

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA supports Portfolio Committee call to place Department of Military Veterans under administration**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), as the majority union at the Department of Military Veterans (DMV), is vindicated by calls from the Parliamentary Defence and Military Veterans Committee to place the DMV under administration based on incompetence and a lack of leadership.

This follows a Committee meeting on 14 May 2025 where Members of Parliament highlighted the protracted extension of the acting Director-General's contract, several key vacancies, and the DMV's broken organogram. The PSA has been at the forefront of exposing maladministration, incompetence and lack of leadership at the DMV. Amongst key issues affecting the DMV's operations is the absence of an approved organisational structure that is essential to efficiently execute assigned functions. The crisis at the DMV has led to a dysfunctional database, slow pension payout, non-payment of benefits to children of military veterans and no communication, exacerbating the plight of military veterans.

The DMV has many employees who are incapable of acting in high-ranking positions being appointed by the current acting Director-General who is alleged to have not completed Matric. The PSA supports calls for the acting Director-General (DG) to be immediately suspended and held accountable for irregularities.

It is reported that at the Portfolio meeting on 14 May 2025, a troubling picture of key vacancies that have not been filled for several years emerged. The DMV, amongst critical positions, lacks a Deputy Director, a Director of Internal Audit, and a Director of Legal Services. The call for the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) to intervene is progressive, as the DMV as a critical department cannot be allowed to collapse. The DMV is one of the few government departments that received less than R1 billion during the 2024 budget period. There is an urgent need to re-examine the DMV's organogram, which is the competence of the DPSA.

The PSA has over several years raised issues at the DMV at the Bargaining Forum and demanded that it should have an approved organisational structure and fill critical positions. These demands were ignored and in February 2025, the Minister told parliamentarians that when she took over the Department in 2024, she found a "wrecked ship". The Minister has, however also not displayed a political will address this crisis. For many years, the DMV has been operating on a non-existent structure. The entire senior management is absent, and often misplaced employees are not fit for purpose. Military Veterans is one of the few government departments that received less than R1 billion during the 2024 budget period.

The PSA has also, on several occasions, raised the DMV's non-compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, as it has failed to provide a work environment that is free from health and safety hazards. In April 2025, the DMV management was made aware of various non-compliances with occupational and safety, including flooding when it rains, leaking toilet plumbing pipes, cracked walls, poor ventilation, and open electrical wires. The

PSA, in vain, requested the DMV management to provide Building and Electrical Compliance Certificates. Whilst employees are exposed to various health and safety risks, the acting DG refuses to engage the PSA or take corrective measures. On 8 May 2025, employees reported water flowing into passageways, elevators and some offices. The PSA discovered that the water was coming from two blocked toilets on the third floor and dripping onto floors below through the ceilings.

In view of these glaring matters, the PSA supports the call by the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans to ask the President and the Minister to place the DMV under administration, dissolve it, and place it under the Department of Defence.

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