

<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	Unutilised state-owned properties: PSA calls for urgent, comprehensive plan
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the recent revelation that taxpayers have paid a staggering R65 million in rates and services for more than 1 000 vacant state-owned properties.

This information, disclosed by the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, highlights a significant misuse of public funds at a time when the country faces numerous socio-economic and financial challenges. As of January 2025, there are 1 259 state-owned vacant lands, 207 unoccupied houses, and 830 abandoned farms that remain unallocated for utilisation. Government is potentially losing an estimated R83 million in revenue by not leasing out these properties.

The PSA calls for an urgent and comprehensive plan to address this matter. Government must take immediate steps to conduct a thorough audit of all state-owned properties to determine the current status and potential utilisation. A strategic plan must be developed for the allocation and utilisation of these properties to ensure their contribution to economic growth and social development. The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure must ensure transparency and accountability in the management of state-owned properties to prevent wasteful expenditure. Exploring opportunities for public-private partnerships to develop and manage these properties can also contribute towards a solution and is encouraged. Strategic utilisation of these properties can also contribute to employment creation for various disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of people. Engagement with relevant ministries is thus recommended.

The PSA urges government to act swiftly in addressing this matter and ensure that unutilised state-owned properties and public funds are used effectively to the benefit of all South Africans.

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