

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**PSA concerned about border emergency response following accident at Oshoek Border, Mpumalanga**

**DATE**

28 January 2025

**EMBARGO**

None

**ENQUIRIES**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is concerned following a serious accident that occurred on 26 January 2025 at the Oshoek Border Post in Mpumalanga.

A heavy truck travelling to the Kingdom of Eswatini experienced brake failure, resulting in a multi-vehicle collision and extensive damage to infrastructure, including guardhouses used by immigration and SARS Customs officials. Three people were injured, including a SARS official, a tourism monitor, and the truck driver. In the immediate aftermath, emergency response teams from Eswatini swiftly attended to the injured, transporting them to a nearby hospital.

Whilst the PSA acknowledges and appreciates Eswatini's swift response, it is very concerning that South African emergency services were unresponsive, leaving a neighbouring country to step in during a critical time. This incident exposes glaring deficiencies in South Africa's border management and emergency response systems. The PSA is particularly alarmed by the apparent lack of preparedness at a major border post that handles high volumes of daily traffic. A more severe incident could have had catastrophic consequences owing to the absence of a coordinated South African emergency response.

The PSA highlights this incident as a wake-up call for authorities to urgently address inadequacies in emergency services and border management. Immediate investment is needed to enhance the capacity of emergency response teams, upgrade infrastructure, and implement robust safety measures to protect officials, travellers, and trade operations.

The damaged guardhouses have been temporarily closed, with affected officials being relocated to alternative workspaces. The PSA will closely monitor the Border Management Authority's response to this situation and remains committed to advocating for the swift implementation of safety measures and emergency response protocols at all South African border posts. The PSA calls on the relevant authorities to take decisive action to prevent similar incidents and to prioritise the safety and security of South Africa's borders for the benefit of the public and officials.

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