



FOR PSA MEMBERS: **EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) - WESTERN CAPE**

04-08-2025

What is happening at EMS Western Cape?

EMS Independent Management Labour Caucus (IMLC)

Members will recall that the PSA opposed the disbandment of the EMS PIMLC (Provincial Independent Management Labour Caucus), reason being that it would result in the EMS Metro and EMS Rural to operate independently without accountability to any overarching provincial committee when it comes to transversal issues. The employer was called upon to take the matter back to its principals and return with a workable proposal. Organised labour was then invited to a multilateral in late July 2025 where the employer presented the following in response to the above-mentioned concerns:

- EMS falls within the ECSS (Emergency and Clinical Services Support) as per the newly approved macro-structure of Department of Health and Wellness, Western Cape.
- This in turn, means that all transversal EMS issues will be addressed in the ECSS Transversal IMLC.
- The proposed EMS Metro and Rural IMLCs retain their independence whilst operating within the ambit of the Transversal EMS IMLC.

The PSA welcomed the practical adjustment to the EMS IMLC structure as this alleviates the previous concerns raised by organised labour. The employer will submit the amended 'terms of reference' to organised labour for signature.

Contact-Centre vs Ambulance: Eight hours overtime - Lunchtime

Employees are currently required to perform 160 hours before being entitled to overtime. Employees are then allowed to claim a maximum of eight hours overtime within the month. This overtime excludes a lunch hour. The overtime has become a part of Ambulance staff members' standard practice owing to the long hours on the road, which on occasion, call for the uncompromising sacrifice of a lunch break. Contact-Centre staff lodged a petition in which they called on the right to the claim these eight hours - at the cost of their fixed lunchtime to be part of their normal practice as well. The employer responded by clarifying that the operational need of Ambulance staff cannot be compared to that of Contact-Centre staff. One is 'on the road' whilst the other is 'office-based'. Lunch breaks can be managed within an office-based function whilst this cannot be said for on-the-road service. The automatic right to eight hours overtime at the cost of a lunch hour can therefore not be applied similarly between Ambulance and Contact-Centre staff. If the narrative is that *one shoe fits all*, then the current practice regarding lunchtime: overtime for the entire EMS must be reviewed. Organised labour noted the response and reserved its

right to respond. PSA members are urged to engage their EMS shop stewards to address the contention regarding this matter further, with the EMS operational need in mind.

The PSA thanks all EMS members for entrusting the Union with the responsibility to ensure sound and consistent labour practice in the Department.

EMS members are called upon to join PSA as the Union continue protecting their rights and promoting their interests. Employees interested in joining the PSA or wanting to raise any employment concerns should contact the PSA Labour Relations Officer at angelo.fisher@psa.co.za.

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