

MEDIA RELEASE	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework: PSA expectations
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The Public Servants Association (PSA), representing more than 230 000 public-sector employees, calls on National Treasury to prioritise the needs of the public by ensuring stability in the Public Service in the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF).

Government continues contributing to exacerbate the state of the Public Service with its current approach. Instead of prioritising the recovery processes of funds lost owing to corruption and fraud, it is urging National Treasury to refrain from creating budgets to please political agendas. The PSA has consistently been consistently calling on government to start collecting these "lost" funds, which processes are subjected to endless and costly commissions with no prosecutions and recoveries. The shortcomings and deficiencies are furthermore also not addressed and allow for unabated looting.

The PSA has in previous years and in the Union's demands, called on government to not only stop appointing contractors and outsourcing government functions at a cost, but to also stop frivolous expenditure. These calls fell on deaf ears, and it is becoming a norm to blame rising expenditure on the public servants who face excessive overtime sometimes without compensation, shortages of staff, and poor working conditions, including unsafe buildings.

As a result, the PSA calls for allocations to the Department of Public Works to prioritise the restoration of unsafe government buildings to prevent disasters that are waiting to happen. The PSA also calls for the strengthening of the Security Clusters, such as the Department of Home Affairs, the Border Management Agency, the Special Investigating Unit, the National Prosecuting Authority, and the South African Police Service. These key institutions must be reinforced urgently to address the country's high crime rate, corruption and shortages that are contributing to the collapse of the Public Service. Improvements in the Security Cluster will also prevent the random destruction of infrastructure, such as railway lines, and electricity cables, which further impacts on the struggling economy, business investment and employment opportunities.

Community Health Workers have played a key role in curbing of the spread of COVID-19 and providing critical health services to communities. The PSA is extremely concerned that the essential role of this group of workers is not valued, recognised, and corrected. Community Health Workers have been utilised by government, but they are denied recognition as employees by means of permanent absorption. The absorption of these workers must be prioritised.

Despite a steep population increase over the years, the Public Service staffing structure is expected to decrease at the expense of service delivery. The PSA thus again appeals to all stakeholders to allow the Minister of Public Service and Administration to effectively run the affairs of her Department. The adjusted METF must also provide for this, including arear payment of salary increases that were due in 2020 and remaining increases for the 2021-financial year.



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