

PSA LINK

NO 12/2019

PSA SHOP STEWARD NEWSLETTER



Accountability is mine. Protect the PSA's image

Accountability in the public sector emanates from the fact that the sector is established through government mandates and processes and through the public's money. This means that everything done in that space should be for the benefit of the public. Public servants are not only accountable to their immediate superiors, they are accountable to the public.

However, where people are deployed because of their association with a political party, they become accountable to the party that put them in the position, instead of the public, as they are there as a curtesy or favour, especially when it comes to financial discipline.

The PSA's position as a politically non-aligned Union is that employees must be accountable for themselves. Any action by them, whether good or bad, will affect society with possible implications for the entire country. Always ask yourself:

“Am I performing to the best of my ability, am I doing what I'm supposed to be doing, am I satisfied with myself, is this the best representation of my potential, am I an asset to this workplace, and is my presence felt?”

In the workplace, your time does not belong to you - it belongs to the public. Every minute you misuse at work, is a minute of some service not being delivered to the public.

The resources that are abused are resources that should have gone to communities. Every minute should be used towards fulfilling your obligation as a public servant, using resources responsibly.

Globally, there is a decline in workers joining trade unions. This is also true for South Africa. The two main reasons for this are casualisation and members not seeing the work that unions do on their behalf. Members need to see the fruits of the presence of their union. The public also needs to understand the role of union officials and shop stewards. Shop stewards must know their important role in addressing conditions in the workplace. Members must be able to see where their membership fees are going.

The power of the PSA, as a membership-based organisation, to a large extent rests in its collective bargaining strength. When union leaders, however, focus on power only instead of service delivery or when communication is not cascaded to members, it can cause suspicion and distance between members and leaders. Therefore, unions need vigilant shop stewards and whistle blowers to ensure duties are performed.

Individual accountability is important as people relate to an organisation through individuals of the organisation. A shop steward is an elected union ambassador and representative. The union is merely an entity driven by people. The PSA's representatives must adhere to the core values and principles of the Union. The sustainability of the PSA depends on accountability.

