



NEWSLETTER



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Public Service Co-Ordinating Bargaining Council



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Conclusion of the PSCBC Provincial Chambers Strategic planning Sessions and Annual General Meetings

The Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) recently concluded its Provincial Chambers Strategic Planning Sessions and Annual General Meetings, marking the final year of its current five-year strategic cycle. This milestone sets the stage for the launch of a new five-year strategic plan, designed to strengthen the Council's role in advancing labour relations and effective service delivery within the public service.

As part of this process, the PSCBC engaged chambers across all nine provinces to assess key challenges and gather first-hand insights. Issues such as operational inefficiencies, resource limitations, policy implementation difficulties, and inter-departmental coordination were critically examined. At the same time, chambers showcased successful strategies and innovative approaches that could be scaled to benefit the entire Council.

The sessions were led by the General Secretary, Mr. Frikkie De Bruin, alongside the Senior Manager for Collective Bargaining, Ms. Valencia Kola, and facilitated by Mr. Gerald Maube. The discussions were structured around key strategic themes, including; strengthening collective bargaining processes and fostering constructive dialogue, promoting collaborative, interest-based approaches to negotiations, enhancing the efficiency of dispute resolution mechanisms, addressing demographic shifts and workforce planning needs and Improving stakeholder relationships across the public service.

Special focus was also placed on the quality of relationships between employers, trade unions, and the Council. Chambers explored ways to improve communication and transparency, reviewed rules of engagement, and emphasised the chambers' role in shaping public service employment policies. Furthermore, mental health support through employee assistance programmes, as well as stronger workplace guidelines for women and persons with disabilities, were highlighted as priority areas.

These sessions were a resounding success, providing invaluable insights that will guide the development of a responsive, inclusive, and effective strategic plan for the next five years. With these outcomes, the PSCBC is well-positioned to remain adaptive to the evolving needs of the public service workforce and to continue building a foundation of fairness, inclusivity, and collaboration.





PSCBC, GPSSBC & PSETA Graduation Ceremony

The Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC), together with the General Public Service Sector Bargaining Council (GPSSBC) and in partnership with the Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA), proudly hosted a series of provincial graduation ceremonies throughout July 2025. These ceremonies were held across four provinces: Gauteng, North West, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Eastern Cape.

The purpose of these graduations was to recognise and celebrate the dedication, commitment, and perseverance of the 560 learners who successfully completed the Skills Programme in Apply Labour Dispute Prevention Approaches. This programme forms part of a broader initiative to enhance labour relations capacity within the public service.

The ceremonies were graced by several distinguished guests, including Mr. Frikkie De Bruin, General Secretary of the PSCBC; Ms. Sharlaine Oodit, General Secretary of the GPSSBC; the Vice-Chairpersons of both Bargaining Councils; the Chief Operating Officer of PSETA; and Mr. Freeman Nkompilo from VBSKILLS.

In their keynote addresses, speakers extended warm congratulations to the graduates, acknowledging that their achievement marks a significant milestone in both their personal and professional lives. They highlighted

that this qualification opens doors to new career opportunities, potential advancement, and future academic pursuits. Importantly, they praised the graduates for embracing lifelong learning, describing it as a vital tool for those seeking to make a lasting impact within the public service.

The PSCBC, GPSSBC, and PSETA collectively extended their heartfelt appreciation to the graduates for their commitment to self-development and professional excellence. They noted that these individual accomplishments contribute meaningfully to strengthening labour relations and improving service delivery across the public service.

The ceremonies were a great success, filled with joy, pride, and celebration. The remarkable dedication of the graduates was evident, making these events not only a recognition of achievement but also a testament to the transformative power of education in shaping the future of public service.





67 Minutes of Mandela Day at Bombani Shelter for Abused Women and Children

In honour of Nelson Mandela's legacy of service, the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) dedicated its 67 Minutes of Mandela Day to supporting the Bombani Shelter for Abused Women and Children in Alexandra. The shelter serves as a safe haven for victims of gender-based violence, working closely with the South African Police Service and civil society organisations in Gauteng, and is staffed by professional social workers who assist victims in overcoming trauma.

