

<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	Reform too slow, failure too costly, PSA backs Auditor General's call for accountability
<b>DATE</b>	31 March 2026
<b>EMBARGO</b>	None
<b>ENQUIRIES</b>	<a href="mailto:communication@psa.co.za">communication@psa.co.za</a>

---

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is deeply concerned the following Auditor-General (AG) Tsakani Maluleke's latest findings, which warn that the pace of institutional reform remains far too slow to restore public confidence in government systems. According to the AG, the State has not acted with sufficient urgency to address entrenched weaknesses in governance, accountability and institutional capability, despite clear recommendations made in previous audit cycles.

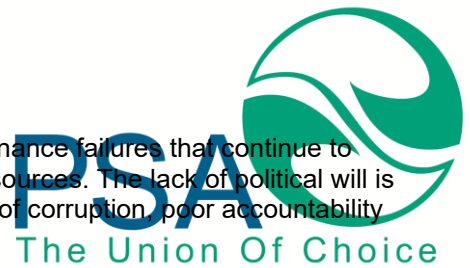
The AG's report reveals that poor-quality public spending continues to undermine the state's ability to deliver essential services. High levels of non-compliance with legislation persist, often without consequences, contributing to a growing culture of impunity. This disregard for rules does not only weaken internal controls but also signals to the public that mismanagement is tolerated within state institutions. Equally concerning is the continued submission of poor-quality financial statements by many government entities. The AG notes that her office still identifies material errors and omissions that departments should prevent, detect and correct through basic internal controls. This ongoing reliance on external audit interventions highlights deeper governance failures that impede transparency and accountability.

The PSA is also alarmed by the trend of minimising irregular expenditure as a mere procedural issue. The AG stresses that this mindset contradicts fundamental principles of transparency. Irregular expenditure, whether technical or substantive, reflects weaknesses in planning, monitoring and ethical decision-making all of which undermine the public's trust in government operations. The PSA reiterates that credible financial reporting and sound internal controls are non-negotiable pillars of a functioning public service. The AG's findings reflect not isolated incidents, but systemic problems that require decisive leadership intervention to correct. Public servants cannot perform optimally within dysfunctional systems characterised by weak oversight and limited accountability.

The PSA therefore urges the administration, Parliament and all oversight bodies to respond with immediate and measurable action. Strengthening internal controls, enforcing consequence management and prioritising governance reforms are essential to restoring the integrity of public institutions and the confidence of the South African public. The PSA also calls for protection of auditing staff who are constantly threatened whilst conducting audit inspections. Auditors must be able to perform their duties without fear and reprisals.



The PSA believes that the AG's warning reflects longstanding governance failures that continue to undermine effective service delivery and the ethical use of public resources. The lack of political will is plunging the country in a financial quagmire and a perpetual culture of corruption, poor accountability and lack of consequence management.



END

