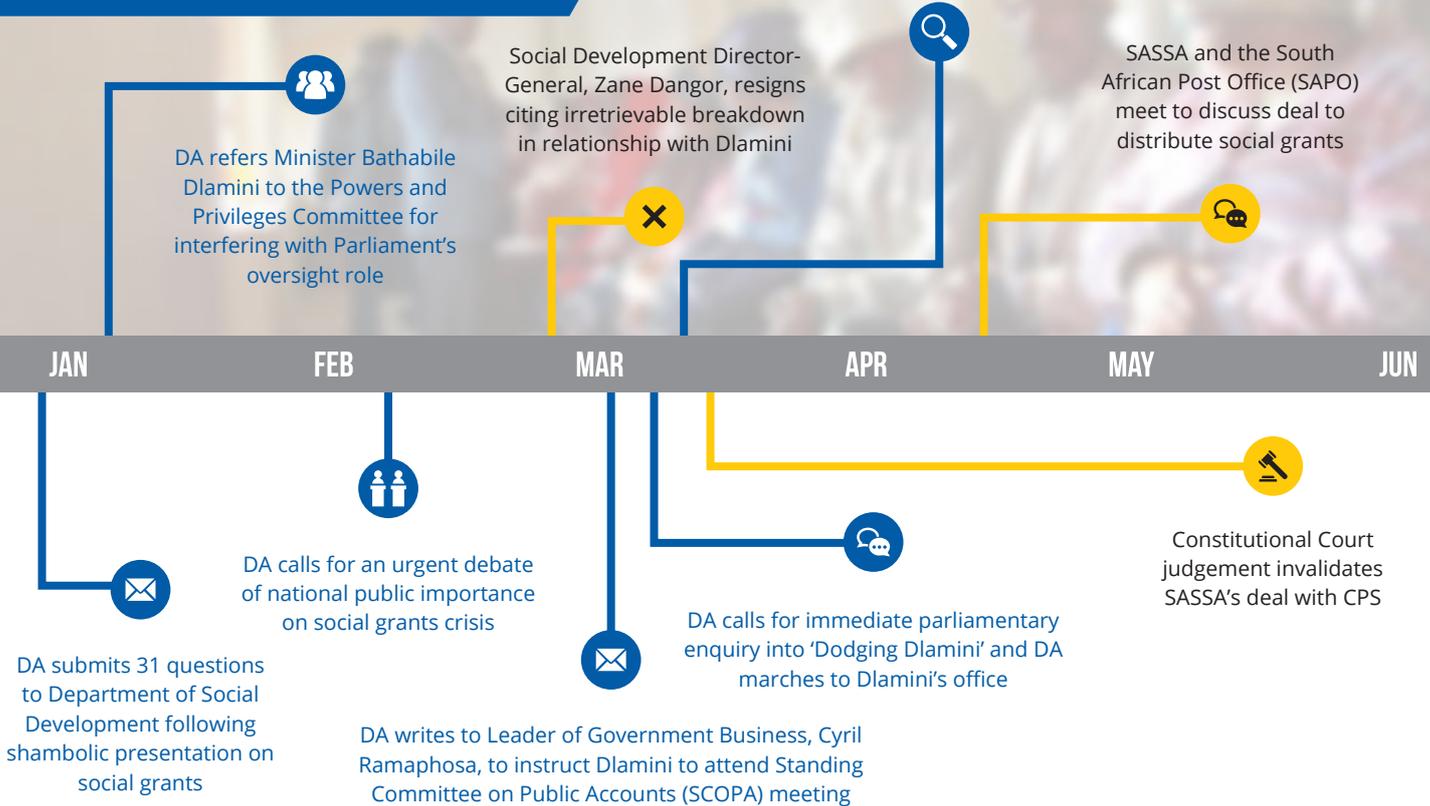
The year 2017 will seemingly be bookended by the social grants crisis – in March, Minister Bathabile Dlamini brought SASSA to the brink of collapse as she played Russian roulette with 17 million vulnerable South Africans' only source of income. In the same month, President Jacob Zuma dumped the country into crisis when he reshuffled his Cabinet, removing Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan and his deputy in 20 changes which sent the markets crashing and prompted rating agencies to downgrade South Africa's sovereign credit rating to junk. In May, the Gupta Leaks laid bare the sheer scope and scale of State Capture, revealing the rot at the heart of government and, specifically, the complicity of the president himself, soon to face the eighth Motion of No Confidence of his ruinous presidency. All the while, the ANC in Parliament never missed an opportunity to endorse and underwrite Zuma's presidency as the increasingly ugly race to succeed him started to impact the work of the Legislature with proxy battles waged in the committees and corridors of Parliament.

