

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA calls for fast-tracking appointment of permanent State Information Technology Agency board
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) calls on the Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies to urgently fast-track the appointment of a permanent Board of Directors at the State Information Technology Agency (SITA).

Since the appointment of the current Interim Board on 28 February 2025, the PSA has observed with increasing concern that the Interim Board has failed to act decisively in the best interests of SITA and its employees. Critical decisions affecting employee benefits and organisational stability have either been ignored or subjected to unreasonable delays. To date, the only concession by the Interim Board was the implementation of a salary increase that left employees earning below market-related levels and below what SITA's own Remuneration Policy prescribes. This regression undermines employee morale and contradicts the stated objective of attracting and retaining scarce ICT skills in the public service.

The PSA further draws attention to a recent judgement by the Constitutional Court of South Africa in *Mahlobo v State Information Technology Agency SOC Ltd and Others*, where a retired SITA employee successfully challenged the enforcement of the retirement age of 60. The Court confirmed that the application of the retirement policy, in circumstances where it is not clearly agreed upon or justifiable, constitutes unfair discrimination on the grounds of age and violates constitutional protections to equality and fair labour practices. Following this judgement, SITA tabled a proposed policy at the Bargaining Forum to align the retirement age to 65 years, thereby eliminating unfair discrimination and ensuring equitable treatment of employees. There is no rational or lawful basis to perpetuate a policy that unfairly compels employees to retire at 60.

It is therefore deeply contradictory that the Interim Board recently appointed a Managing Director on a five-year contract at the age of 58, whilst employees turning 60 are still compelled to retire. This inconsistency demonstrates selective application of principles and further erodes trust in the Interim Board's leadership.

The PSA is equally concerned that the Interim Board appears to be focusing on replicating the governance model of the Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS), including convening an excessive number of Board meetings annually, without delivering tangible improvements to employee conditions. At present, SITA employees receive no additional benefits beyond their salaries.

Labour has already tabled its wage demand for the 2026/27-financial year. Given the pattern of engagement in the previous financial year, the PSA anticipates that negotiations may once again be conducted in bad faith. SITA must brace itself for the consequences of such conduct, including the possibility of protected industrial action should negotiations collapse.

The tolerance of SITA employees is wearing thin. Continued instability at governance level threatens employee morale and the effective delivery of critical ICT services to the state. The Minister is therefore urged to urgently finalise the appointment of a permanent, competent, and accountable Board of Directors to restore stability, integrity, and confidence at SITA.

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