As part of the initiative, the PSCBC called for donations of non-perishable items, a request that was generously answered by both staff and Council members. Beyond donations, the day was filled with activities aimed at promoting wellbeing and skills development. A yoga session, facilitated by Mr. Oomang Parag, PSCBC Senior Manager for ICT, encouraged mindfulness and healing, while staff members under the guidance of Ms Shriya Budhram, PSCBC Administrator, hosted crochet lessons to help women and shelter staff develop new income-generating skills.

PSCBC Staff and volunteers also assisted with cooking and helped refurbish the shelter's walls through painting, creating a brighter and more welcoming environment.

In his address, the General Secretary of the PSCBC, Mr. Frikkie De Bruin, thanked staff and Council members for their contributions. He stressed that Mandela Day is not about recognition but about making a lasting impact on the lives of those most in need.

The PSCBC remains committed to supporting initiatives that promote dignity, empowerment, and social justice. For more information or to support the Bombani Shelter, contact them at 011 027 1513 or info@bombanishelter.org.



NEHAWU Hosts Its National Organising, Servicing, and Bargaining Conference at **Birchwood Conference Centre**

The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU) hosted its National Organising, Servicing, and Bargaining Conference from 27–29 August 2025 at the Birchwood Conference Centre. The event was held under the theme:

"Strengthening workplace organisation to defend collective bargaining, deepen class consciousness, and advance internationalism."

The conference served as a platform for NEHAWU to review its national bargaining strategy across public service sectors, strengthen workplace organisation, and advance internationalist alliances. The PSCBC proudly exhibited at the three-day conference, engaging delegates on its mandate and role in advancing effective labour relations.

The event opened with a keynote address by Comrade Mike Shingange, President of NEHAWU, who reminded delegates that a union's true strength is not measured at conferences but in the daily struggles of its branches and workplaces. He emphasised that branches must remain active at all times, and leaders must carry the responsibility of ensuring that workers' challenges are never ignored. "If workers cannot sleep peacefully because of unresolved issues, then union leaders cannot afford to sleep either," he stated, underscoring the deep responsibility of leadership.



The Minister of Public Service and Administration, Honourable Inkosi Mzamo Buthelezi, addressed delegates on key issues affecting the public service. His remarks carried direct significance for the PSCBC and its stakeholders. The Minister emphasised the need to restore the Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) to its founding mandate, raising concerns over governance lapses, fraud, and corruption. He reaffirmed government's commitment to working closely with NEHAWU, the PSCBC, and other partners to strengthen oversight. Concluding his address, the Minister pledged stronger accountability, closer engagement with organised labour, and collective efforts to build a resilient, citizen-centred public service.

On the second day, the General Secretary of the PSCBC, Mr. Frikkie De Bruin, delivered a thought-provoking address on the "State of Collective Bargaining: Challenges and Opportunities." He highlighted critical issues within the public service, including non-compliance with collective agreements such as GEHS, GEMS, the Service Charter, the Public Sector Summit Agreement, and the Professionalisation of the Public Service. He also raised concerns about wasteful expenditure linked to legal costs, referencing the National Treasury investigation, as well as the implementation of Resolution 2 of 2025. Delegates actively engaged with the General Secretary during a lively Q&A session, further strengthening dialogue between leadership and members.



In addition to formal proceedings, the PSCBC hosted an exhibition stand where delegates interacted with Council representatives. A fun Q&A session about the PSCBC's mandate and role created an interactive platform for members to learn more about the organisation's work and impact.



PSCBC Attends the **Annual Government Employees Medical Scheme Symposium** at Focus Rooms, Sandton

The Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) brought together key stakeholders, including government representatives, labour, health sector partners, and policy experts, at its annual GEMS Symposium held at Focus Rooms, Sandton, 28–29 August 2025. The symposium was hosted under the theme: "Building a Sustainable & Affordable Future: Enhancing Member Value in a Changing Healthcare Landscape."

The event provided a platform to explore how a member-focused healthcare system can deliver better value, improve access, and ensure long-term sustainability. Key strategies discussed included risk pooling, strategic cost management, preventative care models, and digital transformation, with a strong emphasis on collaborative action to build a resilient healthcare system that prioritises member well-being and long-term value.

