

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA welcomes SCOPA decision to place SITA under strict oversight amidst vast irregular expenditure
DATE	20 May 2025
EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) commends the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) for placing the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) under strict oversight after the Auditor-General exposed SITA's failure to address irregular expenditure of more than R2 billion and continued reckless spending with inadequate controls and accountability.

The situation at SITA is dire with clear evidence of mismanagement, lack of accountability, systemic inefficiencies, and thriving corruption and maladministration. The lack of leadership has been blamed as one of the leading causes of problems at SITA, with a high turnover at top management level, affecting sustainability.

The PSA has continuously called for accountability and consequence management at SITA where experienced and highly qualified personnel are lost owing to a hostile working environment and poor remuneration. The PSA has called on SITA to review remunerative framework without success. Money wasted at SITA resulted in an inability to provide much-needed services to clients. Some government departments are now seeking to procure information technology services and products from private companies. The culture of fixed-term contracts must be addressed as it contributes to SITA's inefficiency. The PSA has repeatedly urged SITA to employ these employees permanently. The Ministry of Communications and Digital Technologies' absence is further not assisting as it is failing to play an oversight role and hold the board accountable.

The PSA trusts that the SCOPA intervention to hold the SITA board and management accountable through stricter oversight and regular reporting is not too late. The added five critical issues on SCOPA's accountability dashboard demonstrated an understanding that SITA's existence is under threat. Issues include a review of SITA's governance structure, progress of Special Investigating Unit and Public Protector investigations, risk management and lifestyle audit protocols, performance against financial and operational targets, audit readiness, and MIS reform.

The PSA will make submissions to be part of the loss-control committee that is currently unable to track findings, strengthen control, and ensure consequence management. The PSA is eager to participate in the process of restoring SITA as SCOPA warned that should next year's audit not show marked improvement, tougher questions, including whether SITA deserves to exist, should be asked.

The PSA further calls for proper vetting and lifestyle audits on all SITA Board members and decision makers. Those enriching themselves must face the law as South Africa cannot afford theft at state entities without consequence management. The PSA is committed to advocating for transparency, accountability, and good governance at all public service institutions.

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