

<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	South Africa's record fuel-price increases: PSA calls for remote work and urgent government intervention
<b>DATE</b>	27 March 2026
<b>EMBARGO</b>	None
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about unprecedented fuel-price increases expected to hit South Africans from 1 April 2026, with petrol set to rise by some R5 per litre, and diesel by more than R8 per litre.

This price hike, driven by surging global oil prices exceeding \$112 per barrel, disruptions caused by conflict in the Middle East, and a weakened rand, poses a direct and immediate threat to the livelihoods of millions of workers who rely on affordable transport to access employment. The PSA noted that diesel under-recoveries of over R8.50 per litre and petrol under-recoveries of R4.68 to R5.20 per litre will make this one of the steepest fuel increases in the Country's history.

Public transport costs are expected to surge within weeks, with taxi associations and bus operators already warning of fare increases. Many commuting workers already spend up to 40% of their income on transport. This hike could push that figure above 50%, making basic mobility unaffordable. The PSA recognises that the taxi industry, which moves the overwhelming majority of South African workers daily, will face unbearable operational pressure. Food prices are expected to increase owing to higher diesel costs impacting logistics and agriculture. Workers will be hit by a double shock as the fuel-price hike coincides with Eskom's 8.76% electricity tariff increase on 1 April 2026.

South Africans cannot withstand simultaneous and rapid increases in transport, fuel, food, and electricity costs. The PSA urges government to implement a multi-pronged relief strategy, including temporary fuel subsidies for the taxi industry. This sector is at the core of the public transport system and without support, fare hikes are inevitable. Government must introduce targeted operational subsidies to keep fares stable and protect workers from further financial distress. The PSA further urges government departments and employers to reinstate hybrid and remote work models where feasible to reduce employees' commuting frequency, cut transport costs, and ease pressure on the public transport system.

With fuel prices projected to reach R25.13 per litre for 95 unleaded, remote work becomes practical and essential. Flexible working hours can reduce peak-hour congestion and allow employees to adjust travel patterns, saving fuel and reducing strain on transport systems.



With fuel levies set to increase in April despite public concern, the PSA calls for reconsideration of these hikes, which constitute nearly one-third of the final petrol price. Temporary tax reductions or suspensions must be explored to provide relief. Fast-tracking affordable public transport alternatives, including the rollout of subsidised bus routes, resuscitation of commuter rail services, and implementation of integrated transport systems, must take place and also remote working.

The PSA emphasises that National Treasury has already indicated limited room to offer relief, but failure to act will deepen poverty and erode workers' ability to maintain employment. The PSA urges government to reprioritise spending, consider temporary interventions, and urgently engage with labour. Workers carry the state, economy, and service delivery. They cannot be left to absorb this crisis alone. The fuel-price crisis is more than an economic issue – it represents a national stability issue. Without swift intervention, millions of South Africans will be pushed further into hardship, threatening productivity, service delivery, and economic recovery.

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