The General Secretary of the PSCBC, Mr. Frikkie De Bruin, represented 1.3 million public servants during an interactive expert panel session focusing on Member Centricity. Drawing on recent PSCBC research, he raised urgent concerns regarding the affordability and accessibility of GEMS. He reminded delegates that GEMS was founded to ensure that every public servant, regardless of income, has access to affordable, quality healthcare and promise now under strain. Key challenges highlighted included; contributions rising faster than wages, increasing out-of-pocket expenses, uneven access to services and complex communication that makes navigating the scheme difficult for members.

Mr. De Bruin emphasised that public servants are not asking for luxury, but for dignity, the assurance that teachers, nurses, police officers, cleaners, and administrative personnel receive care when they need it most. He called on unions, government, GEMS leadership, and healthcare partners to work together to address the affordability challenge, stressing that only joint efforts can ensure GEMS remains the trusted guardian of public servants' health and well-being.

Broader symposium discussions included strategies to; strengthen GEMS governance, improve service delivery within the healthcare system, tackle fraud and corruption and ensure the scheme adapts to changing member needs in an evolving fiscal environment. Collectively, these discussions reflected a shared commitment to safeguarding the founding vision of GEMS while responding to the pressing realities faced by its members today.





National Teachers' Union Celebrates Its **107th Triennial National Conference**

The PSCBC was honoured to attend the National Teachers' Union (NATU) 107th Triennial National Conference, held at the Birchwood OR Tambo Conference Centre in Boksburg from 03–05 September 2025. The event, themed "Beyond the Classroom: Re-imagining Education Funding to Support Teachers and Transform Education," brought together educators, union leaders, and government representatives to reflect on the future of education in South Africa.

On the first day, PSCBC General Secretary Mr. Frikkie De Bruin addressed the delegates, acknowledging NATU's 107-year legacy and principled leadership. He highlighted that teachers remain the architects of South Africa's future, often working under overcrowded and under-resourced conditions. Mr. De Bruin stressed the need to reimagine education funding, placing teachers at the centre of policy and prioritising investment in people over infrastructure. He further emphasised that collective bargaining is a constitutional right and pledged PSCBC's continued solidarity with NATU in advancing support for educators.



The sentiments were echoed by Deputy Minister of Basic Education Dr. Makgabo Reginah Mhaule, who underscored the importance of supporting teachers as the backbone of the education system. She highlighted the need for holistic education funding that balances salaries with resources for infrastructure, learning materials, transport, and Early Childhood Development programs. She also called for teacher development, wellbeing initiatives, and access to digital tools to empower educators to innovate beyond the classroom.

On day two, Minister of Public Service Administration Honourable Inkosi Mzamo Buthelezi delivered a passionate address on the systemic challenges facing teachers, including corruption, political interference, and unequal resource distribution.



He stressed that teachers' wellbeing is critical to effective teaching and encouraged delegates to uphold ethical leadership while prioritising educators' development and dignity.

FEDUSA General Secretary Ms. Riefdah Ajan also addressed the conference, highlighting the need to eradicate corruption, recognise teachers' value, and defend collective bargaining. She encouraged delegates to build alliances and work boldly to restore dignity in public schools.

The conference also marked the election of NATU's new leadership. PSCBC congratulates the newly elected office bearers:

- President: S.V. Malinga
- Deputy President: G.M. Mabuza
- General Secretary: M. Mabija
- Vice Presidents: S.A. Dlamini, P. Mnabe, S.L. Mabele and B.Z. Mbatha

The PSCBC looks forward to continued collaboration in championing teachers' rights, ensuring they are supported, valued, and empowered to shape the nation's future.



SAPS Division of Visible **Policing** **Women's Month Celebration** at Arcadia Hotel

The South African Police Service, Division of Visible Policing hosted an insightful Women's Month Celebration on 5 September 2025 at the Arcadia Hotel in Pretoria, under the theme Accelerating Action for Gender Equality. The event brought attention to key workplace challenges faced by women, including sexual harassment and bullying, while emphasising the importance of equal opportunities and empowerment for women.

