

MEDIA RELEASE PSA rejects claims that government employees are overpaid and incompetent

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) strongly condemns recent claims recently published in the *Daily Investor*, suggesting that South African government employees are overpaid and incompetent.

Such sweeping statements are irresponsible, misleading, and deeply disrespectful to hundreds of thousands of public servants who continue to deliver essential services under extremely challenging conditions.

The article by Shaun Jacobs fails to consider the complexities faced by South Africa and public servants. To paint public servants with a single brush ignores the reality of chronic understaffing, years of real-terms wage erosion, unsafe working environments, and severe resource constraints across key sectors such as health, education, policing, social services, and local government. Nurses, educators, inspectors, social workers, clerks, and frontline officials are routinely expected to do more with less whilst absorbing the consequences of policy failures and weak political leadership.

The PSA rejects the false narrative that blames employees for systemic problems rooted in poor planning, corruption, cadre deployment, budget cuts, and failures at senior political and administrative levels. Where incompetence exists, it is often most visible at the top, yet employees are consistently used as convenient scapegoats.

Public servants are not overpaid. Many are overworked, under-supported, and demoralised. Attacking their integrity undermines morale, erodes service delivery, and distracts from the urgent task of repairing governance failures. The PSA calls for an honest national conversation focused on accountability, skills development, ethical leadership, and proper resourcing of the state, rather than attacks on the public servants who keep the Country functioning.

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