



MINISTRY  
PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**MINISTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION  
HON. INKOSI MZAMO BUTHELEZI, MP**

**PRESS BRIEFING REMARKS  
LAUNCH OF THE INTEGRATED PUBLIC SERVICE MONTH (IPSM) 2024**

Ronnie Mamoepa Media Centre, GCIS Pretoria: 2 September 2024

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Good morning, members of the media.

Thank you for being here today.

It is with a profound sense of responsibility that I address you today as we launch the Integrated Public Service Month. This is a significant period in our national calendar, dedicated to recognising and reinforcing the essential role of public servants in our democracy.

Colleagues,

This year, the activities for Public Service Month will take place from September 5th to October 7th, with launch events in the Northern Cape.

As you may know, the Integrated Public Service Month (IPSM) is a well-established strategic programme of government that serves as a national platform for inter-departmental and governmental policy learning and development, as well as a public participation and engagement platform observed during September.

In the past, Public Service Month primarily focused on enhancing governance and public administration. However, the Cabinet has decided to expand the scope of Public Service Month, transforming it from a month-long celebration into a year-round programme that encompasses all related activities.

I am pleased to announce that this year's theme, **"A Government That Works For You,"** aims to restore public trust in government by embodying the spirit of our collective efforts under the 7th Administration – which is what makes this year's

integrated public service month particularly momentous, as government now reflects the diversity of the electorate in a Government of National Unity.

The GNU serves all South Africans, and we are partnering with the many voices who all want what is best for our country. Ultimately, we are one people, one government and we are stronger when we work together!

Our theme further reflects government's third key priority, as outlined by President Cyril Ramaphosa in his Opening of Parliament Address: **building a capable, ethical, and developmental state** while focusing on the greater professionalization of the public service.

When we say we are "**A Government That Works For You,**" we mean that we will actively demonstrate how the government is identifying our shortcomings and implementing effective solutions to the challenges faced in the public service. We are committed to showing South Africans that the government is fully dedicated to delivering services with excellence.

I want to remind the over 1.3 million public servants who serve over 60 million South Africans daily, that this year's theme is not just a slogan but a solemn commitment to every citizen of this nation.

I want to clarify that Public Service month is not a public relations exercise. That is why, we call on all our public servants to ensure that every citizen feels the tangible impact of good governance in their daily lives.

Therefore, for us to achieve the above we need to address all the weaknesses in our governance systems. This will require us as a department to encourage collaboration within departments.

Our national departments, provincial administrations, local government, institutions and entities, have numerous operational challenges that have hindered effective service delivery in the past. Therefore, government, will address these problems, with a strong focus on breaking down the silos that have traditionally separated our departments, by working towards fostering a spirit of greater collaboration.

Members of the Media,

While our focus will be on addressing the decline in public confidence in government service delivery, we will not spend the coming months merely criticizing and highlighting our failures.

We must be fair and give credit where it is due. Therefore, we will also acknowledge the functioning government systems and the brilliant, hardworking individuals who wake up each day to serve our people.

During the Integrated Public Service Month, we will recognize the efforts of these dedicated and patriotic public servants, who go above and beyond their call of duty to serve our people. We have over 1.3 million public servants, serving a population of just over 60 million South Africans. We will do so by individually acknowledging them in commending their work and years of service to the citizens of our country.

As we kick-off this year's Public Service celebrations, we will focus on working together across all government departments, in partnership with various stakeholders, entities and the private sector, to build a public service that is more resilient, agile and innovative in addressing our people's needs.

In terms of our frontline services, greater efforts are being made to improve governance and service delivery including through the District Development Model (DDM). During the recent Presidential Imbizo which was held in Ekurhuleni, I was deeply moved by the direct and honest feedback from residents, who asked questions to Members of the Executive.

They expressed a sincere desire to work alongside government to ensure that every resident benefits from government services. This feedback reinforces the necessity of our collaborative efforts to improve service delivery, and it highlights the urgency of our work as government in partnership with communities to drive meaningful and impactful change.

As part of the government's strategy, we are strengthening the District Development Model. Ministers and Deputy Ministers will resume their work in acting as champions for municipalities or metros that are struggling to meet their targets and deliver essential services. This approach will enable us to address service delivery gaps more effectively and ensure that no community is left behind.

Despite numerous challenges and, at times, seemingly insurmountable odds, our government has succeeded in delivering basic services to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our society.

In the past year alone, we have seen significant advancements in the public service, and it is essential that we continue to build on this progress and maintain the momentum to accelerate service delivery for all South Africans. This involves not only professionalising our public service but also committing to ongoing training, skills development, and a thorough review of our current practices, such as addressing the ethical standards of our public servants.

We must thank all our honest public servants, who are brave enough to come forward to blow the whistle on corruption and malpractice in the workplace. We can assure all public service whistleblowers, that we will strive to protect them as far as possible. Many face death threats simply because they choose to do the right thing.