The event was officially opened by Brigadier Tsakane Mtileni, who extended a warm welcome to all attendees and highlighted the role of Women's Month in driving meaningful change for women in the workplace. In her opening remarks, she urged women to empower one another, pursue education, explore entrepreneurship, and refrain from gossip, stressing that collective support and personal growth are key.

Also present at the event was Brigadier Njikela, who addressed the gathering on issues affecting women in the workplace. She spoke about the prevalence of sexual harassment and gender-based violence (GBV), noting the high levels of GBV in professional environments and its impact on women's mental health. She emphasised that the police service maintains a zero-tolerance approach to GBV and is developing new policies to address sexual harassment and violence in the workplace. Brigadier Njikela also spoke on the importance of women actively implementing these policies to protect themselves and others from abuse. She further noted that the Constitution provides a framework for women to thrive in their careers and outlined the processes for reporting sexual harassment, reinforcing SAPS's commitment to a safe, inclusive, and supportive work environment for all women.

Representing the General Secretary of the PSCBC, was the Senior Manager for ICT, Mr Oomang Parag. He gave an address at the gathering as he reflected on the history of Women's Day, noting that women of today are leading divisions, and emphasised that women play a crucial role in getting things done. He acknowledged the challenges women face in the police division and stressed the importance of mental well-being alongside physical safety, highlighting the PSCBC's continued efforts to provide support systems for Police officers.

Mr Parag further noted that Women's Day is a reminder of the power of the women's movements and the progress achieved since the appointment of the first women police officers in 1972. He praised the attendees as products of generations of courageous women, describing them as the heartbeat of policing, and encouraged them to continue to build a service based on unity, respect, inclusivity, and integrity. He concluded by urging women to keep shining, leading, and inspiring.





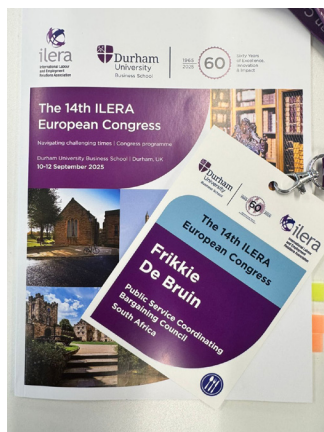
PSCBC General Secretary Mr Frikkie De Bruin represents South Africa at the **14th ILERA European Congress**

The Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council General Secretary, Mr. Frikkie de Bruin, represented South Africa at the 14th ILERA European Congress, held at Durham University Business School in the United Kingdom from 10 to 12 September 2025. The congress was hosted under the theme "Navigating Challenging Times" and brought together academics, researchers, and practitioners in the field of industrial and employment relations from across the globe.

Mr. De Bruin actively contributed to several sessions during the congress, showcasing South Africa's experiences and perspectives. He participated in a special session on Industrial Researchers and their Professional Associations, where discussions centred on the crucial role that both national and international professional associations play in supporting research and knowledge exchange.



Another significant highlight was his participation in the session on "The Role of Gender in the Employment Relationship, Global Issues and Aspects." Here, Mr. De Bruin presented a thought-provoking paper on "The Influence of Gender Equality on Employment Relations and Social Policies in the South African Public Service." His insights generated robust discussions among global peers and highlighted the strides South Africa has made, while also reflecting on ongoing challenges in advancing gender equality in the workplace.



As the congress concluded, Mr. De Bruin also took part in the session on "Past and Current Developments and Challenges in Industrial Relations," where he shared perspectives on Labour Relations in 30 Years of South African Democracy. His contribution provided delegates with an important reflection on the progress and complexities of labour relations within the South African public service. The PSCBC is honoured to have contributed to these important international conversations on labour relations, gender equality, and social justice. Our participation reaffirms the Council's commitment to ensuring that the experiences and voices of the South African Public Service remain part of shaping global perspectives on these critical issues.



