

MEDIA RELEASE	PSA welcomes SIU's expansion of lifestyle audits: Calls for decisive government action
DATE	27 March 2026
EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the announcement by the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) of its intention to expand lifestyle audits to include assessments covering livestock ownership, land holdings, and international travel, as part of effort to close loopholes used by public servants to conceal illicit enrichment.

This development follows the SIU's presentation to Parliament on strengthening lifestyle audits and enhancing accountability across the public service. The PSA views this expansion as a critical and long-overdue step in combating corruption, strengthening ethical governance, and restoring public trust in the state. The PSA is encouraged that lifestyle audits will now scrutinise areas traditionally exploited to hide wealth, such as agricultural assets, informal land transactions, and unreported international travel. These have historically allowed people engaged in corrupt activities to disguise unlawful gains by diverting these outside formal banking systems.

The PSA supports comprehensive asset verification, including movable and immovable property, livestock, land, offshore interests, tracking of international travel, especially where officials undertake unexplained or frequent trips inconsistent with their income levels, and cross-checking declarations with actual lifestyle indicators to identify discrepancies early. This aligns with broader efforts by the SIU to tighten investigative frameworks and ensure no loopholes exist for corruption to thrive.

Whilst the PSA commends the SIU's initiative, lifestyle audits will only be effective if accompanied by adequate resourcing of investigative units, swift disciplinary and criminal action where discrepancies are found, and collaboration with the Auditor-General, the South African Police Service, the South African Revenue Service, and financial intelligence entities. For lifestyle audits to have credibility, outcomes must not disappear into administrative processes and must result in visible consequences.

The PSA stresses that lifestyle audits must apply uniformly to senior executives, middle management, supply-chain officials, and politically connected people. This assist in addressing any perception of selective targeting or political bias. Corruption is not limited to a single level of government but is a systemic issue. Recent corruption cases, including irregular tenders and maladministration across various municipalities and departments, show the urgent need for a rigorous and impartial audit framework.





The PSA believes that ethical public servants, who make up the overwhelming majority, stand to benefit from strengthened lifestyle audits, as these ensure that corrupt people are identified and removed, public resources are safeguarded for service delivery, and the reputation of the public service is restored. Lifestyle audits are not punitive when conducted properly as they are a safeguard for integrity, accountability, and clean governance.

The PSA urges government to adopt the SIU's expanded lifestyle audit framework without delay and integrate lifestyle audits into all departments, entities, and local government structures. Findings must be acted upon swiftly and transparently, with strengthened whistle-blower protections to complement lifestyle investigations.

END

