



# Izwi lase OPSC

Jan/Feb/Mar 2022

Custodian of Good Governance

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## Editorial

**W**e are pleased to present the fourth quarter edition of Izwi lase OPSC. This is the final edition for the 2021/2022 financial year.

The Plenary meeting, which was held in March 2022, approved the new vision and mission for the Public Service Commission (PSC). All members of Team PSC are required to familiarize themselves with the new vision and mission and all the PSC reports and related publications should reflect it.

The PSC released its quarterly publication titled the Pulse of the Public Service through a media briefing at the Government Communication on 30 March 2022. We reflect on the briefing. We also report about the Lifestyle Audit Indaba which was organized by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) from 17-18 March 2022. The PSC was represented at the Indaba.

As part of Human Rights Day commemoration, the PSC in the Eastern Cape participated at the Human Right event in Bizana. The Provincial Director, Mr Loyiso Mgengo and Commissioner Anele Gxoyiya represented the PSC and in this edition, we report about the commemoration.

The Office of the Public Service Commission held its Operational Review Seminar from 10-11 March 2022. The seminar, which was aimed at identifying operational challenges with the view to come up with solutions to those challenges, was a resounding success and we report about the event.

We also touch on the following:

- PSC's participation at the Future of Work Indaba
- Pension matters
- Vaccine certificates



## Vision

“An impartial and innovative champion of public administration excellence in South Africa.”

## Mission

“To actively promote the constitutional values and principles as well as service excellence in public administration practices which result in a capable, ethical, innovative and developmental state.”

# Izwi lase OPSC

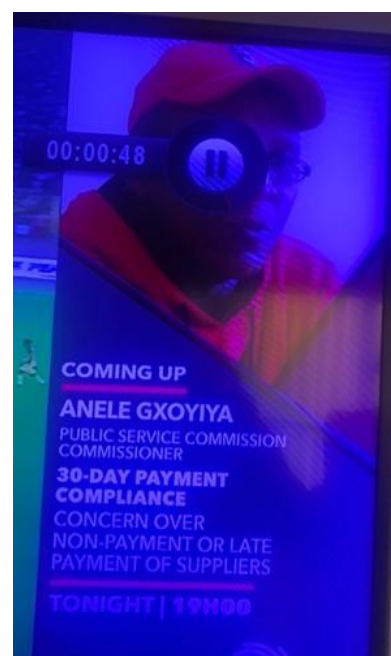
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## PSC RELEASES THE PULSE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE FOR THE PERIOD 01 OCT TO 31 DEC 2022

On Wednesday, 30 March 2022, the PSC held a media briefing to release the Quarterly Bulletin titled: The Pulse of the Public Service. The Quarterly Bulletin focused on amongst others, the following:

- Non-payment of government suppliers within 30 days by departments;
- Promotion of Constitutional Values and Principles - A PSC reflection on local government
- Capacitating the youth to fight corruption
- Complaints and grievances handled by the PSC up to 31 December 2021

The highlight of the bulletin was on the non-payment or late payment of suppliers, as this imposes dire consequences on the financial health of businesses. The media briefing received maximum coverage from TV, Radio, Online and print media and Commissioner Anele Gxoyiya was also interviewed in various radio stations and TV.



# PULSE

OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

**VOLUME 19**

01 OCTOBER - 31 DECEMBER 2021



## HUMAN RIGHTS DAY COMMEMORATION

On Thursday, 24 March 2022 Commissioner Anele Gxoyiya accompanied by the Provincial Director in the Eastern Cape, Mr Loyiso Mgengo, represented the PSC at the Human Rights Day commemoration in Bizana, Eastern Cape. The theme for the event was *"Accessing Human Rights"*.

The history of Human Rights Day is grounded in the Sharpeville Massacre that took place on 21 March 1960, where the apartheid police shot and killed 69 people during a peaceful protest. This year's commemoration coincided with the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution. The Constitution enshrines the rights of all people in South Africa and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom.

During the event, Commissioner Gxoyiya made a presentation focussing on the mandate of the PSC, the Constitutional Values and Principles (CVPs) and the role played by the PSC in Human Rights services. In his presentation, Commissioner Gxoyiya said that "building integrity is crucial in addressing poverty and inequality. The value of human dignity as well as the principle of high standard of professional Ethics should at all times guide the behaviour of government officials when delivering government services".

He further mentioned that the PSC, through its work and advocacy, was able to assist SMMEs by facilitating payment for outstanding invoices beyond 30 days, owed by government and payment of outstanding pension claims that have exceeded 90 days amongst others. He also emphasized the importance of the promotion of the CVPs as they will influence public servants' actions and decisions, which must be premised on the ethical values of responsibility, accountability, fairness and transparency. In conclusion, Commissioner Gxoyiya said that "the PSC will continue to encourage officials to promote a sound, efficient, effective, transparent and accountable administration. The PSC appreciates the work of the Human Rights Commission in ensuring that the dignity of the citizens is restored".

