

Jacob Zuma's appeal against journalist Karyn Maughan and advocate Billy Downer dismissed

The Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA) has dismissed with costs an application by Jacob Zuma against journalist Karyn Maughan and advocate Billy Downer in his private prosecution of the pair. The judgement was handed down electronically on Friday 13 October.



Source: © 123rf [123rf](#) Jacob Zuma's appeal against journalist Karyn Maughan and advocate Billy Downer has been dismissed with costs by the Supreme Court of Appeal

“The appeal is dismissed with costs, including those of two counsel, to be paid on the attorney and client scale,” read the judgement.

The case by Zuma stemmed from a private prosecution in the Pietermaritzburg high court, against Downer and Maughan. On 5 September 2022, Zuma contended that Downer contravened provisions of the National Prosecuting Act when he supposedly “leaked” a document to Maughan containing his private medical information. The medical information was contained in a letter from a military doctor, submitted in August 2021 in support of an application for a postponement in Zuma’s Arms Deal trial.

Downer is a lead prosecutor for the National Prosecuting Authority and has worked on cases against Zuma, including the prosecution of Schabir Shaik, who was convicted of corruption in 2005.

Maughan, a legal journalist at News24, has been reporting on the various allegations against Zuma including criminal investigations, criminal indictments and numerous legal challenges and proceedings for several years.

Downer and Maughan applied separately to the high court to have the private prosecution set aside as an abuse of process of the court.

On 7 June 2023, the Pietermaritzburg High Court, in a judgment running to 63 pages, set aside the criminal summons against Maughan and Downer. The court ordered Zuma to pay costs on a punitive scale.

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