

magazine

4/2026

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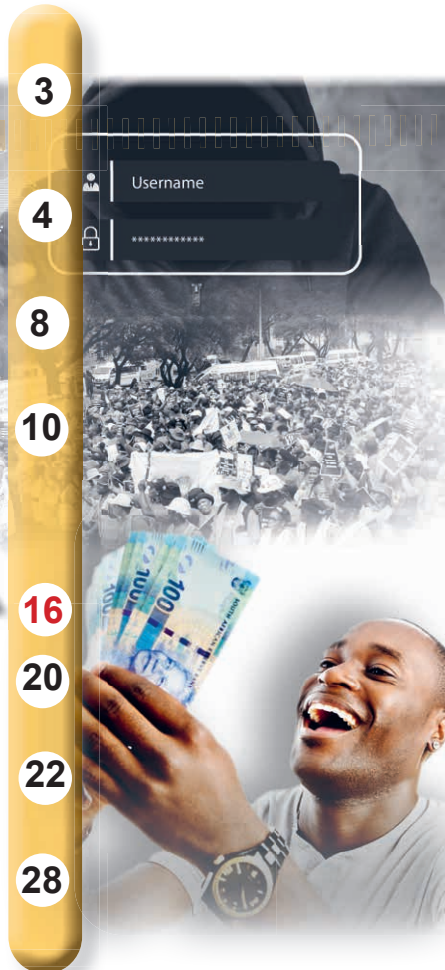
VISION

Be the leading politically non-aligned, professional trade union
of choice, in the public sector and globally.

MISSION

Ensure the sustainability of the PSA through dynamic stakeholder
management to protect the rights and to promote the interest of
members. The following values guide our conduct aimed at achieving
the PSA's mission:

**Loyalty, transparency, respect,
ethical conduct, consistency,
and service excellence**



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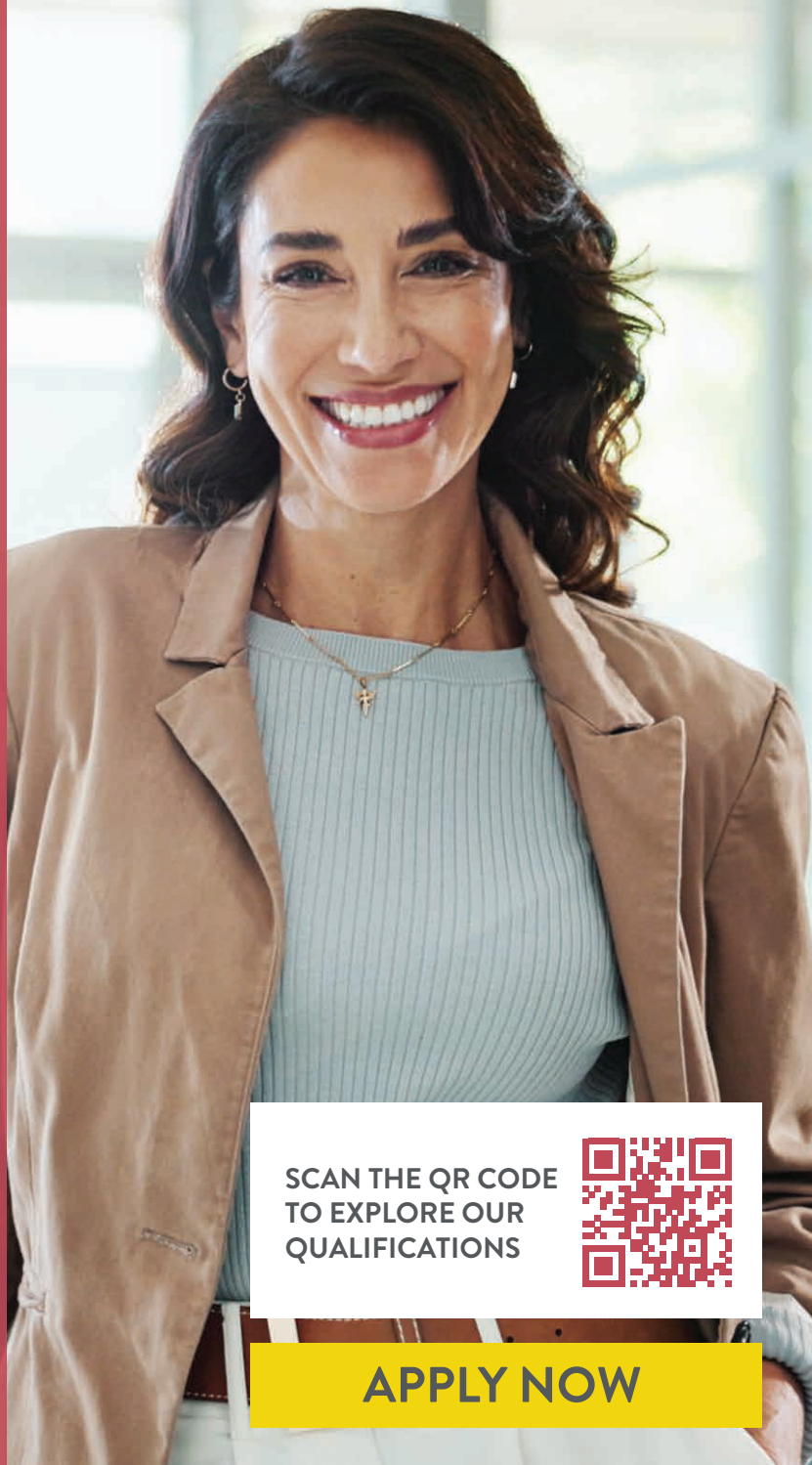
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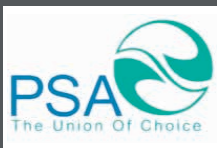


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editorial

PSA standing firm:

Protecting legacy and strengthening future



Every organisation encounters defining moments that test its systems, structures, character, purpose, and resolve. For the PSA, 2026 has been one of those periods. The Union faced unprecedented challenges that demanded resilience, principled leadership, and unity.

The notice issued by the Registrar of Labour Relations regarding the PSA's organisational structure created uncertainty and opportunistic detractors questioned the Union's future. Through every challenge the truth remained unchanged: The PSA is a registered, legitimate, and trusted Union that continues to serve the interests of public-sector employees with distinction.

The administrative transition required to separate the Union from its non-profit company is a significant organisational change. Structural change should, however, not come at the expense of institutional identity. Whilst implementing the necessary reforms, the PSA will not lose the very qualities that have distinguished the organisation for 106 years. There are those who believe that the solution to every challenge is to imitate others. The PSA rejects that notion. The PSA will never adopt the operational models of organisations that have failed their members and will not abandon a governance model that has stood the test of time to follow trends or satisfy those who mistake noise for leadership. Strength is not found in militancy or in confrontation without purpose. True strength lies in credibility, professionalism, consistency, and the confidence of members who know that their Union of Choice will consistently act with integrity.

Periods of organisational change inevitably create vulnerabilities with opportunity for those seeking to infiltrate, divide, or redirect in the interest of personal or political agendas rather than the interests of members. The PSA recognises that there are those who would seek to exploit uncertainty and promote division. Members are, however, assured that the PSA will not be hijacked or weakened. The PSA's strength has never rested in personalities. The PSA is directed by a governance model carefully designed over generations. It is no coincidence that the Union continues to thrive whilst others have perished.

The PSA operates through a robust three-tier structure comprising a professional administration, democratically elected branches, and accountable office-bearers serving through the Board and National Executive Committee. These pillars provide the balance, oversight, accountability, and continuity. This structure reflects the PSA's belief that lasting organisations are built through sound governance rather than impulsive decision-making. It protects the Union from instability, ensures accountability at every level, and keeps the interests of members at the centre of every decision.

The Union's values remain the foundation upon which decisions are made. Loyalty has ensured that the PSA's commitment has always been to members rather than political interests. Transparency has guided governance and financial stewardship. Respect continues to define how the PSA engages with members, employers, and stakeholders. Ethical conduct remains

non-negotiable. Consistency has enabled the PSA to remain dependable through changing governments, evolving labour environments, and economic uncertainty. Service excellence continues to distinguish the PSA as a Union that delivers tangible value through professional representation, legal services, collective bargaining, workplace advocacy, and member support.

These principles have directed the PSA during challenges and positioned the Union for continued growth. As a result, the challenges intended to cast doubt on the PSA have produced the opposite effect. Since the Registrar's notice became public, the PSA has experienced unprecedented visibility across the public sector. Employees who previously knew little about the Union have come to understand its history, governance, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to public servants. New sectors and previously untapped organisations have approached the PSA seeking representation, recognising that stability and credibility matter more than empty promises. At the same time, the Union continues to achieve meaningful successes for members. Collective bargaining continues, legal victories protect employees' rights, membership continues to grow, communication platforms expand reach, and the Union's advocacy on matters affecting public servants remains influential. These achievements were accomplished by remaining true to principles.

Moments of uncertainty, unfortunately provide fertile ground for misinformation. False and malicious claims that the PSA had been deregistered or ceased to exist as a legitimate trade union were deliberately circulated by opposition groups and people pursuing their own interests. These narratives were designed to create fear, confusion, and instability amongst members. The facts remain: The PSA remains lawfully registered, operational, and continues to represent members across the public service. No campaign built on misinformation will erase more than a century of service, nor diminish the confidence that members have placed in the Union over generations.

Moving towards 2027, the mission is clear - the PSA must remain sustainable for future generations of public servants. The PSA will continue to deploy every lawful, strategic, and organisational mechanism available to safeguard the Union's future. The PSA will adapt where necessary, modernise where beneficial, and reform where required, but will never compromise the values, governance, and identity that have contributed to the legacy of the Union of Choice. This legacy cannot be erased by rumours, weakened by misinformation, or undone by selfish ambition. The PSA's focus is now solidly on 2030 and 110 years in service of public-sector employees!

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL SECRETARY



In service of public-sector employees



Username

Public Investment Corporation

CRISIS and Madlanga Commission:

WAKE-UP CALL for South Africa

Every act of fraud leaves victims. Sometimes these are pensioners whose retirement savings are placed at risk. Sometimes these are public servants who work under increasingly strained conditions because resources were diverted. Sometimes an entire nation's confidence in public institutions is erased.

International Fraud Awareness Week is commemorated between 15 and 21 November and serves as a reminder that fraud, corruption, political interference, and governance failures continue to threaten South Africa's democracy and economy. Whilst billions of rands are lost to corruption each year, the true cost must be measured in broken trust, weakened institutions, delayed service delivery, and diminished public confidence.

Recent developments at the Public Investment Corporation (PIC), the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency, and the ongoing work of the Madlanga Commission demonstrate that the battle against corruption is far from over. The PIC, entrusted with managing trillions of rand on behalf of the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) and other public-sector investors, once again found itself under intense scrutiny following the suspension of senior executives, governance disputes, and the resignation of the entire Board. Whilst these resignations should not be interpreted as an admission of wrongdoing, they exposed an institution battling instability at a time when public servants expect certainty that their retirement savings are protected.