***Full presentation can be accessed from the Intranet under Presentations.***



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## LIFESTYLE AUDIT INDABA

On 17-18 March 2022, the PSC participated at the Lifestyle Audit Indaba, organized by the DPSA. The theme for the Indaba was "Building an ethical Public Service through lifestyle audits". The two-day Lifestyle Audit Indaba was aimed at strengthening disclosure and fight corrupt activities in the public service.



In delivering the opening remarks, the Minister for the Public Service and Administration, Ms Ayanda Dlodlo said that "corruption undermines democracy and the rule of law, it leads to violations of human rights, distorts markets, erodes the quality of life and allows organized crime, terrorism and other threats to human security to flourish. It is for this reason that the South African government remains steadfast in its commitment to eradicate corruption".

She further mentioned that from 01 April 2021, the conducting of lifestyle audits will become compulsory. In terms of legislation, Heads of Departments are tasked with ethics and anti-corruption functions, thereby placing the responsibility to fight corruption and to build ethical departments. They are also responsible to implement lifestyle audits in their respective departments.

The stakeholders involved in the Lifestyle Audit process included the Director-Generals of the Public Service Commission, Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, National School of Government, Presidency, Directorate of Priority Crime Investigation, National Prosecuting Authority, Financial Intelligence Centre and Auditor-General South Africa.

Addressing delegates on behalf of the PSC, Mr Cameron Jacobs said "the Public Service has the benefit of a value system that is prescriptive in section 195 of the Constitution which must determine how public servants and public officials serve the interests and welfare of society and the citizens". He said that the Constitutional Values and Principles represent a constitutional directive in respect of good governance and public leadership in the public sector. "Values and principles must guide the actions of all of us throughout the governance system. Our actions must be embedded in a culture of values".

Mr Jacobs further mentioned that Ethics Officers should be brave, do what is right, have the courage of their convictions, and be a vocal advocate for the Constitutional Values and Principles. They should be citizen centric and be the servant of the people".

He concluded by saying that "Ethics Officers have a responsibility to shift the thinking in the Public Service toward the mobilization and empowerment of others and to create a governance system based on the fundamental Values and Principles of the Constitution".

***Full presentation can be accessed from the Intranet under Presentations.***

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## OPSC REVIEW ITS OPERATIONS AT A SEMINAR

The Office of the Public Service Commission held an Operational Review Seminar from 10 – 11 March 2022 at the University of South Africa. Led by the Director-General, Advocate Dinkie P Dube, the Seminar was attended by amongst others, PSC investigators and members of the Senior Management Services. The guest speaker was Prof. Thuli Madonsela.

The aim of the Operational Review Seminar was to identify operational challenges/inefficiencies and propose solutions. There were robust discussions amongst participants during the two-day session with interesting ideas coming to the fore relating to solutions on how to deal with the operational challenges. It was agreed that an implementation plan based on the solutions would be compiled and once finalized, it will be shared with the members of Team PSC.

The Operational Seminar was a resounding success and congratulation goes to the organizing team under the leadership of the Chief Director: People Management Practices for a job well done. Congratulations mainly goes to all the participants for making the event a success through their participation.





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## PSC PARTICIPATES AT THE FUTURE OF WORK INDABA

The PSC under the leadership of the Acting Chairperson, Professor Somadoda Fikeni participated at the Future of Work Indaba arranged by the Ministry for Public Service and Administration from 14-15 March 2022. The Indaba was held under the theme: **Growing South Africa together for a capable and ethical Public Service.**

Professor Fikeni delivered a message of support at the Indaba. On the other, the Director-General, Advocate Dinkie P Dube facilitated a panel discussion on skills required and the recruitment of new millennials in the Public Service.



## PENSION MATTERS

The Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF) is concerned with the increase in the number of unclaimed benefits and wants to pay them out. If you are a former government employee who did not claim a pension on retirement, it is possible you have money owed to you.

If you are a dependent of a deceased person who worked for government, and whose pension was never claimed at the time of their death, you could possibly also have a claim. This could also relate to individuals who were minor children at the time of a parent's death but who are now adults.

Unclaimed benefits occur when a member leaves the fund, retires, or passes away, but the benefit is not paid to the member or beneficiary within 24 months of the last day of service in line with the rules of the Fund. The main reasons for benefits not being claimed is usually an administration issue.

Therefore, it is important for members to ensure that their information is up to date, especially their nomination forms. As a member you need to make sure your nomination forms are up to date with the latest contact details of your beneficiaries.

These are some of the reasons claims are processed:

- A member's exit documents, known as Z102 may not have been submitted when the member left the fund or contained errors that have not been rectified.
- The GEPF is unable to get a tax directive from SARS as the member or beneficiaries tax affairs are not in order. This could be because they not registered for have outstanding tax returns
- The benefits are paid but are returned to GEPF due to incorrect banking details, frozen or dormant accounts, incorrect pay points.
- The GEPF does not have enough information with respect of the deceased member's spouse(s) or beneficiaries to enable them to claim their benefits or for the fund to pay the benefits to them.