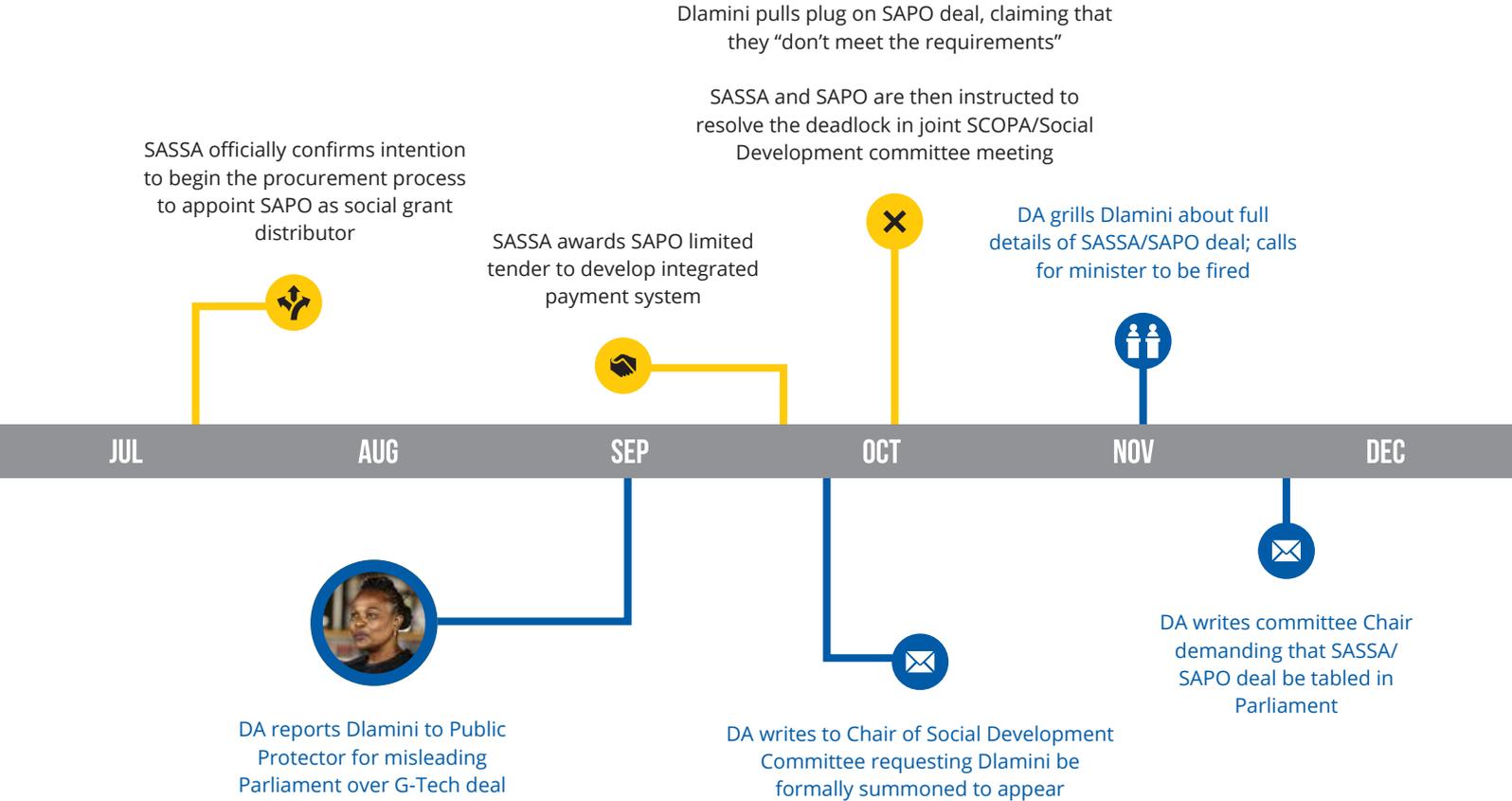
Once again, the DA took up the fight on behalf of the people of South Africa and forced Government to confront and deal with the many crises confronting it. Using the country's apex institution, Parliament, we have held the Executive to account and found solutions.