The PSA has consistently argued that governance structures must be allowed to fulfil their statutory responsibilities without political or commercial interference. Accountability must prevail and due process must be respected. It requires transparent governance, independent oversight, and the full implementation of reforms recommended by the Mpati Commission. Lessons from the PIC extend far beyond one institution.

In Mpumalanga, allegations of corruption amounting to some R380 million linked to "ghost tenders" at the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA) is another disturbing example of how governance failures continue to threaten public administration. Investigations by the Special Investigating Unit and the Hawks uncovered evidence of manipulated procurement processes, gross maladministration, and unlawful tender approvals. A forensic report recommended that criminal charges be instituted against implicated officials.

Against this backdrop, the PSA has expressed deep concern over reports that the suspended former Chief Executive Officer could be considered for another senior government position whilst no visible action has been taken against officials implicated in the scandal. Such developments send a dangerous message that accountability can be delayed or avoided, undermining public confidence in government's commitment to combating corruption.

Every rand lost through fraud and corruption is a rand diverted from hospitals, schools, roads, policing, environmental conservation, and economic development. It is communities that bear the cost through deteriorating services, lost employment opportunities, and declining confidence in public institutions.

The broader challenge confronting South Africa is therefore not simply exposing corruption but ensuring that institutions have the independence and courage to act decisively once wrongdoing is uncovered. This is why the work of the Madlanga Commission is significant.

The Commission was established to investigate allegations of criminality, corruption, political interference, and institutional capture in South Africa's criminal justice system. Its mandate goes beyond identifying individual misconduct. It seeks to expose systemic weaknesses that allow corruption to flourish and to recommend reforms capable of restoring integrity across the justice sector. The extension of the Commission's mandate until November 2026 acknowledges the complexity of its work and the importance of ensuring that no avenue of investigation remains unexplored.

The PSA welcomed the extension, recognising that thorough investigations are essential if South Africa is to rebuild public confidence in institutions responsible for upholding the rule of law. Taken together, governance challenges at the PIC, corruption allegations at the MTPA, and the Madlanga Commission's investigations reveal that corruption is rarely an isolated event. It flourishes where governance is weak, oversight is compromised, procurement controls fail, and political or commercial interests are allowed to override accountability.

The PIC is not an ordinary investment institution. It is the custodian of the retirement savings of millions of public servants through the GEPIF and manages investments worth trillions of rands on behalf of clients. Every governance failure, every conflict of interest, and every questionable decision carries far-reaching consequences. For the PSA, the situation reinforced the critical message that institutions entrusted with safeguarding public wealth must be allowed to function independently, transparently, without interference. The PSA has consistently maintained that accountability must never be sacrificed for expediency. Allegations of misconduct must be investigated thoroughly, fairly, and objectively, whilst governance structures must be allowed to discharge their statutory responsibilities without intimidation or undue influence. Calls for premature intervention or attempts to politicise governance processes undermine public confidence in institutions responsible for protecting billions of rand belonging to public servants.

The situation further raises uncomfortable questions that South Africa cannot afford to ignore. Why do governance crises continue to emerge in strategic public institutions? Have the lessons of previous commissions of inquiry translated into lasting institutional reform? And, most importantly, are sufficient safeguards in place to prevent history from repeating itself? These are the questions that underscore the importance of commissions of inquiry. The recent extension of the Madlanga Commission's term until November 2026 acknowledges that exposing entrenched corruption and institutional capture requires careful examination of evidence, meaningful engagement with stakeholders, and recommendations capable of delivering lasting reform. Its work is significant because corruption rarely exists in isolation. Weak governance in one institution often enables failures in another. Political interference, compromised oversight, intimidation of honest officials, conflicts of interest, and the erosion of accountability create an environment where fraud can thrive. The lessons extend directly to institutions such as the PIC.

South Africa previously witnessed failures in governance's devastating consequences for public finances. The findings of the Mpati Commission exposed weaknesses in governance, investment oversight, conflicts of interest, and Board accountability in the PIC. Many of its recommendations were intended to strengthen transparency, improve fiduciary oversight, depoliticise appointments, and reinforce ethical leadership.

The recurrence of governance instability inevitably raises questions about whether those reforms were fully implemented and whether sufficient safeguards exist to protect public servants' retirement savings from future risk.

Protecting members' pensions is non-negotiable for the PSA. Public servants contribute throughout their working lives with the expectation that their retirement savings will be managed prudently, ethically, and exclusively in their best interests. They deserve institutions led by people of integrity, appointed on merit, and held accountable through strong governance frameworks rather than political patronage. The battle against fraud cannot begin only when scandals emerge. It begins with ethical leadership, transparent procurement, effective internal controls, independent oversight, protected whistle-blowers, and institutions that are free from political and commercial interference. It requires leaders who are willing to act decisively when governance failures arise, regardless of who may be implicated.

International Fraud Awareness Week therefore serves as more than a reminder of past failures – it is a call to strengthen institutions that protect democracy, public finances, and the livelihoods of millions of South Africans.

The PSA is steadfast in advocating for accountable governance, transparent leadership, and robust oversight at public institutions. The PSA will continue to monitor developments at the PIC, whilst supporting efforts such as those of the Madlanga Commission that seek to expose corruption, strengthen institutions, and restore public trust.

Fraud flourishes where accountability is absent. South Africa's future depends on exposing corruption and building institutions that make corruption impossible. The real measure of success will not be the number of commissions established, but whether their findings result in stronger governance, lasting reform, and institutions worthy of public trust.

Source

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Women's Month 2026 *Rights. Justice. Action.* **Empowered Women = Empowered Nations**

A nation is shaped by the strength of its women as progress is measured by the laws a nation enacts and the opportunities its women are given to succeed. A society cannot truly prosper whilst a major portion of its population face barriers to equality, safety, and economic participation.

Women's Month, commemorated in August, was a reminder that building a stronger South Africa requires more than recognition - it demands meaningful action to ensure that every woman can live, work, and lead with dignity, confidence, and purpose. Women's Month was a call to action and an opportunity to recognise how far South Africa has come whilst confronting realities that deny many women freedom, dignity, and opportunities. Empowering women is a moral imperative essential for building a stronger, prosperous, and just nation. As South Africa marked the 69th anniversary of the historic Women's March to the Union Buildings, the more than 20 000 courageous women who stood together on 9 August 1956 in defiance of injustice are honoured. Their message echoed beyond the steps of the Union Buildings. They proved that when women unite with purpose, they become an unstoppable force for change.

The 2026 Women's Month theme, "*Building Resilient Economies for All*," recognised that sustainable economic growth and social progress cannot be achieved without the full participation, leadership, and empowerment of women. It challenged every sector to create opportunities that enable women to participate lead, influence, and transform.

For the PSA, this commitment extends beyond Women's Month. It is embedded in the Union's daily work in protecting workers' rights, advocating for fair labour practices, promoting equal opportunities, and creating workplaces where women can succeed without fear of discrimination or prejudice. The PSA proudly represents thousands of women who dedicate their lives to serving the country. They care for the sick, educate future generations, administer justice, maintain public safety, provide critical government services, and ensure that communities continue to function. Their resilience, professionalism, and compassion are the foundation of an effective public service. Yet, many women carry burdens that extend beyond the workplace.

South Africa continues to grapple with the devastating scourge of gender-based violence and femicide - a crisis that robs women of their safety, dignity, and fundamental human rights.

Every woman deserves to live free from fear, whether at home, in the workplace, or in the community. The battle against gender-based violence cannot be left to government or law enforcement alone. It requires collective action by employers, organised labour, communities, families, and every South African. Silence enables violence, action changes lives. The PSA is committed to advocating for safe workplaces, supporting members whose rights have been violated, and promoting respect, equality, and dignity for women. Rights, justice, and action are inseparable. Rights without protection are meaningless and justice without accountability is incomplete. Action without commitment cannot create lasting change.

Women deserve workplaces free from harassment and discrimination, equal opportunities to lead, equal pay for equal work, and the confidence that their voices matter. Empowerment is built through opportunity, mentorship, education, representation, and unwavering support. It means creating pathways for women to grow into leadership positions, to develop professionally, to influence decision-making, and to realise their ambitions without limitations imposed by gender. Every achievement by a woman creates opportunities for another. Every barrier broken becomes a doorway for future generations. Every woman who is empowered strengthens her family, uplifts her community, inspires young girls, and contributes to a more resilient economy. Empowered women empower the nation.

The PSA celebrated the Union's female members during a Women's Day event on 9 August 2026 in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal. This celebration of achievement recognised the extraordinary women who serve the public and a reaffirmation of the PSA's commitment to supporting their growth. Through advocacy, representation, leadership development, and collective bargaining, the PSA continues to stand beside women as they pursue their goals, overcome obstacles, and shape the future of public service.

The PSA will continue to pursue workplaces where women are respected and an economy where women prosper. The PSA will continue to oppose gender-based violence, inequality, and every injustice that seeks to diminish the worth of women. Because when women rise, families flourish, communities become stronger. Public service becomes more resilient, and nations become more prosperous.

Source
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In service of public-sector employees



Modernising Labour Court without weakening union representation

By **Dr Geoffrey Esitang**: PSA Assistant General Manager – Members' Rights and Litigation

Court Online promises speed and efficiency, but it must not make justice harder for workers and their unions. A worker's day in the Labour Court should not depend on whether the union representative can navigate a digital platform.

Court Online has the potential to make labour litigation faster, cleaner, and more efficient, but it also raises an uncomfortable question: If access to the Court begins with registration, uploading, electronic enrolment, and platform permissions, will union representation remain as effective as the law intends? Through its *Court Online* directives, the Labour Court has begun shifting labour litigation from paper-based processes to electronic initiation, filing, enrolment, and case management. For unions, the central concern is whether this digital shift will open the doors of justice wider or quietly create new technical barriers for members.

The *Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 (LRA)*, as amended, recognises the important role of unions in representing members. In particular, section 200 allows unions to act on behalf of members, whilst section 161 recognises representation before the Labour Court. These rights must remain meaningful when the Court's directives require parties to interact with digital systems before their disputes can move forward. This means that union officials should not be treated as lesser participants in Labour Court litigation.

Where a union official is properly mandated to represent a member, the *Court Online* process should recognise that official with the same practical status as a legal practitioner for purposes of registration, filing, access to case information, uploading of documents, communication with the Registrar, and participation in hearings. Anything less would dilute the statutory right to union representation and risk creating a two-tier system of access to the Labour Court.