Case Law Summary: Ziphate Mboneni Cibane and Nonhlanhla Pamela Hlongwa v Premier of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal

The case of Ziphate Mboneni Cibane and Another v Premier of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal and Another (Labour Appeal Court of South Africa, Case No. DA 15/2024, delivered 15 July 2025) concerned an appeal against the Labour Court's refusal to quash disciplinary proceedings instituted against two senior managers in the Office of the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal. The appellants, one serving as Chief Financial Officer and the other as Director: Supply Chain Management, were implicated in a 2017 forensic report that recommended disciplinary action for alleged breaches of the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 (PFMA) and related procurement policies. However, formal disciplinary charges were only brought in July 2020, nearly three years after the Premier had first informed them of the report's findings. The appellants contended that the long delay rendered the proceedings unlawful, and that the employer had effectively waived its right to discipline them.

The disciplinary hearing commenced in February 2021 before a senior counsel appointed as chairperson. At the outset, the appellants raised preliminary objections based on unreasonable delay and waiver, but these were dismissed in July 2021. The chairperson held that the delay was adequately explained, that any prejudice to the appellants could be addressed in the enquiry itself, and that assurances they claimed to have received from the Premier did not amount to a waiver since such assurances were not legally binding. The Labour Court later dismissed the appellants' application to review this ruling, reasoning that despite the unexplained delay, the seriousness of the charges and the public interest in ensuring accountability for PFMA breaches outweighed the prejudice claimed by the appellants. The Court further held that a public authority cannot waive a statutory power or duty exercised in the public interest, such as the power to discipline employees for financial misconduct.



On appeal, the Labour Appeal Court considered both the procedural and substantive aspects of the case. A central issue was whether the Labour Court had jurisdiction to grant the declaratory relief sought by the appellants, namely to declare the delay unreasonable and the charges permanently quashed. The Court revisited its earlier decision in *Booyesen v Minister of Safety and Security* (2011) 32 ILJ 112 (LAC); [2011] 1 BLLR 83 (LAC), which had recognised that the Labour Court may intervene in incomplete disciplinary proceedings in exceptional cases. However, it contrasted this with subsequent Constitutional Court decisions that restricted the Labour Court's jurisdiction, particularly *Steenkamp & others v Edcon Ltd* (2016) 37 ILJ 564 (CC); [2016] ZACC 1, which held that the Labour Court has no general jurisdiction to declare dismissals unlawful, and *Baloyi v Public Protector* 2021 (2) BCLR 101 (CC); (2021) 42 ILJ 961 (CC), which confirmed that the Labour Court's jurisdiction is confined to matters specifically assigned to it by statute. The Labour Appeal Court concluded that *Booyesen* should not be interpreted as granting a general supervisory power over incomplete disciplinary proceedings; rather, jurisdiction must be established in each case with reference to statutory provisions and the pleadings.

The Court also rejected the appellants' claim that the delay warranted terminating the proceedings.

It emphasised that the seriousness of the allegations, which involved alleged violations of the PFMA by senior officials, raised issues of public accountability that outweighed the appellants' claim of prejudice. Moreover, it found that the appellants had failed to establish a contractual or statutory basis for relief, nor had they disclosed valid grounds for reviewing the chairperson's interlocutory ruling under section 158(1)(h) of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995. Importantly, the Court reiterated the principle that reviews "in medias res" — before the finalisation of internal disciplinary proceedings — should only be entertained in exceptional circumstances, consistent with section 158(1B) of the LRA.

Ultimately, the Labour Appeal Court dismissed the appeal, holding that the Labour Court had been correct to decline jurisdiction over the declaratory relief and to reject the review application. It reaffirmed that public employers cannot waive disciplinary powers that exist in the public interest, that excessive delays alone do not automatically justify terminating proceedings, and that employees may not rely on mid-process litigation strategies to derail disciplinary enquiries. The decision thus underscores the principle of expeditious dispute resolution envisaged by the LRA while balancing the public interest in accountability for serious misconduct.



VISION

"Ensuring workplace democratization, economic development, social justice and labour peace for the public service"

MISSION

"Embracing the future of work by advancing and protecting centralised collective bargaining, ensuring effective dispute management and good governance, empowering women, persons with disabilities and youth"

VALUES

Integrity Efficiency Accountability Good
governance Equity

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