The DA has remained unwavering in its commitment to making Parliament work. We will continue to resist efforts to side-line the Legislature, by those who resent and reject accountability. We will continue to stand up for our Constitutional democracy and for the people of South Africa.

SOCIAL GRANTS CRISIS

DA requests Public Protector investigate Dlamini's relationship with Cash Paymaster Services (CPS); PP launches probe on 19 March





Dlamini pulls plug on SAPO deal, claiming that they "don't meet the requirements"

SASSA and SAPO are then instructed to resolve the deadlock in joint SCOPA/Social Development committee meeting

SASSA officially confirms intention to begin the procurement process to appoint SAPO as social grant distributor

SASSA awards SAPO limited tender to develop integrated payment system

DA grills Dlamini about full details of SASSA/SAPO deal; calls for minister to be fired

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

DA reports Dlamini to Public Protector for misleading Parliament over G-Tech deal

DA writes to Chair of Social Development Committee requesting Dlamini be formally summoned to appear

DA writes committee Chair demanding that SASSA/SAPO deal be tabled in Parliament

STATE CAPTURE

JAN



Finance Minister, Pravin Gordhan, rubbishes claims by Gupta-owned Oakbay over collusion with banks' decision to close accounts

FEB



Affidavits by Ajay Gupta and Duduzane Zuma dispute bribery claims by Deputy Finance Minister, Mcebisi Jonas

MAR



Gordhan and Jonas fired in President Zuma's "Midnight Reshuffle"; Gigaba appointed to head Treasury

Armoured vehicle spotted at Guptas' family compound in Saxonwold

DA lay charges against Guptas, Jacob and Duduzane Zuma, Ashu Chawla, Nazeem Howa, Matshela Koko, ministers Zwane, Gigaba, Muthambi and Van Rooyen

NA House Chairperson Cedric Frolick cherry-picks four committees to probe State Capture; excludes Finance and Energy

Sunday Times reports #GuptaLeaks e-mails containing damning details of State Capture

Gupta family receive R70 million VAT refund payment from SARS

APR

MAY

JUN



Portfolio Committee on Public Enterprises agree to enquiry into corporate governance at ESKOM



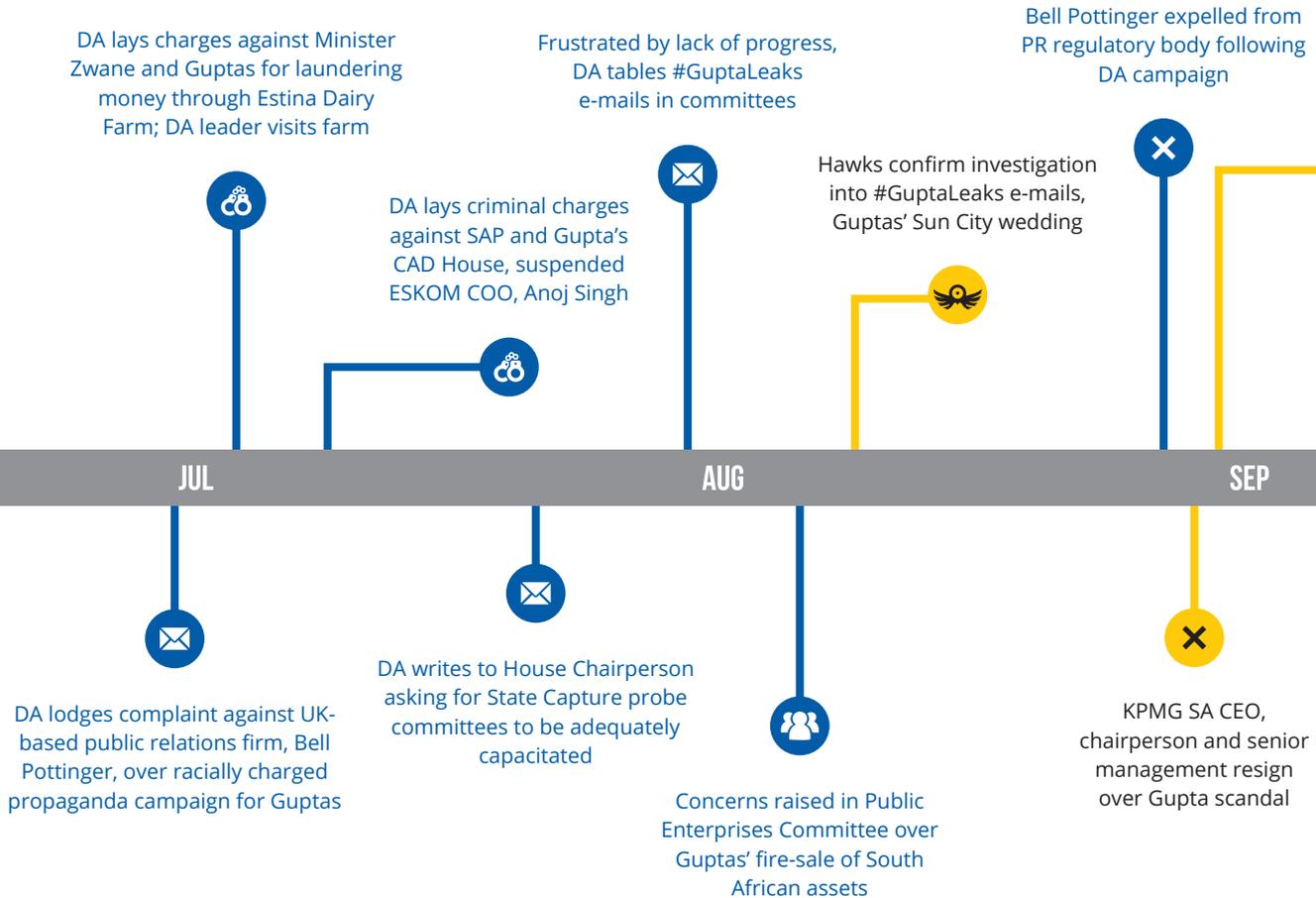
DA moves motion calling for establishment of ad hoc committee to investigate State Capture



Opposition parties unite in support of State Capture ad hoc committee; ANC blocks proposal



PC on Public Enterprises agree terms of reference for enquiry into ESKOM and Gupta links



ANC MP Makhosi Khoza quits party, slams colleagues for inaction



Mmusi Maimane asks Jacob Zuma about alleged salary payments by Roy Moodley in the NA; Zuma denies



Former ESKOM Chairperson, Zola Tsotsi, testifies before Parliament about meeting Tony Gupta and Salem Essa at Minister Brown's home

ESKOM probe in PC on Public Enterprises kicks off in earnest

HSBC close Guptas' bank accounts, launch review

DA marches to Guptas' Saxonwold compound

OCT

NOV

DEC

SAICA launches investigation into KPMG's work for Guptas

FBI and UK financial watchdog launch Gupta probes

PC for Trade and Industry agree terms of reference for enquiry into Transnet's China South Rail locomotive deal

DA to report Guptas' Bank of Baroda accounts to Indian Reserve Bank

MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

MAY

JUN



Jacob Zuma's "Midnight Reshuffle" sees Gordhan axed, Gigaba appointed among 20 changes



DA submits Motion of No Confidence in President Zuma



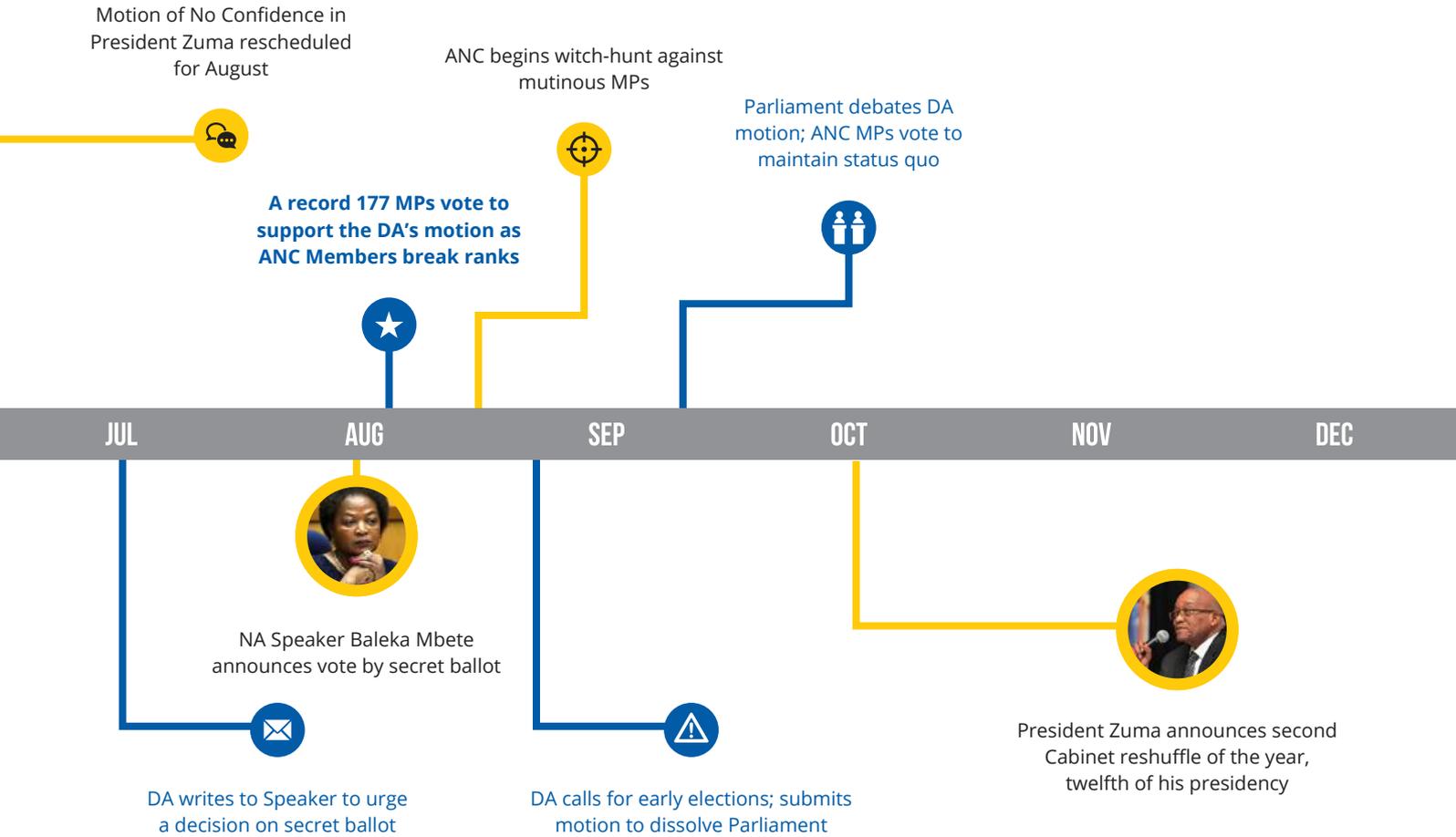
DA motion scheduled for 18 April



DA requests NA Speaker to postpone MoNC for Constitutional Court to consider secret ballot



Constitutional Court judgement grants Opposition request for secret ballot





FINAL VERDICT

In 2017, whatever veneer of legitimacy still surrounded the ANC-led government fast faded amid chronic mismanagement of the state and an avalanche of corruption scandals. Meanwhile, President Zuma no longer even feigned legitimacy and, when visiting Parliament, hid behind the ANC's majority. On 16 November, when responding to DA questioning in the NCOP, Zuma stated simply:

"If you want to know these questions you must win elections and have a government so that you can get to know [sic]."

The President clearly does not feel obliged to account to Parliament, as the Constitution instructs, and believes electoral success has bequeathed him with unchecked power. He has no regard for the Legislature or the Constitution.

This same sense of arrogance and exceptionalism now pervades the ANC as a whole. Indeed, the parliamentary year will be remembered for the ANC Caucus' deliberate and dogged defence of the President. Presented with one opportunity after another to do the right thing, they never hesitated to do the exact opposite in their unwavering loyalty and allegiance to Zuma.

The DA, however, is fully committed to the Constitution and to using Parliament to advance the interests of the people of South Africa. Through the efforts of the DA in Parliament, the corruption of the ANC-led government has been laid bare and the self-created crises of this tainted administration have been tackled head on.

The 2017 parliamentary year will be remembered for many things – including the stellar work done by the Ad Hoc Committee on the SABC Board Inquiry, the Portfolio Committee on Social Development and SCOPA's handling of the social grants crisis, and the Portfolio Committee on Public Enterprises' ESKOM Enquiry. In 2018, the DA in Parliament will carry on the good work with renewed vigour and dedication as we forge a new beginning.



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