Digital shift

Court Online is intended to support electronic filing and digital case management. Directives have introduced this shift in phases, beginning with urgent applications and moving towards broader electronic management of Labour Court matters. In practice, the directives affect how parties register, issue proceedings, upload documents, deal with enrolment, communicate with the Registrar, and access case information. These changes can save time and travel costs, improve access to records, and make case management more efficient. However, labour justice is not only about speed. It is also about fairness, accessibility, and the ability of workers to be represented effectively by their unions.

Risk for unions and members

The danger is that the directive-driven digital process may be experienced differently by legal practitioners, individual workers, and union officials. Requirements such as correct registration, electronic initiation, uploading, service, return dates, court orders, taxation, applications for leave to appeal, and communication with the Registrar can become obstacles if these are unclear or inaccessible. More importantly, if *Court Online* gives legal practitioners fuller or easier functional access than union officials, the platform may indirectly undermine the equality of representation contemplated by the *LRA*.



Review matters add another layer because arbitration records from the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) or bargaining councils must also be handled electronically. If any step required by the directives is missed or misunderstood, a dispute may be delayed or procedurally compromised before the merits are even heard.

The overlap between *Court Online* and *Caselines* also requires careful attention. Where presentation bundles, uploaded records or matters already managed on another platform are involved, union representatives may have to understand more than one digital system whilst still complying with Labour Court rules, directives, and strict timeframes. The availability of tutorials, registration guidance, and helpdesk support is useful, but support alone cannot cure a process that is too technical for those who must use it daily.

Opportunity

- Faster filing and communication
- Reduced travel and administrative delays
- Better access to records and case information
- Improved case management where systems are user-friendly
- Major cost saving for unions and other users

What must be done?

- Allow direct and practical registration for union representatives under the *Court Online* process.
- Recognise properly mandated union officials as having equal practical status to legal practitioners for registration, filing, access to case information, platform permissions, and participation in Labour Court processes.

- Publish simple, union-friendly guidance on the directive requirements, including initiation, uploading, service, set-downs, and return dates.
- Provide dedicated support for unions and unrepresented litigants, including helpdesk assistance that is responsive during urgent matters.
- Ensure that review records from the CCMA and bargaining councils can be uploaded without unnecessary technical obstacles.
- Clarify when *Court Online* and *Caselines* must each be used for parties not to be prejudiced by platform confusion.
- Maintain hybrid or assisted filing options where digital access is limited.
- Ensure that digital rules and directives promote access to justice rather than technical exclusion.

Digitalisation should strengthen, not weaken, collective access to justice. Because the Labour Court directives now form part of how *Court Online* operates in practice, their impact must be assessed through the lived realities of workers, unions, unrepresented litigants, and legal practitioners alike. The Labour Court should therefore ensure that properly mandated union officials enjoy equal practical recognition with legal practitioners when using *Court Online* and appearing in Labour Court processes.

The test is not whether the system is modern, but whether ordinary workers and their unions can still use it effectively when their rights are at stake.

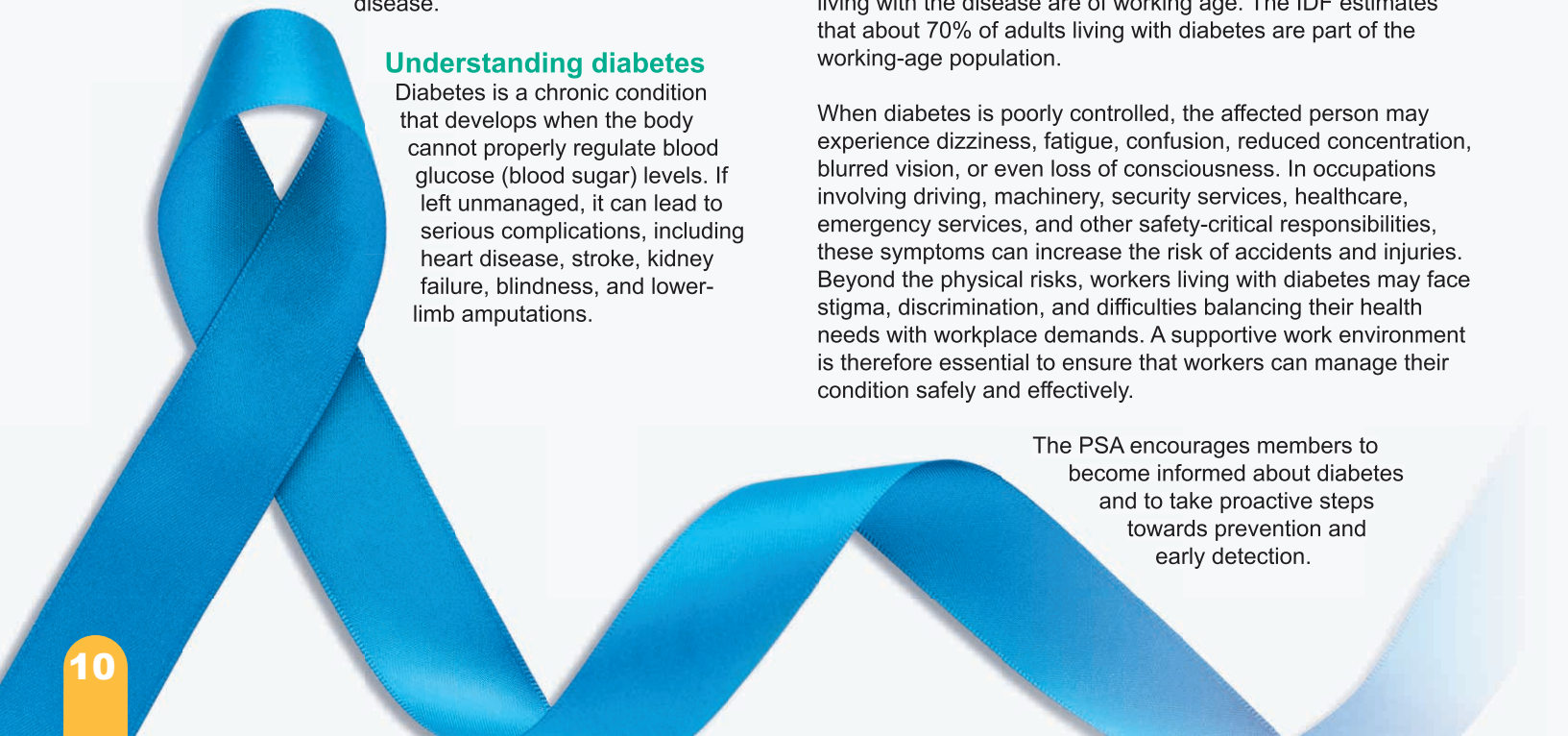


Best way to manage diabetes = PREVENTION

On 14 November, World Diabetes Day is observed as part of a global awareness campaign aimed at improving understanding of diabetes, promoting prevention, and supporting people living with the disease.

For the PSA, this day serves as an important reminder that diabetes is not only a health issue but also a workplace issue that affects the wellbeing, safety, and productivity of workers.

Diabetes is one of the fastest-growing chronic diseases globally. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the number of people living with diabetes increased from 200 million in 1990 to 830 million in 2022. Today, approximately one in every nine adults worldwide lives with diabetes, whilst hundreds of millions more are at risk of developing the disease.



Understanding diabetes

Diabetes is a chronic condition that develops when the body cannot properly regulate blood glucose (blood sugar) levels. If left unmanaged, it can lead to serious complications, including heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, blindness, and lower-limb amputations.

The most common form is Type-2 diabetes, which is often linked to lifestyle factors such as unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, excess body weight, and family history. Worryingly, many people remain undiagnosed until complications set in. According to the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), millions of people are living with diabetes without knowing it. Therefore, it is important to be on the lookout for common warning signs, which include:

- Excessive thirst
- Frequent urination
- Constant fatigue
- Blurred vision
- Increased hunger
- Unexplained weight loss

Why diabetes matters in the workplace

Diabetes directly affects the workplace because many people living with the disease are of working age. The IDF estimates that about 70% of adults living with diabetes are part of the working-age population.

When diabetes is poorly controlled, the affected person may experience dizziness, fatigue, confusion, reduced concentration, blurred vision, or even loss of consciousness. In occupations involving driving, machinery, security services, healthcare, emergency services, and other safety-critical responsibilities, these symptoms can increase the risk of accidents and injuries. Beyond the physical risks, workers living with diabetes may face stigma, discrimination, and difficulties balancing their health needs with workplace demands. A supportive work environment is therefore essential to ensure that workers can manage their condition safely and effectively.

The PSA encourages members to become informed about diabetes and to take proactive steps towards prevention and early detection.

Regular health screenings can identify diabetes before serious complications occur, offering a better chance of managing the condition successfully.

The PSA also calls on employers to support employees living with diabetes by:

- Promoting workplace wellness programmes
- Encouraging regular health-screening initiatives
- Allowing reasonable time for medical appointments
- Supporting workers who need to monitor blood-glucose levels or take medication during working hours.
- Raising awareness to reduce stigma and discrimination in the workplace.

Prevention and management

Whilst Type-1 diabetes cannot currently be prevented, many cases of Type-2 diabetes can be delayed or prevented through healthy lifestyle choices. The WHO recommends:

- Eating a balanced and nutritious diet.
- Engaging in regular physical activity.
- Maintaining a healthy weight.
- Avoiding tobacco use.
- Attending regular health check-ups and screenings.

For everyone living with diabetes, effective management includes taking prescribed medication, monitoring blood-sugar levels, following medical advice, exercising regularly, and attending routine screenings for complications affecting the eyes, kidneys, heart, and nerves.

The PSA urges members to learn more about the signs of diabetes, know the risk factors, and encourage colleagues, friends, and family members to undergo regular health screenings.

Increased awareness, early diagnosis, and supportive workplaces can significantly reduce the impact of diabetes on workers and their families.

Cooperation will create healthier workplaces, protect workers from preventable complications, and ensure that no employee is disadvantaged because of a chronic



The PSA provides **PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE** cover for health-sector members of R1 million per member per year (at no additional cost as part of the PSA membership fee) covers members in various occupational groups.



Scan QR code for more information

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PSA
The Union Of Choice

Source

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/diabetes>

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/diabetes>

<https://worlddiabetesday.org>

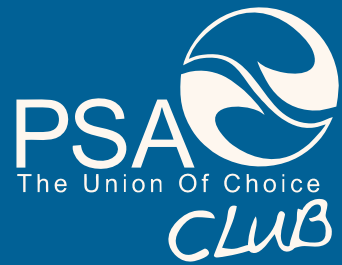
<https://idf.org/news-and-resources/resources/diabetes-in-the-workplace>

<https://idf.org/what-we-do/diabetes-awareness-activities>



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Access your PSACLUB benefits today!



HOW TO LOG IN:

First-time user?

Enter your Loyalty Number as both your Username and Password, then select "Submit."

You'll find your Loyalty Number in your welcome SMS or email.

Secure your account

Update your password after logging in to keep your account safe.