As government we will redouble our efforts to combat corruption, bribery and nepotism and strengthen our government institutions while upholding the core values of transparency and accountability that underpins the Government of National Unity.

Our commitment to ethics management remains strong. We are implementing lifestyle audits for Senior Management Members to ensure accountability. As of July 2024, 147 out of 160 national and provincial departments have completed these audits.

To further support ethical practices, we have institutionalised the Ethics Officer function across all departments. These officers promote ethics, manage conflicts of interest, and report unethical behaviour. We are also developing an Ethics Self-Assessment tool in collaboration with the National School of Government.

Discipline management is being strengthened through our Case Backlog Project, initiated in October 2023, which has ensured the resolution of numerous cases. At the end of February 2024, the seven (7) National Departments selected for intervention could resolve or uplift 133 of their long overdue suspensions (out of the total of 250 cases). This represents a finalisation rate of 53%.

The 20 Provincial Departments selected resolved 68 of the 172 long overdue cases. This represents a 40% resolution rate. Our new Directive on Discipline Management encourages timely hearings and precautionary transfers to ensure compliance with applicable timeframes for the resolution of cases.

Regarding these transfers, the department has ensured that while very senior qualified and competent officials are undergoing disciplinary processes, they do not just sit at home on suspension, but that they are transferred to another department or unit for them to use their skills and qualifications to benefit another department, unit or entity within the public service. This has proved to work well and has saved government a lot of money.

Colleagues,

A developmental public service places a high priority on growth, health, and wellness, with a strong focus on public sector employees who are dedicated to putting the needs of the people first.

We are committed to revitalising the **Batho Pele** principles, while at the same time ensuring that the well-being of our public servants is at the forefront of our efforts. This includes implementing a comprehensive mental health strategy, especially in the wake of the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Colleagues,

We have witnessed the transformative impact of technology on service delivery. Moving forward, we will continue to explore how technology can further enhance the efficiency and accessibility of our services. We will achieve this by leveraging Information and Communication Technology (ICT) innovative systems, and creative solutions, as we aim to improve our public service operations and better serve our citizens.

However, we must address challenges like ICT systems downtime, which hampers service delivery. Our commitment to digital transformation and ethics management is vital for enhancing accountability and ensuring that our public service operates with integrity.

Therefore, colleagues, members of the media,

It gives me great pleasure to announce that we have several key activities planned during the **Integrated Public Service Month** which will feature a series of impactful events aimed at enhancing service delivery and promoting ethical governance.

As indicated earlier, this week we will officially launch the 2024 Integrated Public Service Month in collaboration with the Northern Cape Provincial Government on the 5<sup>th</sup> of September.

The launch will be followed by Ethics Week from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 2024, which will introduce the Ethics Committee Procedure and provide training on lifestyle audits and discipline management. These initiatives aim to strengthen the ethical foundations of our public service.

Additionally, the Department of Public Service and Administration and the Department of Cooperative Governance (DCOG) will launch a Public Sector Ethics Survey, conducted by The Ethics Institute, to assess the state of ethics within public administration.

Another important event is a dialogue on the provision of services to persons with disabilities, scheduled for the 12<sup>th</sup> of this month. This will examine our progress in upholding the rights of people with disabilities and inform evidence-based policy recommendations.

The Service Delivery Monitoring Week will be held from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 2024. The aim is to strengthen intergovernmental relations and collaboration in ensuring effective service delivery.

The Batho Pele Week will take place throughout the week of the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> of September, incorporating the Khaedu Programme and Heritage Week.

We are delighted to inform members of the media that together with the United Nations University, the Wits School of Governance and our very own Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) will host the 17<sup>th</sup> edition of the International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance (ICEGOV), coming to Africa for the first time on the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2024 - in keeping with our commitment to transform the public service by strengthening e-government.

In the same week, the CPSI will also host a Hackathon Weekend from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of October, in partnership with the private sector to find innovative solutions to our problems in the public sector.

The Integrated Public Service Month activities will end with the Government Employees Medical Scheme - Big Walk, which will take place on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2024, reinforcing our commitment to the public service excellence and the well-being of our public servants.

In conclusion,

As we embark on this journey, we are committed to deepening the relationship between the government and the people.

We will be engaging with communities, listening to their concerns, and working collaboratively to find solutions that are sustainable and inclusive.

Our government is a government that values dialogue, participation, and the empowerment of its citizens.

In moving forward, let this Public Service Month reaffirm our unending commitment to you - the people of South Africa.

We pledge to work tirelessly, with integrity and dedication to build a public service that is efficient, compassionate and capable of driving the socio-economic transformation our country desperately needs.

You, the people of this country, have clearly expressed your desire for unity, regardless of our political and ideological differences.

As we celebrate 30 years of democracy and reflect on our many achievements, you have reminded us that there is still much work to be done.

This work must be approached collectively. Your voices were heard in your votes, which is why we have established the Government of National Unity (GNU).

Together, let us build a future where every citizen can say with confidence, ***“This is a government that works for me!”***

Thank you.