

Shop stewards' contribution to PSA success

Shop stewards are the first line of contact between the PSA and the Union's members and prospective members.

Shop stewards are a crucial extension of the PSA and fulfill a key role at the workplaces where members are represented. The quality service delivery by shop stewards, is what differentiates the PSA from other unions.

Shop stewards assist with the distribution of information and ensure that members are informed of the latest developments regarding wage negotiations, matters affecting their benefits or working conditions, etc. The new way of work created by the COVID-19 pandemic, however, meant that shop stewards had to adjust their approach and ensure that members' queries are dealt with closest to where these emanated.

Shop stewards are, in most instances, the first contact point for members related to the following:

- Assist and represent members with grievances and disciplinary proceedings.
- Cascade information to members.
- Monitor the employer's compliance with relevant legislation, especially compliance with COVID-19 regulations.

- Reporting contraventions of workplace provisions of relevant legislation, as well as binding collective agreements to the PSA and the employer.

Shop stewards also contribute substantially to the recruitment of new members, and the retention of existing members. This is achieved through the continued visibility of the PSA at the workplace and updating members on relevant matters.

Shop stewards further attend to departmental activities, such as shortlisting and attendance of interviews, and form part of skills development committees, OHS committees, etc. They should also report employer non-compliance with policies.

The PSA is member mandate driven Union. During mandating processes, the PSA works closely with shop stewards to obtain members' mandates to assist in the drafting and finalisation of collective agreements.

Training of PSA shop stewards is thus key. PSA shop stewards are fully capacitated to service, retain, recruit, represent members and update members on rights and interest matters. Shop stewards market the PSA's values, and the fact that PSA deploys highly-skilled shop stewards contributes to the Union's continued success.