Can't find your Loyalty Number?

Scroll down and enter your ID Number. Your login details will automatically populate in the fields.

Mobile app login screen showing fields for Username, Password, and ID No. Includes a "Submit" button and a "Forgot Password" link. A note for first-time users states: "First Time Users: Use your loyalty no. as both username & password. Remember to update your password under Profile to keep your account secure. Problems?"

Welcome SMS Example:

Welcome to PSACLUB

#8800000057 use it as login and password.

Go to www.psacclub.mobi
info 0860 021 076

PSACLUB MISSIONS OVERVIEW

Dive into PSACLUB Missions and start completing fun, easy tasks that unlock rewards as you go. All you need to do is jump into the Shop Menu, tap on PSACLUB Missions, and you're good to go!

Mission 1: Let us compare and advise you on your existing funeral policies. If we can't beat your current monthly fees, you'll earn a **R50 Checkers Voucher**.

Mission 2: Are you a mover and shaker? Get 20 people to take up any PSA Members Funeral Policy and you'll be rewarded to the sound of a **R500 Checkers Liquor or Grocery Voucher**.

Mission 3: Make your dream holiday a reality, lay-buy your holiday with PSACLUB and M-Travel for 6 or 12 months. One lucky winner will have **one month of their lay-buy installment covered!**

Mobile app missions board showing three missions: Mission 1: Pay less on your funeral insurance, Mission 2: Policy dash, and Mission 3: Take a break! Includes a note: "By participating in the PSAClub missions, you accept our Terms and Conditions."

SIGN UP DIGITALLY FOR A PSA MEMBERS FUNERAL PLAN

Sign up for your **PSA Members Funeral Plan** quickly and easily on the PSACLUB App!

Go to Shop → PSA Products → Funeral Insurance to view available plans, then select **Sign up now**.

Complete your details and we'll be in touch to confirm your cover. That's it!

Mobile app sign-up screen for the PSA Members Funeral Plan. It displays a table of plan options and a "Sign up NOW" button. Below the table is a form to complete details for sign-up.

Cover / Ages	R10 000	R20 000	R30 000	R50 000	R75 000
18 - 64 Years	R22	R44	R70	R125	R165
65 - 74 Years	R90	R147	-	-	-
75 - 84 Years	R235	-	-	-	-

Sign up NOW

Complete the form below to sign up for the a PSA Member Funeral Plan

Agent Details: (For office use only)

Name & Surname:
Agent Code:

1. Personal Details:

Title:
Full Name:
Surname:
ID No.
Date of Birth: yyyy/mm/dd
Preferred Name:
Maiden Name:
Preferred Language:
Cell No.



Teachers' Day 2026

Quiet architects of society

On 5 October every year, the world pauses to celebrate teachers, the quiet architects of society who shape what children know and who they become.

A great teacher does far more than explain a lesson or mark an examination paper. A great teacher creates magic. They awaken curiosity, spark imagination, and ignite a lifelong yearning to understand the world beyond the classroom walls. Some of the most treasured memories begin with a teacher who believed in us before we believed in ourselves. They introduced stories that transported us across continents, equations that revealed hidden patterns, scientific discoveries that expanded our understanding of life, and historical events that connected us to generations before us. They taught us to ask questions, to challenge assumptions, to dream bigger, and to see possibility where others saw limitation.

The true magic of teaching lies in transformation. Every day, teachers take young minds filled with questions, uncertainty, and potential and help shape them into thinkers, leaders, creators, innovators, and compassionate citizens. They do this not through grand gestures, but through thousands of ordinary acts of patience, encouragement, preparation, and perseverance. The lesson repeated one more time, the extra hour spent preparing, the comforting word offered to a struggling learner, and the unwavering belief that every child has potential - these are the moments that change lives.

In South Africa, teachers carry an especially profound responsibility. They educate future doctors, nurses, engineers, public servants, entrepreneurs, artists, scientists, and community leaders. They often do so in classrooms that are overcrowded, under-resourced, and burdened by the social realities that many learners bring with them. Yet they continue to teach, encourage, and inspire. Teaching is not merely a profession - it is a vocation that demands resilience, creativity, empathy, and courage. It requires educators to remain hopeful when circumstances are difficult, to keep planting seeds of knowledge when they may never witness the full harvest of their labour. Every learner who discovers a passion for reading, every young person who decides to pursue higher education, every future leader who chooses integrity over corruption carries within them the influence of a teacher who once opened a door to a wider world.

To every educator who has faced long hours, administrative pressures, curriculum changes, limited resources, and the emotional weight of caring for young people, the PSA says: Your work matters. The impact of your dedication cannot be measured only in test scores or annual reports. It is measured in confidence restored, dreams awakened, opportunities created, and futures transformed. The PSA is committed to standing alongside educators through every challenge and triumph. The PSA will continue to defend educators' rights, protect their working conditions, advocate for fair remuneration, and ensure that their voice is heard in every forum where the future of education is shaped.

Educators' perseverance strengthens the nation. Their commitment to teaching strengthens generations. To all teachers across South Africa, thank you for creating magic in classrooms. Thank you for helping learners discover not only the world, but also themselves. Continue to persevere, continue to inspire, and continue to believe that the seeds you plant today will grow into the forests of tomorrow.

Source

<https://www.unesco.org/en/days/teachers>

<https://www.iicba.unesco.org/en/celebrations-world-teachers-days>

<https://www.ilo.org>

<https://www.unesco.org>

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/education-day>



Labour Appeal Court

affirms compensation for unfair prolonged suspension

By **Wandile Mphahlele** - PSA Coordinating Manager:
Rights and Litigation

The Labour Appeal Court (LAC) recently reaffirmed the principle that employees subjected to unfair labour practices may be entitled to compensation even where they suffer no financial loss.

In *Thembanani Banda v General Public Service Sector Bargaining Council and Others* (Case No A2025-092122, 15 April 2026), the Court held that an arbitrator had wrongly refused to award compensation after finding that an employee's prolonged precautionary suspension was unfair. Ms Thembanani Banda, employed as Chief of Staff in the Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation, was placed on precautionary suspension in February 2022 pending an investigation into allegations of misconduct.

The suspension was governed by the *Senior Management Service Handbook*, which requires that a disciplinary hearing be held within 60 days of a precautionary suspension. Although the Department initially interpreted the 60-day period as calendar days, it later relied on a disciplinary chairperson's ruling that the period referred to working days. As a result, Ms Banda's suspension was extended well beyond the prescribed period and ultimately lasted approximately eight months. She challenged the continued suspension as an unfair labour practice.

The arbitrator found that the Department had acted unfairly by extending the suspension beyond the period permitted by the *SMS Handbook* and ordered that the suspension be uplifted. However, compensation was refused on the basis that Ms Banda had continued to receive her full salary and that the Department had acted on incorrect legal advice rather than out of malice. The Labour Court dismissed Ms Banda's review application, finding that the arbitrator's decision fell within the range of reasonable outcomes.

On appeal, however, the LAC reached a different conclusion. The Court emphasised that compensation for an unfair labour practice is not limited to financial loss. Relying on established authority, the Court reiterated that compensation may serve as a *solatium* for the infringement of an employee's rights and may also have a deterrent effect.

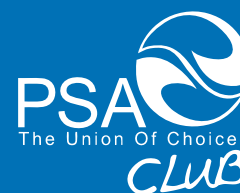
The Court found that the arbitrator had focused exclusively on factors favourable to the employer whilst ignoring unchallenged evidence that the prolonged suspension had caused Ms Banda emotional distress, required psychological treatment, affected her family, and deprived her of career opportunities.

According to the Court, the arbitrator misdirected himself by failing to consider the prejudice suffered by Ms Banda and by treating the absence of financial loss as decisive. This resulted in an unreasonable exercise of discretion. The Labour Court therefore erred in refusing to interfere with the arbitration award.

On appeal, the LAC held that the arbitrator had fundamentally misconstrued the distinction between patrimonial damages and *solatium*. It emphasised that *solatium* is not dependent on actual financial loss but is intended to compensate an employee for the distress suffered as a result of an unfair suspension. In this case, there was evidence demonstrating the adverse impact of the suspension on the employee's psychological stability. The LAC further found that the Labour Court erred by failing to recognise that the arbitrator had not properly applied his mind to the question of what constituted just and equitable compensation in the circumstances. Consequently, the LAC awarded compensation equivalent to one month's salary.



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labour of your invoice

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for services

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voucher to the cashier to claim discount.**

PSA member recruitment: How **YOU** benefit!

A strong Union, growing union, supported by member recruitment efforts, provides significant benefits for individual members and the collective group of members.

A solid and growing membership base strengthens the union's collective bargaining power, allowing it to negotiate better wages and improved working conditions. It further strengthens worker representation in workplace disputes, promotes labour rights advocacy, ensures safer work environments, and educates employees about their rights. The union empowers workers with a collective voice to address concerns, influence policies, and drive positive change in their workplaces.

The PSA is such a strong and growing Union of Choice of more than 250 000 public-sector employees and retired employees, thanks also to members' continued efforts! *The PSA rewards registered members who successfully recruit new members for the Union with an honorarium.*

To qualify, the recruiter must submit the fully completed membership application form of the new member, ensuring that the recruiter's details are also fully completed on the form. Once the PSA collects the first membership fee from the new member's employer, the recruiter will receive an honorarium equal to the current PSA monthly membership fee of R119 (minus 25% tax).

All PSA members are encouraged to recruit* as many members as possible for the Union of Choice and reap the rewards for these efforts!

****Membership application form provided on page 18 of this magazine (also available at www.psa.co.za)***



PSA Holiday Resort



Nestled in a lush indigenous dune forest at **Queenera Mouth** east of the Gonubie River and in close proximity to the beach, you will find the **PSA HOLIDAY RESORT**. Just 18 km from East London, the Resort is committed to offering relaxation and tranquility. **The Resort has ten fully-equipped chalets** most with a sea view (choice of two or three bedrooms) and **110 semi-shaded stands for caravans and camping**. The Resort has a hall that can host weddings, birthday celebrations, church groups, and baby showers. The terrain is suitable for outdoor activities such as team building and has a stunning swimming pool.

For bookings contact: 082 880 8949 / 043 065 0320 or visit www.psaresort.co.za





VERY GOOD REASONS

WHY THE PSA SHOULD BE YOUR LABOUR HOME

The PSA, a registered trade union, is the largest politically non-affiliated, fully representative Union in the Public Service and State-Owned Entities, with a proud history of more than 106 years of service to members. The PSA...

1. **Is a growing Union** with 250 000+ members served by Provincial Offices across South Africa.
2. **Attends to members' individual disputes FREE** of charge.
3. **Negotiates fair terms of remuneration** and represents members' interests in bargaining structures.
4. **Protects members' service benefits** (including medical aid, pension schemes, and housing subsidies).
5. **Addresses issues** such as fair and reasonable working conditions, hours of work, and leave.
6. **Is the only Union in the Public Service that serves Public Service pensioners.**
7. **Is financially stable** (complies with the *Labour Relations Act* and other prescripts).
8. **Assists beneficiaries and communities throughout South Africa as part of the Union's corporate social investment programs.**
9. **Protects members' rights** and defends them in unfair labour practices or infringements of constitutional rights and legislation (*Labour Relations Act, 1996, Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997, and Employment Equity Act, 1998*). Disputes are resolved at the CCMA, Labour Court, and Labour Appeal Court. In the Public Service, the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC), Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), Safety and Security Sectoral Bargaining Council (SSSBC), Public Health and Social Development Sectoral Bargaining Council (PHSDSBC), and General Public Service Sectoral Bargaining Council (GPSSBC) provide dispute resolution functions. With the promotion of interests, rights are also established with collective agreements - non-compliance with such rights is being taken care of by these institutions.
10. **Employs professional, dedicated and competent staff** to support member structures in service of members.
11. **Promotes members' interests** during collective bargaining in bargaining forums with employers.
12. **Is admitted to the various bargaining councils**, which enables the Union to resolve workplace problems in these councils, saving cost and time.
13. **Acts only on members' mandate** (mandates on collective issues are obtained from member structures).
14. **Has country-wide, extensive member structures** (national and sectoral) that are the link between the Union and members. These structures mirror the structures for collective bargaining and ensure the protection and promotion of members' rights and interests. Structures are active in all provinces to promote the organisation of members, obtain mandates and improve communication. For information on your PSA representative and structure, contact your local PSA Provincial Office.
15. **Has an impressive success rate in resolving cases** by the Union's full-time staff and thousands of democratically elected, trained shop stewards.
16. **Offers fringe benefits to members, including FREE membership of PSACLUB!** Other benefits include an exclusive PSA short-term insurance scheme, insurance benefits, funeral schemes, and assistance with debt and personal loans.
17. **Provides FREE financial assistance with funeral costs at a member's death.**
18. **Provides FREE professional indemnity insurance cover** for identified groupings of members (R1 million, per member, per year with no limitation in the aggregate).
19. **Holiday Resort** offers holiday accommodation at discounted rates.
20. **Magazine and workplace-specific newsletters** are issued to members **FREE** of charge - Update your contact details with the PSA's Membership Section (updateinfo@psa.co.za) to ensure that you receive all news.

The PSA effectively represents the full spectrum of the South African population and lives by the values of **LOYALTY, TRANSPARENCY, RESPECT, ETHICAL CONDUCT, CONSISTENCY, and SERVICE EXCELLENCE!**

www.psa.co.za | ask@psa.co.za | 0861 452 452



PSA membership application

Public Servants Association of South Africa

Reg No LR 2/6/2/1409



*COMPULSORY FIELDS

PERSONAL INFORMATION

DEPARTMENT / EMPLOYER*			
TITLE (DR, MR, MRS, MS)*		PERSAL / SALARY NUMBER*	
SURNAME*		INITIALS	
FIRST NAMES*			
IDENTITY NUMBER*		DATE OF BIRTH	DD MM YYYY
CELL PHONE*		TELEPHONE	FAX
EMAIL ADDRESS			

METHOD OF PAYMENT* STOP ORDER (SALARY DEDUCTION) ☐ DEBIT ORDER (BANK DEDUCTION) ☐
(Indicate choice with X) (Noting that the Agency Fee will also be payable in this instance)

MEMBER'S BANKING DETAILS (only if debit-order payment option is chosen)

BANK NAME		BRANCH CODE	
ACCOUNT NO		ACCOUNT TYPE	
ACCOUNT HOLDER			

CONSENT

I hereby **explicitly consent** to the processing of my personal information by the PSA for the **specific purposes** indicated below (Please tick (✓) purposes for which you consent OR (X) for which you do not give consent):

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Marketing and promotions (PSA and all Business Partners) | ☐ |
| 2. Discount and special offers (PSA and all its Business Partners) | ☐ |
| 3. Research activities (PSA and all its Business Partners) | ☐ |

I confirm and understand that: (1) I have been informed of the purpose of processing; (2) The processing is voluntary, and I may withdraw consent at any time by contacting the Information Officer of the PSA; (3) I understand the consequences of not providing consent where required and withdrawal of consent may limit my ability to use certain services; (4) My consent is specific and applies only to the ticked purposes; and (5) My personal information will be processed in accordance with the POPI Act, 4 of 2013, and the PSA Privacy Policy (available at www.psa.co.za). By taking up membership, I agree to the said Policy.

***Failure to tick any consent checkbox, or failure to return this form, shall under no circumstances be interpreted as consent. It shall be deemed an explicit refusal (X) to the processing of personal information for the purposes listed.**

SALARY STOP-ORDER COMMENCEMENT DATE:

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for membership of the PSA (Public Servants Association of South Africa) and authorise and request the Accounting Officer of my employer to deduct the applicable PSA Membership Fee (as approved by the PSA Office Bearers) from my salary as membership fee, starting from the STOP-ORDER COMMENCEMENT DATE, and thereafter to continue such monthly deductions until my further written notice.

I UNDERSTAND THAT IN TERMS OF SECTION 13(3) OF THE LABOUR RELATIONS ACT, 1995, THIS STOP-ORDER MAY ONLY BE REVOKED BY THE GIVING OF THREE MONTHS' (ONE MONTH IN THE CASE OF NON-PUBLIC SERVANTS) WRITTEN NOTICE TO MY EMPLOYER AND THE PSA.

I understand that membership fees are due to and collectable by the PSA while I am a member of the PSA.

BANK DEBIT-ORDER COMMENCEMENT DATE:

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for membership of the PSA (Public Servants Association of South Africa), requesting and authorising you at the same time to deduct from my account at the above bank the applicable PSA Membership Fee (as approved by the PSA Office Bearers), which covers my membership fee to the PSA, starting from the DEBIT-ORDER COMMENCEMENT DATE and **continue deducting said amount monthly on theth day of each month thereafter until further my written notice.**

SIGNATURE*

DATE*

RECRUITER
(NOT PSA STAFF MEMBER)

PSA MEMBERSHIP NO*		TAX NO*	
IDENTITY NO*		CELL PHONE	
INITIALS & SURNAME			
POSTAL ADDRESS*		POSTAL CODE	
EMAIL ADDRESS			
BANK NAME*		BRANCH CODE	
ACCOUNT NO*		ACCOUNT TYPE	
ACCOUNT HOLDER			

PLEASE NOTE THAT NO HONORARIUM CAN BE PAID WITHOUT A VALID TAX NUMBER. THE HONORARIUM WILL BE PAID DIRECTLY INTO YOUR BANK ACCOUNT.

NOTE: THE PSA WILL ASSIST MEMBERS (REPRESENTATION, FINANCIALLY, OTHERWISE) ON CONDITION THAT THE CAUSE OF ACTION FOR WHICH ASSISTANCE IS SOUGHT AROSE AFTER THE PSA'S ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

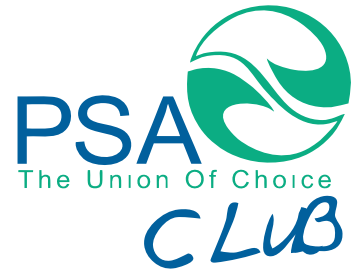
	WEEK NO*
--	----------

OFFICE DATE STAMP

WEEKLY REPORT ID

PSA CLUB LINE:

0860 021 067



UPDATE MY DETAILS:

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR CHOICE WITH A ☒

☐ CELL PHONE NUMBER ☐ EMAIL ADDRESS ☒ NEW PSA MEMBERSHIP CARD

*Will be posted to address indicated by member on this form

PSA MEMBERSHIP NUMBER OR ID NUMBER

PERSAL / EMPLOYEE NUMBER

INITIALS SURNAME

CELL PHONE NUMBER

EMAIL

www.psaclub.mobi | info@psaclub.mobi | *120*960#

Understanding your PSA structure

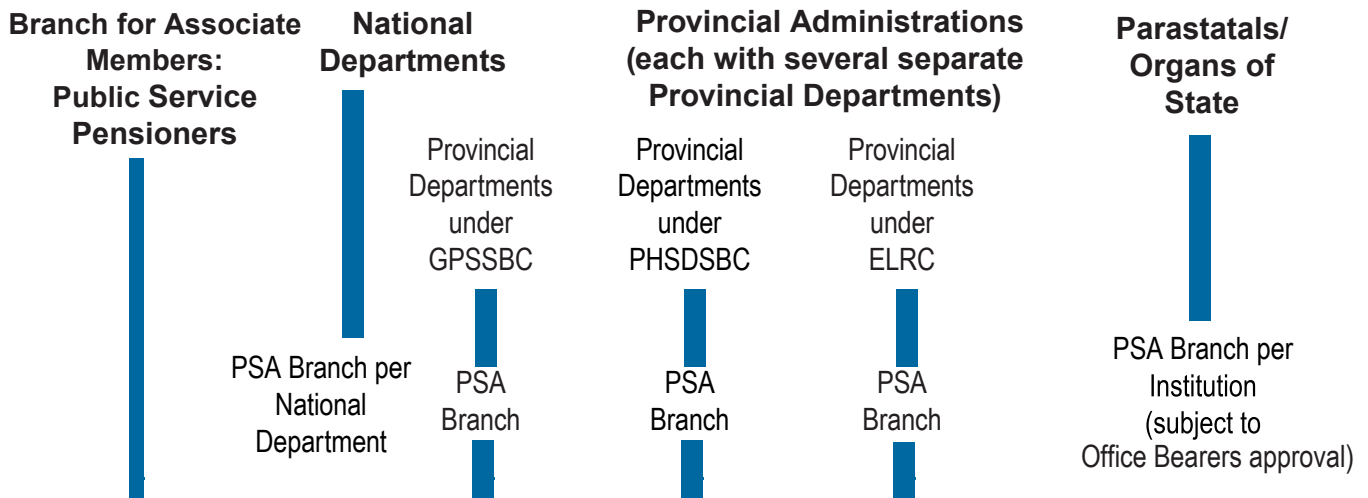
Country-wide member structures (on national and sectoral level) are the link between the PSA and its members. These structures mirror the current structures for collective bargaining and offer direction, thereby ensuring the protection and promotion of the rights and interests of members.

The PSA's Office Bearers on 29 March 2017 resolved that in terms of the *Labour Relations Act* or an Organisational Rights agreement, a group will be entitled to elect five shop stewards. The Office Bearers may, on good cause shown, establish such a group as a branch.

These structures have been established in all provinces to promote the organisation of members, obtaining their mandates, and improving communication with members.

Details of this extensive network of committees and branches are available from the PSA Head Office as well as any of the PSA Provincial Offices and Satellite Offices.

