



# THE PUBLIC SERVANT

Public Service Commission's quarterly e-newsletter

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July - September 2024

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**HOST**  
LOT NDAMANOMHATA

**GUEST**  
COMM'R SALMAAN D. JACOBS

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## E-NEWSLETTER



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# EDITORIAL BOARD

Mr. Alfredt. T. Tjihambuma  
Mrs. Tangeni O.T. Haitula  
Mr. Chalo Chainda  
Ms. Selma Nalusha

## DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Mr. Chalo Chainda  
Ms. Selma Nalusha

## EDITOR

Mr. Chalo Chainda

## CONTRIBUTORS

Mr. Chalo Chainda  
Ms. Selma Nalusha

## THE PUBLIC SERVANT CONTACT DETAILS

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## THE PUBLIC SERVANT

- 🏠 P.O. Box 1117  
Windhoek, Namibia
- ☎ Tel: +264 287 3172
- ✉ Email: PSCCommunications@opm.gov.na

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# Editor's Note



## Chalo Chainda Chief Information Officer

We are excited to present Volume 5, Issue No. 2 of our online newsletter, **“The Public Servant.”** This edition covers the period from July 1 to September 30, 2024, representing the second quarter of the 2024/25 financial year. The Public Service Commission (PSC) uses this bulletin to inform its stakeholders, including the public and public servants, about the activities and work undertaken to fulfill its mandate of overseeing the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery in the public service.

The bulletin also serves to educate stakeholders about the PSC’s mandate, functions, and activities. This edition focuses on several key topics, including the newly redesigned PSC website, the Africa Public Service Day celebrations at NIPAM, and the importance of establishing a strong media and digital presence to enhance the Commission’s visibility. Additionally, it highlights the Commission’s benchmarking visit to the Public Service Commission of Zimbabwe in Harare.

Moreover, this issue emphasizes the PSC’s commitment to strengthening regional cooperation, featuring insights from the SADC Public Service Commission Forum held in Cape Town, South Africa. It also includes updates on stakeholder engagement sessions and courtesy meetings conducted during the review period, information dissemination circulars concerning retention and re-appointment in service beyond retirement age, and offers brief advice to Offices of the Ministry and Regional Councils on the application, harmonization, and interpretation of certain sections of the Public Service and Regional Councils Acts.

Furthermore, it provides a legal opinion from the Auditor General’s office on human resource-related matters. We encourage stakeholders to use this bulletin as a valuable source of information about the state of the public service and the initiatives undertaken by the Commission.

**Enjoy your reading!**





# From the Desk of The Deputy Executive Director. (DED)



**Alfred T. Tjihambuma**  
Deputy Executive Director

Welcome to this edition of **“The Public Servant”**, a quarterly newsletter that explores the latest developments in public service, highlighting key insights, emerging trends, opportunities, and challenges in human resource management. As public servants, we must stand tall and deliver services free of discrimination and prejudice. Being a public servant is a privilege, and we have to serve the nation with humility.

Vacation leave benefits are designed to provide a period of rest. Therefore, Office Managers (O/M/As) and Regional Councils (RCs) are required to manage this benefit responsibly to prevent staff members from accumulating excessive leave days, which is contrary to Staff Rules. While vacation leave does not have to be taken during festive seasons, it should be utilized within designated leave cycles.

O/M/As and RCs are advised to ensure that staff members are informed and take vacation leave during these stipulated periods as per the Public Service Staff Rules (PSSR). Human Resource Audits have revealed that leave management continues to be the most significant area of concern. As such, O/M/As are encouraged to develop effective strategies to enhance leave management.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia is currently working on the final National Development Plan (NDP 6), which will guide us toward Vision 2030. Subsequently, government institutions will create Strategic Plans that articulate the vision, mission, and core values necessary for public servants to assist the government in fulfilling its constitutional mandates. We should reflect on our current service delivery methods, prepare ourselves as public servants, and build our capacity to achieve Vision 2030.

Under the Decentralization Enabling Act, activities are transferred to regional councils, along with their associated staff and resources. Staff members are being seconded from line ministries to regional councils during this delegation phase. Those seconded to regional councils will perform functions within those councils while remaining on the staff establishment of their original line ministries, thereby remaining subject to the regulations outlined in the Public Service Act (Act 13 of 1995).

This secondment differs from traditional practices because its goal is not to reincorporate staff members into their original line ministries after a task or assignment. Instead, the intention is to transfer them permanently into the establishment of the regional councils once the delegation phase transitions to devolution. The Public Service Commission (PSC) is concerned that progress toward the devolution phase has been notably slow.

In conclusion, I extend my gratitude to all those who have contributed, in one way or another, to the production of this edition of The Public Servant.



## PSC Launches its Newly redesigned PSC website and Newsletter

In celebration of Africa Public Service Day, the Public Service Commission (PSC) launched its newly redesigned website and newsletter, highlighting our commitment to transparency and community engagement.

On June 27, 2024, the Chairperson of the Public Service Commission, Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs, officially launched the revamped PSC website along with a special edition of its newsletter, **"The Public Servant."** This event took place during the Africa Public Service Day (APSD) celebrations.

**"The Public Servant"** is a quarterly e-newsletter published by the PSC and produced by the Division of Support Services and Information Officers. It serves as a crucial platform for sharing information and news about the Commission's activities in Namibia. Both the website and newsletter play significant roles in providing updates regarding public service.

During the launch, Chairperson Jacobs encouraged Offices, Ministries, Agencies, Regional Councils, Public Servants, and the general public to visit the newly revamped website and contribute news stories and activities from their respective ministries, departments, and divisions. This collaboration will help highlight and celebrate positive initiatives within the public service, ultimately enhancing effective service delivery.

The APSD celebration began with a sports event held at Delta Secondary School from June 24 to June 25, 2024. Various Offices, Ministries, Agencies (OMAs), and Regional Councils (RCs) participated in soccer and netball tournaments, with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Safety and Security emerging as the overall winner, receiving a gold trophy.



Public Service Commission's Chairperson, Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs flanked by the Deputy Minister of Education, Arts, and Culture Hon. Faustina Caley during the launch of the PSC website and Newsletter.

The two-day APSD event was officially opened by Dr. George Simataa, Secretary to Cabinet, who encouraged Public Servants to think creatively and take pride in their work. He provided examples of the exceptional service delivery and resilience demonstrated by frontline workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Emphasizing the purpose of the APSD celebration, he stated, "The purpose of the APSD is to celebrate our achievements and reflect on past mistakes to improve as we move forward." He also highlighted the spirit of unity shown by Public Servants during the sports events.

The 2024 APSD event was held under the theme **"Empowering a Citizen-Centric Public Service for an Inclusive and Thriving 21st Century Africa: A Journey of Lifelong Learning and Technological Transformation."**



PSC Chairperson Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs address during the APSD celebration.







## An Overview of the Public Service Commission's Stakeholder Engagement: Understanding Its Mandate, Functions, and Reform.

Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs, Chairperson of the Public Service Commission (PSC), emphasized the importance of increasing the organization's visibility across media and digital platforms.

To achieve this visibility, the PSC Chairperson highlighted its functions, mandate, powers, projects, and reforms on public platforms and national broadcasters between July and August 2024. Commissioner Jacobs participated in the Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) 1on1 television program on July 30, 2024. During this appearance, he briefed the nation about the PSC's working visit to Morocco, where he, along with other Commissioners and Secretariat management, attended the 59th Board of Directors meeting of the African Training and Research Centre in Administration and Development (CAFRAD). Namibia represents the SADC Executive Committee in this meeting.

Additionally, on September 10, 2024, Commissioner Jacobs spoke at the Government Information Communication Centre (GIC).

He provided an update on the upcoming Association of African Public Service Commissions (AAPSCOMS) meeting scheduled to take place in Nairobi, Kenya, from the 6th – 8th of November 2024.

Furthermore, Mr. Alfred T. Tjihambuma, the Deputy Executive Director of the Public Service Commission (PSC), appeared on the Namibia Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) television show, “**The Public Service Corner**”.

During the show, he effectively articulated the important roles and responsibilities of the Commission.

Mr. Tjihambuma underscored the critical importance of the PSC's human resources audits currently being conducted in O/M/As and RCs and, highlighted how these audits significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public service.

He clearly outlined the essential steps that public servants must follow when appointing staff to acting positions and transferring staff members, ensuring a structured and transparent approach.

Moreover, he provided a decisive overview of the recruitment process in the public service, addressing the common challenges encountered and presenting actionable solutions to improve recruitment outcomes.

The Head of the PSC Secretariat shared key insights on enhancing the public service through the vital contributions of public servants. They clearly outlined the steps for appointing staff to acting positions, transferring employees within the public service, and navigating the recruitment processes.

Additionally, the Head addressed the challenges in these areas and provided effective strategies to successfully overcome them.





## In-depth Interview with Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs, Chairperson of the Public Service Commission



**Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs  
(Chairperson: Public Service Commission)**

**Context: Hileni Philipus-Hamunyela (HP-H):** Recently, the Public Service OMAS/RCS celebrated the Africa Public Service Day (APSD) from 26-27 June 2024 which is usually celebrated on 23 June each year. Why is it significant to celebrate such a day and briefly give us a highlight on this year's event celebration?

**Commissioner: SD Jacobs (SDJ):** First of all, The Africa Public Service Day is held on June 23 each year globally. It recognizes that democracy and successful governance are built on the foundation of a competent civil service, thus the day aims to celebrate the value and virtue of service to the community.

It rewards the creative achievements and contributions of public service institutions worldwide. This event promotes the role, professionalism, and visibility of public service. At the same time, United Nations Public Service Day is celebrated in Africa to coincide with the Africa Public Service Day.

The African Public Service Day (APSD) is commemorated at two levels, Continental and National levels under a selected theme each year. The designated theme for 2024 was: **"Empowering a Citizen-Centric Public Service for an Inclusive and Thriving 21st Century Africa: A Journey of Lifelong Learning and Technological Transformation"**.

This year we celebrated this event from the 24th – to the 27th of June since it fell on a Sunday. We therefore started with the APSD Sports Tournament at Delta Secondary School on Monday the 24th – Wednesday the 26th. The tournament comprised sports codes such as Soccer, Netball, and Volleyball both male and female.

On the fourth day, 27th June we had an opening conference which included presentations, motivational speeches, and round table panel discussions and this was followed by exhibitions from participating OMAS/RCS and Agencies who showcased their services to both the general public and public servants alike.

The two-day celebration was celebrated with an official parade procession starting from Israel Patrick Iiyambo Police College to NIPAM. It was led by the Namibia Defence Force (NDF) Band and with cultural performances from different cultural groups. I think this year's event was a great success and we can only improve on going further.

This was significant in the sense that public servants were able to share experiences, benchmark, and learn from each other's best practices in terms of service delivery thereby bringing government services closer to all our people.

**HP-H - Follow up:** First and foremost, and before we hear more about the functions and duties of the Public Service Commission; can the chairperson give a brief estimate of the current public servants in Namibia?

**Commissioner: SDJ:** Currently, the Public Servants employee's figures stand at plus minus 105 265 public servants which makes the government the biggest employer and the employer of choice.

Considerate facts such as the wage bill that the government has to carry, medical aid, housing, and social security benefits just to mention but few, thus the need for all public servants to ensure that professional service delivery takes center stage. This means we need to account for all our actions, how we conduct ourselves as civil servants when dealing with our citizens from, the way we receive visitors at our receptionists, in our offices, and at operational levels, to the way management and elected political office bearer's respond to grievances or complaints be it from the media or the general public as the citizens deserves the delivery of efficient and professional service from public sector institutions.

Thus there is a need for all of us to live by the code of ethics and public service charters of different OMAS, RCS, and Agencies that we serve.



**HP-H:** What are the powers, functions, and duties of the Public Service Commission?

**Commissioner SDJ:** In terms of Article 113 of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia the functions of the Commission shall be defined by an Act of Parliament and shall include the power:

a) To advise the President and the Government on:

- The appointment of suitable persons to specified categories of employment in the Public Service, with special regard to the balanced structuring thereof;
- The exercise of adequate disciplinary control over such persons to assure the fair administration of personnel policy;
- The remuneration of any such persons.
- All other matters, which by law, pertain to the public service.

b) To perform all functions assigned to it by Act of Parliament.

c) To, if requested by the President to do so, advise the President on the identity, availability, and suitability of persons to be appointed by the President to offices in terms of the Constitution or any other law.

- The PSC Act, 1990 (Act 2 of 1990), is an extension of the provisions of Article 113 of the Constitution. The Public Service Commission has the power of inquiry it may summon or call any person and administer an oath to or accept an affirmation from any person.
- The Public Service Act, 1995 (Act 13 of 1995) provides for both the recommendatory and advisory powers of the PSC. The Prime Minister approves various matters on the advice of the PSC. In terms of Section 9 of the Public Service Act, after consultation with the PSC, the President may vary or reject such recommendations and the Prime Minister may vary or set aside such advice.

d) The Public Service Commission also makes recommendations on the following:

- Directives, practices, and systems created to give effect to both personal and non-personal Personnel Administration.
- Deviations from the above directives, practices, and systems on the merit of individual cases,

The Public Service Commission is a major role player in the balanced structuring of Public Service through the implementation of the Affirmative Action (Employment) Act, 1998 (Act 29 of 1998) intending to “achieve equal opportunity in employment in Offices, Ministries and Agencies, as well as Regional Councils.

Furthermore, it is done by Article 10 and Article 23 of the Namibian Constitution to redress through appropriate affirmative action plans the conditions of the disadvantaged in employment experienced by persons in designated groups arising from past discriminatory laws and practices; to institute procedures to contribute towards the elimination of discrimination in employment; i.e. gender and disabled persons.

The PSC is also required to recommend and give advice about disciplinary matters in cases of misconduct, appeals, and grievances.

**HP-H:** Who appoints the Commissioners?

**Commissioner SDJ:** Subject to the provisions of Public Service Commission, Act 2 of 1990 section 2 (1) (2) (3) which deals with the establishment, constitution and members of the Commission.

- The Commission shall consist of a chairman and of not more than six and not less than three other persons **nominated by the President and appointed by the National Assembly by resolution.**
- Every member appointed in terms of subsection (2) shall be entitled to hold office as such member for five years, but shall on the expiry of his or her period of office be eligible for re-appointment.
- The act in subsection 3 goes on further and states that the President shall determine the salaries and other conditions of service of the chairman and other members of the Commission.
- Section 4. Discharge and vacation of office of members stipulates that the President may, subject to the provisions of paragraphs (c), (d) and (e), remove a member of the Commission from office –

1. on account of continued ill-health;
2. on account of misconduct;
3. on account of unfitness for the duties of his or her office or incapacity to carry them out efficiently;
4. if, for reasons other than his or her unfitness or incapacity, his or her removal from office will promote efficiency.

**HP-H - Follow-up:** Is the Commission well placed to carry its mandate?

**Commissioner SDJ:** For a body to have relevance and be able to live and deliver to its mandate thus there is a need for such an establishment such the Commission to be correctly placed within the system of the Government.

As the Constitution states under Articles 112 and 113, the Commission should advise the President and the Government on matters relating to human resources, with special emphasis on balance structuring. It further states that the Commission must be independent and act impartial.

Independency, according to our understanding does not mean autonomy only. It is more of resource capacity, both human, financial, and material, for the Commission to embark on its mandate, and for it to be able to plan properly, so that timelines and strategic objectives are met, without hindrances and bureaucratic obstacles.

This is why we are advocating for reforms in the Commission and one of the reform processes we want to achieve is the review of the current laws.

**HP-H:** The issue of balance structuring has always come out in your stakeholder’s engagements. What is the Commission doing to ensure that balance structuring is achieved in the public service?

**Commissioner SDJ:** The Commission is expected to advise the president and the Government on The appointment of suitable persons to specified categories of employment in the Public Service, with special regard to the balanced structuring thereof without a clear legal framework it becomes difficult to achieve this.





Affirmative Action and Employment Act, 1998 (Act 29 of 1998) refers only to three designated groups namely:

- a) racially disadvantaged persons
- b) women and
- c) a person with a disability.

Henceforth The PSC has embarked on a reform process to reposition itself and modernize itself and its mandate clarification for greater efficiency in service delivery. We intend to hold a high-level retreat that will bring key stakeholders together to collectively unpack some of the following:

- (i) Autonomy of the PSC
- (ii) Mandate of PSC and role (balance structuring)
- (iii) Institutional arrangement
- (iv) Legal Framework
- (v) Review the PSCS Structure
- (vi) Performance Agreement of the PSC members
- (vii) WASCOM REPORT
- (viii) Any other relevant available information
- (ix) At the end of this engagement we shall consolidate all the thoughts/ ideas into a concept paper on the way forward.

**HP-H Context:** The world is moving towards the 4th Industrial Revolution and there is a global push towards modernizing and digitalization of human resources aspects of the public service to improve service delivery. What is the vision and role of the Public Service in this regard?

**Commissioner: SDJ:** Currently, management of Human Resources and Administration is manual and results in misplacement of documents and other challenges. The PSC vision is to ensure that Human Resource matters are automated to speed up the management of cases and consolidate staff data so that information on all staff is easily accessible.

**HP-H:** What reforms or digitalization processes is the Public Service Commission undertaking to ensure a professional and efficient public service and who are the other stakeholders involved in ensuring that this is achieved this is a mammoth task that needs key players to pull together in one direction.

**Commissioner: SDJ:** The PSC embarked on the reform process with a specific focus on reviewing itself in line with the provisions of Namibia's Constitution. In addition, the PSC is looking to strengthen its operational structure by emphasizing on automation of the recruitment process.

Other specific areas of focus the Commission is looking at, is learning from other PSCs by sharing programs and systems including capacity building in the public service.

**HP-H: As** Chairperson you recently returned from Rabat Morocco, where you attended the African Training and Research Centre in Administration and Development (CAFRAD) 59th Board of Directors meeting where Namibia serves as the SADC Executive Committee member. Can you give a highlight as to why this body is important and what is Namibia to benefit from such platforms? And how long is your tenure?

**Commissioner: SDJ:** CAFRAD is the Pan African Intergovernmental Organisation created in 1964 by African governments with the support of UNESCO. CAFRAD was created with the mission to improve and promote the system of public administration and governance through research and various interdisciplinary training activities based on contemporary challenges and opportunities needed for the development of African countries.

In addition, CAFRAD serves as a Centre of Excellence and supports to activities of governments in Africa and related agencies in capacity building, innovation, and performance in public administration for improved service delivery to the citizens, visionary leadership, and participatory public policies. Namibia can benefit from some of those activities and programs.

The 59th Meeting of the CAFRAD Governing Board covered the following items for adoption by the Board:

1. Adoption of the Report of the 59th Meeting of the Governing Board
2. Report of the Executive Committee
3. Report of CAFRAD's activities, July 2023 – June 2024
4. Work Programme, July 2024 – June 2025
5. Examination of the Budget Implementation, 31 May 2023 – June 2024
6. Adoption of the Budget, July 2020 – June 2023
7. Audit's Report, July 2022 – June 2023
8. Examination of the Proposed Budget, July 2024 – June 2025
9. Relocated to CAFRAD new Head Office
10. Election of the New Director General of CAFRAD, Dr. Coffi Dieudonne' Assouvi.

**HP-H:** What other bodies and stakeholder engagements does the Commission undertake about enhancing its visibility, capacity building, and benchmarking to professionalize the Namibian Public Service?

**Commissioner: SDJ:** The Commission undertakes several other projects such as the

- Chairperson's Annual Address to be undertaken at the end of the year.
- Launch of PSC's Annual Reports.
- PSC's Newsletter "The Public Servant" recently re-launched during the commemoration of the Africa Public Service Day at the end of June 2024.
- Stakeholders' engagement with OMAS/RCS/Agencies where we conduct HR Audits/post-implementation staffing audits/monitoring and evaluation.
- Benchmarking with other sister organizations such as the PSC South Africa, Botswana, Turkey Human Resources Office in The Presidency, and the Civil Service Commission of Zimbabwe.
- Regional and Continental bodies such as the SADC PSC Forum (Elective Congress is scheduled from the 5th – 9 August), Africa Public Service Commission (APSCOM).



**Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs, Commissioner Nashilongo K. Shivute, Deputy Executive Director: Mr. Alfred T. Tjihambuma, and GIC Host: Mrs. Hileni Philipus-Hamunyela.**



## Public Service Commission (PSC) Engagement in //Kharas Region on Enhancing Human Resource Administration and Management

The Public Service Commission (PSC) visited the //Kharas region in Keetmanshoop from 20 to 23 August 2024. The purpose of the visit was to engage with stakeholders, including the //Kharas Regional Council, heads of government offices, ministries, agencies, and human resources offices, regarding HR administration and management.

The objectives of the visit included providing an overview of the PSC's organizational mandate, functions, and structural and operational framework. Additionally, the PSC aimed to engage with various stakeholders, including staff from HR offices, to discuss the challenges faced in human resource management within the //Kharas region and explore potential solutions.

During this visit, the Public Service Commission (PSC) engaged with a variety of stakeholders, including the Honourable Chairperson of the //Kharas Regional Council, honourable councilors, senior management, and staff members from the human resources departments of several ministries. These ministries included the Ministry of Education, Arts, and Culture; the Ministry of Health and Social Services; the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations; the Ministry of Home Affairs, Safety and Security; the Ministry of Works and Transport; the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology; and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism. Representatives from the Ombudsman's office and other regional agencies also took part in the discussions.

### Meeting with the Leadership of the //Kharas Regional Council

The Chairperson of the //Kharas Regional Council, Hon. Joseph Isaacks, along with Councilor Hon. Jeremias Goeieman (MP) of the Berseba Constituency, welcomed the PSC delegation and expressed their sincere gratitude for the visit. He noted that the meeting was both overdue and necessary to address outstanding issues. Furthermore, he assured the Commission of the Council's unwavering commitment to collaborate and promote advancement in the region, particularly about adhering to and complying with human resource administration and management policies to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.

The chairperson also mentioned a pending complaint, which was specified as a key agenda item, however, he stated that it was to be discussed in camera. He emphasized the Regional Council's responsibility to uphold legal instruments and acknowledged the uncertainties surrounding some legal provisions.



PS delegation with the //Kharas Regional Council leadership, during the courtesy visit.

This uncertainty sometimes necessitates seeking legal opinions when the law is ambiguous, placing the Council in a challenging position regarding how to proceed.

In response, PSC Chairperson Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs, along with the Commissioners, the PSC Secretariat, and the Chief Legal Officer from the Office of the Attorney General, provided a comprehensive overview of the PSC's mandate, functions, and powers. The Chairperson emphasized that the Commission operates in a non-partisan manner and seeks to address identified human resource (HR) anomalies.

An HR audit is currently underway to monitor personnel appointments within the Public Service. He highlighted that the purpose of the courtesy visit was to discuss specific HR issues of mutual concern, affirming that the PSC strives to be fair, honest, and transparent at all times. Regarding balance structuring, he asserted that it requires careful consideration to ensure fairness, equality, and justice.

Additionally, at the request of the Commission, the Chief Legal Advisor from the Office of the Attorney General provided a legal interpretation of the Public Service Act of 1980 (Act 2 of 1980), specifically Section 7, which addresses the variation, rejection, or withdrawal of PSC recommendations. She was also there to offer guidance on legal frameworks during the consultative engagement. The PSC aims to ensure that HR matters are handled with the same meticulousness as financial matters.

The Chairperson of the Public Service Commission (PSC) emphasized that the purpose of the visit was to promote dialogue rather than to pass judgment, highlighting that all parties share a common commitment to upholding the Constitution.





**PSC engagement with the //Kharas Regional Council Management.**



**PSC courtesy Visit to the Kharas Region: Human Resources Office for Education, Arts, and Culture.**

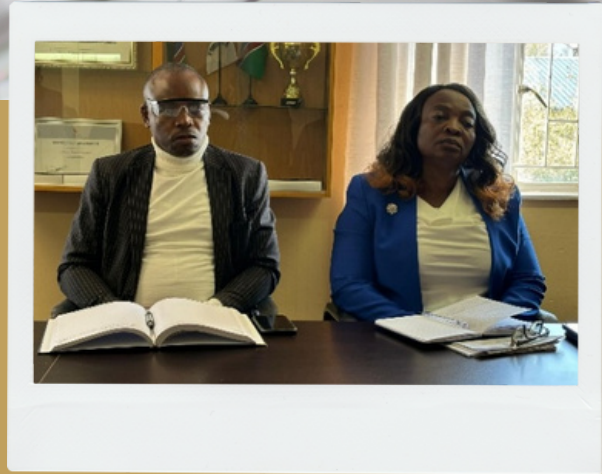
In conclusion, he noted that while public service remains constant, politics can change. Thus, as public servants, we must ensure that the delivery of public services is consistent, fostering strong relationships and teamwork among all parties involved in Human Resource (HR) matters.

On the second day of the visit, a consultative stakeholder engagement session was held, featuring representatives from the //Kharas Regional Council, various Offices of Ministries and Agencies (OMAs), Regional Offices, and other agencies within the //Kharas Region. They made brief presentations discussing the challenges they face and their recommendations to the Commission on how these issues could be addressed. This session was followed by a courtesy visit to the HR offices at different locations.



**Keetmanshoop, MOTH Hall:** The PSC engaged with OMAs, the RC, and various agencies, during which presentations were made regarding challenges and proposals.





**PSC's Courteous Visit to the //Kharas Region: Human Resources Office for Education, Arts, and Culture.**

To address the challenges and recommendations submitted by HR offices in the region, the Commissioners will schedule follow-up meetings with various O/M/As and agencies. The goal of these meetings was to tackle the issues that were raised. The PSC concluded that it was essential to engage different stakeholders by the provisions of the Public Service Commission Act, particularly regarding governance and the management of relationships between political office-bearers and operational staff.

The challenges identified by the Ministry of Education in the region would be presented to the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) for necessary interventions to address these issues. Additionally, concerns raised by the Ministry of Health and Social Services pertain to human resources functions, and it is recommended that designated Commissioners address these matters in the future.

The situation regarding the region operating without a substantive Chief Regional Officer (CRO) would be discussed with the line minister. A detailed briefing on the feedback from the recent visit and the proposed way forward would be needed. Finally, the Public Service Commission (PSC) will coordinate with the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development (MURD) to secure a slot during the induction session for new political office bearers.

The PSC plans to engage with the newly elected regional political leadership during these clustered induction sessions to educate them about its functions, mandate, and the application of the law, particularly to human resource matters.





## Stakeholder engagement and information-sharing session for Public Relations and Communications Officers: A learning opportunity for the Public Service Commission's Information Officers.

The Public Service Commission was represented by two officials, Mr. Chalo Chainda, the Chief Information Officer, and Ms. Selma Nalusha, the Information Officer, during the communication officers' session held in Opuwo, Kunene Region, from June 19 to June 21, 2024.



**Hon. Emma Theofelus:**  
Minister of Information and Communication Technology, delivering a keynote address.

The event was organized by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) under the theme **"Improving Service Delivery in the Public Sector through Communication."** It was attended by communication practitioners from various ministries, agencies, regional and local authorities, and public enterprises. This training aimed to enhance their communication skills and improve service delivery in line with the government communication strategy.