Contact the following officials during office hours (Monday to Friday between 07:00 - 16:00)

Unclaimed benefit tracing section:

Elizabeth Diale – 012 399 - 2464

Patience Sejane – 012 319 1286

Government Employees Pension Fund

Source:





## COVID-19 VACCINATION CERTIFICATE

### VACCINATION CERTIFICATE

Get your COVID-19 Digital Vaccination Certificate at <https://vaccine.certificate.health.gov.za>

- You will need your vaccination code and the ID, Passport, Asylum or Refugee number you used when you registered for your vaccine.
- Certificates issued after 8 Oct 2021 do not expire.
- New versions of the certificates will be introduced over time with extra security and features.
- The Vaccine Passport linked to a mobile application will be ready towards the end of November 2021
- If you lost your EVDS vaccination code or did not receive a code via SMS you can call 0800 029 999.
- If your vaccination record was not captured on EVDS when you were vaccinated, you will need to contact the vaccination site and get them to capture your record on the system.
- Most countries will accept the digital COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate for travel, but you need to check the policy of the country you are visiting. You'll need to show your certificate along with your passport.
- If your personal details are not correct on your certificate, call 0800 029 999 or email [evdsqueries@health.gov.za](mailto:evdsqueries@health.gov.za)
- The QR code on the current version of the certificate is not human readable. The QR code on the next version can be scanned by travel authorities and third parties to verify the certificate.
- The certificate includes the name of the vaccine you received (not the manufacturer). The J&J vaccine is called Janssen. The Pfizer vaccine is called Comirnaty.





Custodian of Good Governance



## NIPPING OFFICE GOSSIP IN THE BUD

To partake in gossip seems to be a fundamental human instinct, probably because our lives are deeply rooted in groups and communities and we depend on these people to survive. Research has found that people spend nearly an hour each day gossiping. Not all of this behind-the-back chat is negative – there are positive forms of gossip and these conversations can be a pleasant distraction from the routine of everyday living. That having been said, negative gossip at work can turn a healthy workplace into a toxic environment.

*"Research has found that people spend nearly an hour each day gossiping."*

### MALICIOUS GOSSIP

The type of gossip that stirs up trouble for an organisation is the kind that is caused by ill intentions towards an individual or group. This type of gossip can be harmful to productivity and taint organisational or departmental culture. If ignored, it can ruin professional and personal relationships, get people fired and drive good employees away.

*"Exercising strong leadership means learning how to rein in gossip before it impacts an organisation."*

#### A good leader can stop office gossip in its tracks.

Exercising strong leadership means learning how to rein in gossip before it impacts an organisation.

One of the best ways to deal with gossip as a leader is by being a positive role model. Managers who consistently demonstrate integrity will inspire the same from their employees.

They do not spread rumours and avoid criticising their superiors in front of staff members.

They stay ahead of the game by communicating with their employees and addressing rumours head-on.

They set an example with a leadership style built on openness and trust.

### HERE ARE FIVE (5) TIPS TO HELP MANAGERS EFFECTIVELY NIP WORKPLACE GOSSIP IN THE BUD:

#### 1. MAINTAIN AN OPEN-DOOR POLICY

One of the advantages of employing an open door policy is that it can help eliminate rumours and gossip in the workplace. One of the reasons that employees will gossip is that management does not communicate sufficiently with them about what is happening with the organisation. Encouraging lower-level employees to communicate with their managers can do away with much of the gossip and negative rumours in the company.

One of the reasons that employees will gossip is that management does not communicate sufficiently with them about what is happening with the organisation.

#### 2. QUICKLY PROVIDE CLEAR AND CANDID INFORMATION

Avoid withholding information and rather create an environment of transparency and trust. Nothing gets the rumour mill working faster than silence from management on a controversial issue. This is particularly true during times of change when workplace gossip tends to spread like wildfire.

#### 3. ADDRESS WORKPLACE GOSSIP WITHOUT DELAY

Whether the rumour circulating is about the organisation or a particular employee, do not stand back to see if this negative gossip runs its course without intervention. The lasting feelings created by such gossip are destructive and will fester and lower morale, disrupting employee engagement.

Take action immediately to address the issue at the source of the gossip. This will help employees feel safe and supported in their work environment and stay focused on their jobs.

#### 4. SHARE PRAISE EQUALLY

When management exhibits a tendency to favour particular staff members over others, hurtful rumours are likely to follow, born of resentment. Conversely, workplace gossip about individual employees is less likely to occur when everyone feels that their work is appreciated. Show your staff that you value collaboration by praising everyone equally for the roles they play in helping the team meet its goals.

#### 5. CLARIFY INDIVIDUAL ROLES

Disagreements and jockeying for position can result from team members not fully understanding the role each team member plays in a project. Be explicit when you assign duties, and make sure everyone is aware of the chain of command. This will help avoid squabbles that give rise to negative gossip, while also enhancing productivity.

SWITCHBOARD LINE ☎ +27 (0) 12 352 1000



SOURCE:

Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa

