

# NIMASA: Uncertainty over Usoro's job

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**T**HERE were indications on Monday that the Federal Government may have sacked the Director-General of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, Mrs. Mfon Usoro.

According to unconfirmed reports, the Executive Director, Finance, Administration and Corporate Services, Dr. Adegboyega Dosunmu, is to take over the affairs of the agency.

The reports said the director-general, who was last week quizzed by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, was sacked over allegations of financial impropriety.

Officials of the agency who pleaded not to be quoted said the sack of

Usoro would be a set back to the agency.

There were also concerns from some workers that the planned improvement in staff welfare might be jeopardised.

Efforts to get the spokesperson of NIMASA, Ego Nwokocho, to comment proved abortive.

The anti-graft watchdog arrested Usoro over allegations of misuse of funds. She was accused of purchasing a search-and-rescue helicopter for NIMASA at a cost of N2.2bn, without due process; launching 2,000 copies of a book for N45m and depositing of \$20m in a bank without approval, among others.

She had insisted that all the transactions, except the book launch, were carried out before she assumed office on August 1 last year and that the book launch was done with orders from her employer.

Usoro's ordeal may not be unconnected with the recommendations of a committee earlier set up on the orders of President Olusegun Obasanjo to investigate the loss of large sums of money in NIMASA.

The committee, headed by H.B. Oyedepo, a Director in the Ministry of Transport, had recommended that "a seasoned administrator from within NIMASA,

who is well-versed in the knowledge and workings of the public service, should be appointed to be at the helm of affairs.

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