

Steinhoff report has little substance, Hawks claim

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The head of the Hawks's commercial crime unit has slammed a report submitted by Steinhoff management as lacking in substance and "malicious".



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The damning indictment by Maj-Gen Alfred Khana was made during a presentation to a joint hearing on the troubled global retailing group held by four parliamentary committees on Wednesday.

The Hawks are investigating three matters relating to Steinhoff which Khana said would ultimately involve fraud and misrepresentation which had led to the loss of billions of rand for investors. But Khana said there was no inkling of a suspect yet as there was nothing pointing to anybody. Complainants who had laid charges had done so based on media reports.

The committees have decided to summons former Steinhoff CEO Markus Jooste to the next hearing on Steinhoff, which will probably take place in August, because of his failure to appear when previously invited.

Former chief financial officer Ben la Grange will be given 10 days to respond positively to an invitation or else he too will be

issued with a summons.

Referring to the statements by Khana, finance committee chairman Yunus Carrim said it was "worrying" that Steinhoff management appeared to have cynically submitted a report to the Hawks on the eve of their appearance before the committees in January.

Steinhoff management did not report a criminal case to the Hawks, as appeared to be the case at the time, but merely submitted a section 34 report under the Prevention of Organised Crime Act.

Steinhoff's legal representative, Rob Driman of Werksmans, said the report to the Hawks had not been cynical.

Source: Business Day

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