

SHOP STEWARDS

going beyond call of duty

Shop stewards are a crucial part of the PSA ongoing success as a vital link between the Union and its members. A shop steward is elected, amongst others, for providing information on the Union's work, membership services, and explaining the benefits of belonging to the Union to new and potential members.

As the PSA celebrates 103 years of service delivery to members, here are some highlights of recent work done by shop stewards in the **Western Cape** in keeping the Union alive and vibrant.

Deneal Johnson is a Full-Time Office Bearer, employed by the Department of Correctional Services (DCS). Deneal is an expert in disciplinary hearings and has a high success rate with cases. The PSA Provincial Office relies on him to represent members. He does this excellently, sometimes at short notice, when members request assistance at a late stage. He does not only represent members in DCS but also in other departments. Deneal has a good reputation and members know that they can trust him in representing them in their disputes, whether it be a meeting with the employer, disciplinary hearing, or an arbitration. He is meticulous in his approach to cases and does not shy away from trying to settle a matter short of arbitration, which is not an easy skill. Deneal is respected by employer representatives in departments where he has done cases because of his negotiating skills. His diary is usually fully booked owing to members' requests for him to represent them, yet he always makes himself available when requested to do so.



Antoinette Stewart, the Western Cape's Department of Defence Committee Vice-Chairperson, consistently assists the Secretary with meeting arrangements, agenda compilations, transport arrangements, meeting packs, and taking minutes. When the Secretary was not available or able to do administrative functions for the Committee, Antoinette would step in to run these functions. She readily takes on calls by the Chairperson for assistance of members.



Often, this involves working after hours, over weekends or on leave days. Antoinette is truly driven to consult with members and service them to provide notebooks and do recruitment – all using her own vehicle and never claiming for this, despite being advised that she could do so. She has never refused or declined to assist a member, even at the expense of her own health or whether she is on duty or not. The Chairperson states that Antoinette's support and stalwart assistance has allowed the Committee to thrive and shine.

Neil Saayman is a shop steward serving on the Western Cape Department of Defence Committee. Despite not being readily mobile on a day-to-day basis, Neil has on numerous occasions organised transport to other units in Simon's Town to consult with members upon the Chairperson's request to assist the members with workplace issues and/or grievances. He has an occupational health and safety qualification and often uses his knowledge to assist members with such issues in his own workplace and in other units, by physically visiting the sites to inspect complaints. Neil has on many occasions availed himself for disciplinary matters in not only his own Department's matters, but also for members in other departments. The Western Cape Department of Education, for example, is off site and outside the Simon's Town areas, yet Neil uses his own vehicle with no travel claims.



Morne Daniels at Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) always goes beyond the call where members are concerned and recruited over 50 new members for the PSA the past six months.



These are but a few examples of shop stewards' dedication to the Union of Choice and its members. In celebrating PSA shop stewards, highlights from other provinces will be published in coming editions of this newsletter to reflect the value of these Union champions.