It is important to understand PSA member structures. In addition, you should be involved in these structures as active members can provide timeous, informed mandates, and ensure that skilled workplace representatives are elected.



Sub-structures for communication to grassroots level

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On World Mental Health Day on 10 October, the spotlight falls on a growing challenge that affects millions of workers around the world - mental health in the workplace.

For public servants who work under demanding conditions whilst delivering essential services to communities, safeguarding mental well-being is critical. World Mental Health Day aims to raise awareness, challenge stigma, and encourage action to support those living with mental-health conditions. The day was first observed in 1992 by the World Federation for Mental Health. What started as a global awareness campaign has since become an internationally recognised platform for governments, employers, workers, unions, and health professionals to advocate for improved mental healthcare and support systems.

Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how people think, feel, cope with stress, relate to others, and make decisions. Good mental health is fundamental to personal well-being, healthy relationships, and productive workplaces.

Public servants under pressure

Public servants are at the frontline of service delivery, carrying the expectations of communities whilst navigating resource constraints, staff shortages, administrative burdens, and increasing workloads. Whether working in healthcare, education, policing, social development, local government, or administration, many of these employees face intense pressure. A Public Service Health and Wellness Indaba in 2024 revealed that stress, burnout, work-life imbalance, and insufficient support systems remain common experiences amongst public servants. Participants indicated that increasing workplace demands often left employees feeling overwhelmed and emotionally exhausted.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) identifies excessive workloads, understaffing, long working hours, bullying, discrimination, low job control, and job insecurity as major risks to workers' mental health. These challenges are familiar to many public servants who are expected to deliver quality services despite ongoing budgetary and operational pressures. Mental-health challenges can affect anyone, regardless of age, occupation, or background. Common conditions include depression, anxiety disorders, burnout, post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, and substance-use disorders. Many of these conditions can be successfully managed through appropriate support and treatment.

Cost of ignoring mental health: Growing concern in South Africa

The impact of poor mental health extends beyond individual suffering. It affects workplace productivity, attendance, morale, and service delivery. According to the WHO, depression and anxiety result in approximately 12 billion lost working days globally every year, costing the world economy an estimated US\$1 trillion annually in lost productivity. Poor mental health is also linked to increased absenteeism, reduced performance, workplace conflict, and higher staff turnover. For the public service, these challenges can affect the quality of services delivered to citizens. When employees are struggling emotionally and psychologically, their ability to perform at their best may be compromised.

Recent findings show that workplace mental health is becoming a significant challenge in South Africa. The South African Depression and Anxiety Group's 2024 Working Life Survey found that 52% of respondents reported having been diagnosed with a mental-health condition. The most commonly reported conditions were depression, stress, anxiety, burnout, and trauma. Employees identified long working hours, tight deadlines, organisational changes, workplace conflict, and financial pressures as major contributors to workplace stress. Additional research suggests that many South Africans face barriers to accessing mental healthcare, particularly in the public sector, where services are often overstretched and not every category of public servants can afford medical aid. Stigma and lack of awareness also continue to discourage many employees from seeking assistance.

Employers must step up

Creating mentally healthy workplaces is a moral imperative and an organisational necessity. Employers have a responsibility to promote psychological safety by providing employee wellness programmes, counselling services, awareness campaigns, management training, and supportive workplace policies. Flexible work arrangements, reasonable workloads, anti-bullying measures, and open communication channels also contribute significantly to employee well-being. Workplaces where employees feel valued, respected, and supported are more likely to experience higher levels of productivity, engagement, and retention.

The PSA continues to advocate for safe and healthy working conditions, reasonable workloads, access to employee wellness programmes, and fair treatment of workers facing mental-health concerns. Through collective bargaining and workplace representation, the PSA helps to ensure that mental health is recognised as a critical workplace issue. The PSA encourages members to seek assistance when experiencing emotional or psychological distress and to make use of available wellness and healthcare programmes.



Taking care of mental health

Mental-health challenges can be addressed through medical and non-medical interventions. Medical support includes professional counselling, psychotherapy, psychiatric care, prescribed medication where necessary, and employee-assistance programmes. Non-medical approaches include regular exercise, healthy eating habits, adequate sleep, stress-management techniques, mindfulness and meditation, strong family and social-support networks, maintaining a healthy work-life balance, and taking regular leave and rest periods. The most important step is often the first one: Acknowledging that help is needed and reaching out for support.

Breaking the silence: How to reduce mental-health stigma in the workplace

One of the biggest barriers to addressing mental-health challenges is stigma. Many employees fear being judged, discriminated against, or perceived as weak if they disclose a mental-health condition. As a result, they may delay seeking help, which can worsen their condition and affect their well-being and work performance.

The following practical steps can help reduce stigma in the workplace:

1. Encourage open conversations: Leaders and managers should create safe spaces where employees can talk openly about mental health without fear of judgement. Regular discussions, awareness campaigns, and wellness sessions can normalise conversations about mental well-being.
2. Lead by example: Senior managers, supervisors, and union leaders can help break stigma by speaking openly about mental health and supporting wellness initiatives. When leaders show understanding and empathy, employees are more likely to seek help.
3. Increase awareness and education: Many misconceptions about mental illness stem from a lack of information. Workplace training can help employees understand that mental-health conditions are medical conditions, not personal weaknesses.
4. Promote confidential support services: Employees need to know that counselling services, employee-assistance programmes, and healthcare support are confidential and accessible. Promoting these services can encourage early intervention.
5. Challenge stereotypes and discrimination: Negative comments, jokes, or discriminatory behaviour relating to mental health should not be tolerated. Organisations should actively address stigma and promote respectful workplace cultures.
6. Share real-life stories: Hearing experiences from employees who have successfully managed mental-health challenges can inspire others to seek help and demonstrate that recovery is possible.
7. Train managers to identify warning signs: Managers should be equipped to recognise signs of stress, burnout, depression, and anxiety and know how to respond appropriately and compassionately.
8. Prioritise employee wellness: Workplaces that encourage work-life balance, reasonable workloads, regular breaks, and employee-wellness programmes send a strong message that mental health matters.
9. Support colleagues, do not judge: Employees can play an important role by listening, showing empathy, and offering support to colleagues who are struggling. Small acts of kindness can make a significant difference.
10. Recognise mental health as part of overall health: Mental health should be treated with the same seriousness and compassion as physical health. No employee should feel ashamed of seeking treatment for depression, anxiety, burnout, or any other mental health condition.

Reducing mental-health stigma requires action from employers, managers, unions, and employees themselves. By fostering a culture of understanding, respect, and support, the public service can create workplaces where employees feel safe to seek help and thrive personally and professionally. World Mental Health Day is a reminder that mental health is everyone's business. Public servants dedicate their careers to serving others, yet they often neglect their own well-being whilst meeting the demands of their professions.

By creating supportive workplaces, strengthening employee-wellness programmes, reducing stigma, and promoting access to mental healthcare, employers, unions, and employees can cooperate to build a healthier and more resilient public service.

Source

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Making sense of CPI: What it means for workers and pensioners

By **Rob Moody** - National Branch Chairperson: Public Service Pensioners

This article is a layman's perspective on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), gathered whilst investigating Government Employee Pension Fund (GEPF) pension increases.

What is CPI?

CPI is a term regularly associated with salary negotiations and pension increases, with employers and pension funds using CPI as primary benchmark. It is the primary statistical tool used to calculate inflation and track changes in the overall cost of living. It is an index of monthly price changes of a fixed "basket" of goods and services, weighted according to spending habits of the average South African household. The current basket, introduced by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) in January 2025, contains 391 products and services grouped into twelve major expenditure categories. Prices are collected monthly, quarterly, or annually, depending on the item. These prices are converted into indices, assigned weights, and then combined to calculate the CPI.

Determination of indices: Stats SA uses the geometric mean (*Jevons* formula) to calculate basic elementary indices from individual price quotations. These are aggregated into higher-level indices using a modified Laspeyres formula, resulting in the headline inflation rate. These indices are thus calculated mathematically.

Determination of weights: Various formulae are used for determining the weight of items in the basket. If households throughout the country spend more of their income on one item, that item will have a heavier weight in the CPI. Food, housing, and transport get large weights, and small items get low weights. CPI is an index, not a direct measure of the amount of money an individual household needs to live. It is calculated from a base period, which is assigned a value of 100. Prices in subsequent periods are compared with those in the base period and expressed as an index relative to that base.

Key points: CPI broadly represents spending patterns of an average South African household and is used to measure inflation. It is used to track changes in the overall cost of living and individuals' personal inflation rate may differ significantly from the official CPI.

Two main presentations

The CPI is represented as a percentage tailored to suit a particular application.

The two most common representations of CPI are:

Year-on-Year CPI (Inflation): Measures percentage change in the Headline CPI over a single twelve-month period. It is calculated using the formula:

$$\frac{CPI_{\text{Current month}} - CPI_{\text{Same month last year}}}{CPI_{\text{Same month last year}}} \times 100$$

Average CPI (Annual Average Inflation): Measures the percentage change between the average index levels of two consecutive calendar years, effectively smoothing short-term monthly volatility to reveal long-term trends.

The calculation involves averaging the twelve-monthly headline index numbers for each year, followed by applying the percentage change formula to these annual averages. It is calculated using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Average CPI}_{\text{Current year}} - \text{Average CPI}_{\text{Previous year}}}{\text{Average CPI}_{\text{Previous year}}} \times 100$$

These two should not be confused. They are calculated differently and have different purposes.

Year-on-Year CPI (Inflation): Measures the price change over a single twelve-month period. It is used for tracking current inflation and identifying immediate cost-of-living pressures. Year-on-Year CPI is highly volatile, reacting immediately to sudden changes in fuel, food, or interest rates. It provides a snapshot of inflation at an instant in time. The controversial Year-on-Year CPI for pensioners for November 2024 was measured at 2.9%, down from the February-2024 figure of 5.6%.

Average CPI (Annual Average Inflation): Compares the average index of twelve months in one year to the average of the twelve months in the previous year. It is used for budgeting, salary adjustments, and evaluating historical inflation trends. Average CPI is much more stable than Year-on-Year CPI. When governments or institutions adjust tax brackets, pensions, or rental agreements, they use this to avoid penalising people for temporary, short-term spikes in inflation. For the period December 2023 to November 2024, the annual average CPI was 4.6%.

The crux of this article is the distinction between how different CPI metrics apply to salary negotiations and GEPF pension increases.

