

MEDIA RELEASE: **PSA condemns SOCPEN fraud at SASSA and calls for urgent action**

DATE: **16 April 2019**

EMBARGO: **NONE**

ENQUIRIES: **communication@psa.co.za**

The Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA) that represents the majority of employees at the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) has noted with concern that SASSA employees have taken the fall for unscrupulous activities related to the insecure system used by SASSA to process millions of grant applications.

“The SOCPEN system has proven to be vulnerable and open to fraudsters. Incidents have been reported where the system has been accessed in the late hours and on weekends when SASSA offices are closed and fraudulent applications would be processed on the system using SASSA employees’ credentials. This has resulted in employees being charged with misconduct and some even being dismissed,” said PSA General Manager, Ivan Fredericks.

The PSA insisted on the establishment of a task team that will investigate the root cause of these questionable transactions. The task team must deal with SOCPEN deficiencies, which create gaps for unauthorised users to commit fraud using unauthorized log-in particulars for corrupt conduct. After establishing the gaps on the system, the task team must make recommendations to SASSA EXCO on means to assist the Agency to curb fraud and the abuse of the SOCPEN system.

“The PSA has also demanded that SASSA should suspend all SOCPEN-related disciplinary actions as it is clear that the problem goes much deeper than mere misconduct. The charged employees could be victims of some form of syndicate,” said Mr Fredericks.

The PSA urged intervention by the Minister of Social Development to ensure that loyal employees do not become innocent victims of fraudulent transactions that target and exploit the deficiencies of the system,” said Mr Fredericks.

END