PSCBC salary negotiations

The CPI is the empirical foundation for salary negotiations, mitigating the erosion of purchasing power caused by inflation. Although standard economic logic suggests that adjustments should strictly correlate with CPI fluctuations, actual negotiations are more complex. To guarantee real wage growth, final agreements must incorporate the CPI baseline and a mutually determined percentage margin. An example is PSCBC Resolution 1/2025. For the 2025/26-financial year, a pensionable salary increase of 5.5% was negotiated, which was above the annual average inflation of 3.2%. For the 2026/27- and 2027/28-financial years, salary increases linked to projected CPI were negotiated. This projected annual average CPI is determined by National Treasury during the tabling of the main budget for the year in which the increase is paid. The Resolution further states that if the projected CPI is less than 4%, the increase will be deemed to be 4%. If the projected CPI is above 6%, the increase will be capped at 6%. For the 2026/27 period, National Treasury projected the annual average CPI at 3.4%. Because it fell below the 4% minimum threshold, the safety clause was officially activated and qualifying public servants received a flat 4.0% pensionable salary increase.

The average CPI is stable because it smooths out peaks and troughs of the year-on-year CPI. Salary negotiators thus understandably use the average rate rather than the year-on-year rate. Negotiators must seek an increase above the average CPI to ensure that workers retain their buying power. The use of projected average CPI allows workers to improve their standard of living rather than just keeping up with costs. If past data were used, workers would lose buying power as prices rise. Projected average CPI helps secure a raise that covers future inflation.

GEPF annual pension increases

Unlike salary negotiations in the PSCBC, the GEPF is a defined-benefit pension fund where minimum yearly pension increases are governed by the *Government Employees Pension Law, 1996*, specifically section 23 of its Rules. Whilst this establishes the baseline, the Board of Trustees has the prerogative to grant a higher increase, depending on the financial state of the Fund. Given this structure, why do these increases spark yearly controversy? Whilst the rules should spell out the minimum adjustment, ambiguity remains. The dispute stems from how the GEPF interprets Rule 23. The Rule reads: "23.2.1. A basic increase at a rate of at least 75% of the average percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index (All Items) over a period of twelve months (1 December to 30 November of the previous year)." This rule appears straightforward. Because it refers to the "average percentage increase... over a period of twelve months," most pensioners assume it targets the annual average CPI. The confusion arises because Rule 23.3 states: "For the purpose of rule 23.2.2, inflation is defined as the change in the Consumer Price Index (All Items) over the period under consideration." This implies a year-on-year calculation.

However, it specifically references Rule 23.2.2 and not Rule 23.2.1 - even though the GEPF consistently quotes Rule 23.2.1 when defending its year-on-year CPI-based pension increases. Historically, the GEPF has used the year-on-year CPI as basis for calculating annual pension increases, contrary to pensioners' interpretation. This is the crux of the controversy. Concerns regarding the CPI used for pension increases mainly involve the volatility of year-on-year CPI, as demonstrated in November 2024, when average CPI was 4.6% and year-on-year CPI was 2.9%. This negatively impacts pensioners as their income fails to keep pace with inflation, eroding buying power and compounding their financial losses each year. Because of this controversy, the PSA Branch for Public Service Pensioners has requested the PSA Administration to investigate the matter.

Pension increases are currently tied to the highly volatile, retrospective year-on-year CPI. This volatility was evident in 2024, when the year-on-year CPI fluctuated drastically from a high of 5.6% in February to a low of 2.9% in November. Relying on year-on-year CPI adjustments leads to an ever-compounding erosion of pensioners' buying power over time. The Pensioner Branch argues that the GEPF should replace the year-on-year CPI with the more stable annual average CPI, which is viewed as the correct interpretation of Rule 23.2.1.

Advice for active members

When possible, avoid the two-pot system. It brings short-term relief with possible dire long-term consequences, typically resulting in lower final payouts when one goes on pension. Savings withdrawal amounts are taxed according to one's normal marginal income tax rate, which can be high. A recent data analysis by the Branch reveals a clear trajectory: While retirees may find their pensions adequate between ages 60 and 65 (even when they did not deplete their savings early via the two-pot system), they are forced into severe frugality by their early 70s. By their 80s, a significant portion must rely on family financial support or deplete their life savings entirely. Be prepared for this eventuality by making wise choices whilst still working.

Inflation reduces the purchasing power of money. Inflation can thus be viewed as a form of indirect tax on disposable income because the same amount of money buys fewer goods and services over time. The impact is particularly severe on people with fixed or low incomes, including pensioners and unemployed people. The debate over the appropriate CPI measure for GEPF-pension increases is far more than a technical argument about statistics. It is fundamentally about purchasing power, financial security, and dignity in retirement. When pension increases are based on a measure that does not adequately reflect the underlying movement in prices, pensioners gradually lose purchasing power and the longer one remains in retirement, the greater the consequences.

Source
<https://www.statssa.gov.za>



Every successful organisation relies on people who ensure that daily operations run smoothly. In the public service, administrative professionals are at the core of every office, providing structure, coordination, and support that enable departments to deliver services efficiently to South Africans.

The PSA recognises and celebrates the invaluable contribution of administrative professionals, clerks, receptionists, personal assistants, secretaries, office administrators, and all support staff who work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep the public service functioning effectively. These professionals are often the first point of contact for members of the public, colleagues, and stakeholders. They manage complex schedules, coordinate meetings, maintain records, process correspondence, organise information, and ensure that essential administrative processes are completed accurately and on time. Their ability to remain organised, professional, and adaptable in fast-paced environments is fundamental to the effective functioning of government departments.

The modern workplace continues to evolve, with rapid technological advancements, changing administrative systems and increasing service-delivery demands. Administrative professionals have embraced these changes with resilience, continuously developing new skills whilst maintaining the high standards of service that their roles require. Their willingness to adapt has made them indispensable in supporting managers, teams, and departments across the public service.

Beyond their administrative responsibilities, these professionals often serve as problem-solvers, coordinators, and trusted sources of institutional knowledge. They contribute significantly to workplace efficiency, communication, and collaboration thus ensuring that operations continue seamlessly even during periods of change and increased workload.

Administrative Professionals: CORE of every office

The PSA recognises that administrative professionals deserve appreciation and opportunities for career development, fair recognition of their contributions, and workplaces that support their well-being and professional growth. Investing in administrative staff strengthens the public service and enhances the quality of services delivered to citizens.

The PSA extends the Union's sincere gratitude to every administrative professional whose dedication, commitment, and professionalism help keep the wheels of the public service turning.

Their work may often take place behind the scenes, but the impact is visible throughout offices, departments, and services delivered to the people of South Africa.





Planting indigenous trees **Protecting South Africa's future**

In September, South Africa observed Arbour Week, a time dedicated to celebrating the Country's rich natural heritage and encouraging citizens to plant and protect trees. The 2026 theme, "Sustainable Environmental Management, Greening Communities, and Championing Indigenous Trees," is particularly relevant as climate change, environmental degradation, and food insecurity are increasingly urgent challenges.

The PSA recognises that the environment is directly linked to the health, well-being, and livelihoods of South Africans. The decisions made today in homes, workplaces, schools, municipalities, and communities, will shape the environment that future generations inherit. South Africa is one of the most biologically diverse countries in the world. Its indigenous trees are an essential part of that natural wealth. Trees have sustained communities for ages by providing shade, food, medicine, shelter, and clean air. Indigenous trees are naturally adapted to local conditions. They require less water, are better suited to local soils and weather patterns, support indigenous birds and pollinators, improve soil quality, reduce erosion, and help restore damaged ecosystems. Protecting indigenous trees is therefore an investment in South Africa's long-term sustainability.

The significance of Arbour Week has grown dramatically as climate change continues to affect communities. South Africans are experiencing more frequent and severe droughts, destructive floods, heatwaves, wildfires, and unpredictable rainfall patterns. These climate-related events place enormous pressure on public infrastructure, healthcare facilities, schools, roads, water systems, and the economy. Trees are amongst the most effective natural tools available to help reduce these impacts. They help to reduce greenhouse gases that drive global warming. Trees also cool surrounding areas, lower surface temperatures, improve air quality, increase water infiltration into the soil, reduce stormwater runoff, and combat erosion and flooding.

Role of public servants

Public servants are at the heart of community development and environmental action. Simple initiatives can have a significant collective impact.

Government offices can plant indigenous trees on their premises, municipalities can prioritise indigenous species in urban greening programmes, schools can establish indigenous gardens that educate learners about biodiversity, and healthcare facilities can create greener, healthier environments for patients and staff. Public servants can also support community clean-up campaigns, encourage water-wise landscaping, protect existing indigenous vegetation, and promote environmental awareness in communities. Environmental responsibility should become part of the culture of public service, a commitment to protecting the resources that communities depend on for their health, safety, and future prosperity.

Arbour Week reminds South Africans that environmental protection cannot be left to conservationists or relevant government departments. It requires collective action from every citizen and community. Protecting indigenous trees, restoring natural landscapes, and planting food-producing gardens are actions that directly support climate resilience, food security, water conservation, and healthier communities. These practical measures will strengthen the Country's ability to withstand challenges.

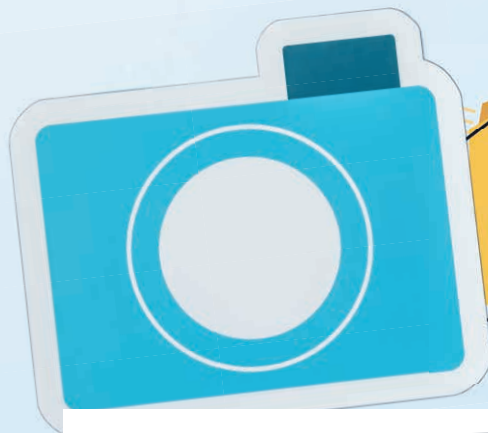
The PSA therefore proudly continues to observe Arbour Month by planting indigenous trees across the Country. Public servants, as custodians of public resources and providers of essential services, also have a responsibility to lead by example. By greening public spaces, supporting indigenous tree planting, encouraging food gardens, and promoting sustainable environmental practices, public servants can help build a more resilient and sustainable South Africa.

Source
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"The only way to save a rhinoceros is to save the environment in which it lives, because there's a mutual dependency between it and millions of other species of both animals and plants."

Sir David Attenborough



#PSApics



The PSA celebrated the Union's 106th birthday on 7 July 2026 with a cake-cutting ceremony at the PSA Head Office in Pretoria. The celebration honoured the PSA's proud legacy, continued commitment to public servants, and the collective strength of the PSA as the Union heads towards 2030.



The PSA Provincial Office in Mpumalanga hosted the annual Intersectoral Members' Meeting in Middelburg in July 2026. The event brought together members from various sectors to discuss workplace matters and challenges affecting public servants. PSA Office Bearer, Natalie Adams, and PSA General Secretary, Reuben Maleka, engaged with members, providing an opportunity for open dialogue, shared experiences and meaningful engagement.



On 9 August 2026, around 200 PSA female members gathered at Shuku's Greenleaf Estate in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, to celebrate National Women's Day. Guest speakers offered inspiration coupled with support by PSA business partners and vibrant entertainment.





A Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to Gideon Serfontein (left) by Dries du Plessis on behalf of the PSA Gauteng Branch Associated Members: Public Service Pensioners. The Certificate was awarded in recognition of dedicated and loyal service to the PSA and the Union's members in the Branch for Associated Members: Public Service Pensioners in various capacities over many years.

The PSA launched the Union's Ulundi Satellite Office and also hosted an Intersectoral Meeting in Ulundi, KwaZulu-Natal in August 2026. The establishment of the Satellite Office marked an important milestone in strengthening service delivery and member engagement in the Province.

PSA Chairperson, Refithile Baloyi, Office Bearer, Anadele Coetzee, PSA General Manager, Reuben Maleka, and hundreds of PSA members were in attendance, making the occasion a strong demonstration of the PSA's commitment to being accessible and responsive to members.



Mandela Day 2026



PSA staff marked Mandela Day by donating clothing and non-perishable food to Bramley Child and Youth Care Centre in Pretoria. The donations were handed over by PSA Assistant General Manager, Ina Kuhn.



In honour of Mandela Day, the PSA Provincial Office in Pretoria Office, led by Organising/Marketing Officer, Angelica Jacobson, supported by PSA shop stewards, undertook an outreach initiative at Refilwe Clinic.

The initiative reflects the PSA's ongoing commitment to making a meaningful difference in communities.

Public servants' role in ending hunger

World Food Day is annually observed on 16 October as a global call to eliminate hunger, improve nutrition, and build sustainable food systems. It is a stark reminder that access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food is a fundamental human right and a prerequisite for human dignity, health, education, and economic development.

Despite being one of Africa's largest food producers, South Africa continues to face a growing food-security crisis. Millions of households do not have access to nutritious meals as the combined impact of unemployment, poverty, rising food prices, inequality, climate change, and economic uncertainty continues to erode purchasing power.

Recent reports by Statistics South Africa found that 23.1% of households experienced inadequate or severely inadequate access to food. The South African Food Security Index recorded its lowest level in more than a decade. Even more concerning is that one in four children living in the Country's poorest households experiences hunger, and a quarter of South African children are affected by stunted growth because of chronic malnutrition. These statistics represent children whose physical development, learning ability, future earning potential, and quality of life are permanently affected.

Hunger is not simply a humanitarian issue. It is an economic issue, a healthcare issue, an education issue, and a public-service issue. Children who arrive at school hungry struggle to concentrate and learn. Patients suffering from poor nutrition are more vulnerable to disease and place additional strain on an overburdened healthcare system. Families experiencing food insecurity often rely more heavily on social assistance. Poor nutrition reduces productivity in the workplace and slows economic growth. The poverty cycle becomes increasingly difficult to break when people lack access to adequate nutrition. Food security can thus not be viewed as the responsibility of farmers alone - it also depends on an effective, well-resourced, and professional public service.

Public servants are at the centre of South Africa's food-security system. Agricultural extension officers assist emerging farmers to improve production, adopt sustainable farming practices, and build resilience against droughts, floods, pests, and changing climatic conditions. Environmental practitioners protect the natural resources upon which food production depends. Water and sanitation professionals ensure reliable access to clean water for farming, food processing, and communities. Veterinarians and agricultural inspectors safeguard livestock health and food safety, helping to prevent disease outbreaks that threaten food supplies and exports.



Healthcare professionals play a vital role by identifying and treating malnutrition, promoting maternal and child nutrition, and educating communities. Social workers support vulnerable households facing food insecurity, whilst officials responsible for administering social grants provide a critical safety net for millions of South Africans who depend on this assistance to purchase food.

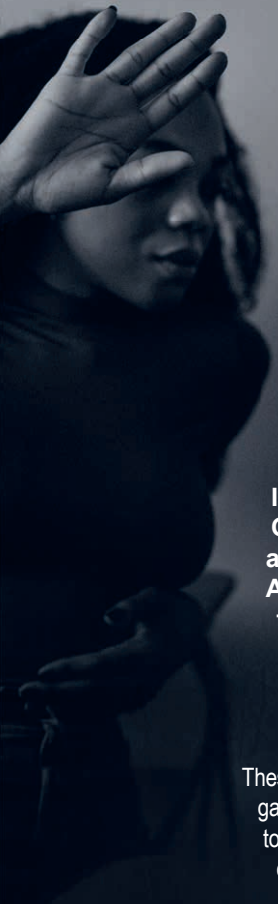
Through the National School Nutrition Programme, millions of learners receive at least one nutritious meal each school day. For many children, this may be the only reliable meal they receive, making schools an essential pillar in the battle against hunger and child malnutrition. Disaster-management officials, municipal workers, emergency responders, and infrastructure professionals also play indispensable roles. During floods, droughts, fires, and other disasters, they work to restore essential services, protect food supply chains, and assist communities affected by food shortages.

These public servants can, however, not succeed alone. Government must continue investing in agriculture, irrigation infrastructure, climate adaptation, rural development, research, and food-security programmes. Policies must support emerging farmers, strengthen local food systems, reduce food losses across the supply chain, and improve access to affordable, nutritious food in vulnerable communities. Businesses also have an important responsibility. Every year, significant quantities of edible food are wasted whilst millions of people remain food insecure. Better food recovery programmes, partnerships with food banks, and responsible supply-chain management can ensure that surplus food reaches those in need instead of ending up in landfills. Reducing household food waste, supporting local producers, establishing community food gardens, donating surplus food, and volunteering at feeding schemes are practical actions that collectively strengthen food security.

Food security entails more than feeding people today. It is about creating resilient communities capable of feeding themselves tomorrow. It requires sustainable agriculture, responsible environmental management, economic opportunity, effective public institutions, and partnerships that place people before profit. The PSA recognises the commitment by public servants who work to ensure that South Africans have access to healthcare, education, agricultural support, social protection, clean water, and other essential services that underpin food security. Often working under difficult conditions and with limited resources, these dedicated professionals remain at the forefront of building healthier communities and improving lives.

The PSA calls on government, business, and all South Africans to renew the commitment to ending hunger. Food security requires coordinated action, ethical leadership, sustained investment, and a public service that is empowered to deliver.

Source
StatSA



Working together to END violence against women and children

South Africa observes several important commemorative days underlining that violence is not inevitable and peace is not passive. International Day of Non-Violence (2 October), Children's Day (7 November), and 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children (25 November to 10 December), are connected by the common purpose of building a society where every woman and every child can live free from fear, abuse, and harm.

These observances are a call to action for government, organised labour, communities, families, and every citizen to reject violence, strengthen protection systems, and create workplaces and neighbourhoods where dignity, equality, and safety are non-negotiable. Peace begins with dialogue, with International Day of Non-Violence highlighting the power of dialogue, mediation, and peaceful conflict resolution. The cost of such violence is measured not only in crime statistics, but also in trauma, lost opportunities, and broken families. Peace is built through respectful communication, accountability, support for survivors, and intervention when abuse is witnessed. Dialogue must replace intimidation, coercion, and silence. A culture of non-violence is the responsibility of all South Africans.

Protecting children is protecting South Africa's future. Every child has the right to safety, care, education, and protection from violence and exploitation. For too many children, danger exists in the very places where they should be safest. Recent crime statistics by the South African Police Service reveal the scale of the crisis. During a three-month reporting period, 315 children were murdered, 490 were victims of attempted murder, and 1 944 children were assaulted with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. Thousands more experienced sexual offences, neglect, abuse, or exploitation - many at the hands of people that are known to them. These incidents are evidence of a child-protection emergency that demands urgent national attention. Public servants, including teachers, nurses, social workers, police officials, emergency personnel, court officials, and community development practitioners, are often the first line of defence for vulnerable children. Their work must be properly resourced, supported, and respected. A society that fails to protect its children undermines its future. Violence against children has lifelong consequences. It affects educational outcomes, mental and physical health, social development, and employment opportunities.

The annual 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign shines a spotlight on one of South Africa's most devastating human-rights challenges, gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF). South Africa continues to record some of the highest levels of violence against women and girls in the world. The First South African National Gender-Based Violence Study, released in 2024, found that 35.8% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) similarly reported that 33.1% of South African women over the age of 18 have experienced physical violence, whilst 9.8% have experienced sexual violence.

President Cyril Ramaphosa has repeatedly described GBVF as South Africa's "second pandemic". The Country has recognised the crisis as requiring coordinated national action. Statistics, however, do not capture the human reality behind numbers, women who live in fear of partners, children who witness domestic violence, families shattered by femicide, and communities traumatised by repeated acts of brutality. Ending GBVF requires collective responsibility. Men and boys must become active participants in prevention, accountability, and cultural change. Harmful gender norms, entitlement, and silence in the face of abuse must be challenged. Women and girls must be empowered to report violence, access support services, and participate fully in economic and social life. Communities must reject the notion that domestic violence is a "private matter". Employers must create workplaces where harassment, intimidation, and discrimination are addressed decisively. Every family, school, workplace, and community has a role in shaping the attitudes that prevent abuse.

The PSA stands firm against any form of violence, harassment, child abuse, and discrimination. Every worker has the right to a workplace that is safe, respectful, and free from intimidation and abuse. The PSA supports stronger protection mechanisms for survivors, improved access to justice, effective implementation of existing legislation, and greater investment in social services, policing, healthcare, shelters, counselling services, and child-protection systems. The PSA also recognises the critical role played by public servants in responding to GBVF and protecting vulnerable children, often under extremely challenging conditions.

Shop stewards and union structures have an important role in promoting awareness, supporting affected members, encouraging reporting, and ensuring that employers fulfil their obligations to provide safe work environments. Commemorative days have value only if these result in progress. South Africans must ensure that every child can grow up in safety, every woman can live without fear, and every community can become a place of dignity.

Source
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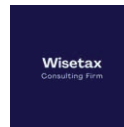
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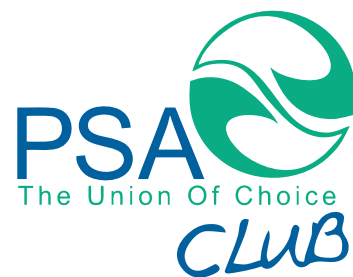
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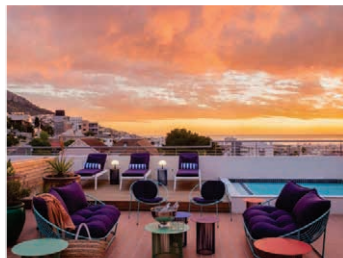


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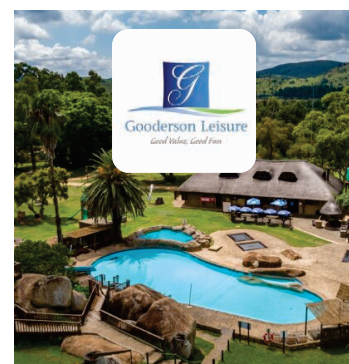
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