The purpose of the information session was to foster collaboration, benchmark practices, and address communication bottlenecks in the public sector. Additionally, the session aimed to strengthen the capacity of government public relations and communication officers to enhance service delivery through effective communication strategies.

In her opening address, the Minister of Information and Communication Technology, Honourable Emma Theofelus, stated that the information-sharing session was designed to accelerate the dissemination of information between government institutions and communities. She emphasized the government's commitment to the principles of access to information, stating, **"Our presence here today in Opuwo is not merely symbolic; it is a practical demonstration of our determination to ensure that every Namibian, regardless of their location, has access to a wide range of government services and information."**

Honorable Theofelus further urged government representatives and public enterprises to engage directly with the community and actively listen to their needs and concerns.

In his motivational address, the Secretary to Cabinet, Dr. George Simataa, reiterated the significance of public communication for fostering a healthy democratic society, which builds trust among communities. Dr. Simataa urged conference attendees to recognize the importance of communication and its role in governance, warning that failure to take their responsibilities seriously could result in serious issues with citizens. He added that public communication is essential for a strong and healthy democracy and for building trust among citizens.

**"In this regard, we as public administration professionals and institutions have a key role to play in developing robust channels for one-way and two-way communication with our various stakeholders,"** he stated.

In attendance were other government officials, including Honourable Marius Sheya, the Governor of the Kunene Region.

Dr. Simataa praised government communications officers for their excellent reporting during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, he stressed the importance of Public Relations Officers (PROs) and communications officers staying updated with trending news and being aware of public perceptions regarding their institutions. He also highlighted the need to foster two-way communication with stakeholders and respond to questions truthfully.



**Dr. George Simataa:**  
Secretary to Cabinet.

Dr. Simataa concluded by urging PROs and Communication Officers to utilize all available communication methods to keep the nation informed. These methods include press releases, press statements, press conferences, radio talk shows, television interviews, ministerial Facebook pages, print media, and circulars.

Finally, he called upon all PROs and Communication Officers to be proactive in keeping the nation informed about activities in their offices, ministries, and regional centres, while continuously engaging with the media on matters concerning their respective ministries.



**PSC Chief Information Officer, Chalo Chainda interacting with clients during Opuwo Stakeholder Information sharing session.**



## PSC on a benchmarking visit to the Public Services Commission of Zimbabwe.

To enhance collaboration and promote a commitment to excellence in public service, the Public Service Commission (PSC) conducted a significant courtesy benchmark visit to the **Harare** Public Service Commission from July 28 to August 1, 2024. The purpose of the visit was to benchmark best practices within the public sector.

The Namibian delegation included its Chairperson, Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs, Commissioner Imelda Katjau, Commissioner Nashilongo K. Shivute, Ms. Inga Ndaningina, Deputy Director Staffing Public Service Commission Secretariat (PSCS) and Ms. Antoinette Stanley, Human Resource Policy Analyst Department Public Service Management (DPSM) Chairman Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs said, **“...our purpose of coming to Harare & to visit the Public Service Commission of Zimbabwe, is simple - that is to learn from the best practices of our sister Commission.”**

**“Public Service Commissions have a mammoth task of recruiting and placing people in the structures of Government and those tasks are life-changing, not only for the person being employed but for the entire system, as service delivery is at stake,”** added Mr Jacobs.



**PSC-Namibia delegation pictured with the Public Service Commission of Zimbabwe during the benchmarking visit to Harare, Zimbabwe.**

Chairman Jacobs also said, **“As members of SADC, we initiated to form what we want to call, the SADC Public Service Commission’s Forum to strengthen, professionalize, and build the capacity of the public service, in response to modern-day challenges.”**

Chairman Jacobs added, **“There are many challenges each country faces & with globalization, these are becoming many-fold. We are living in the VUCA as some scholars put it. VUCA stands for volatile, uncertain, complex & ambiguous situations (Johansen, 2007).”**

**“HR matters must be automated to speed up management of cases coming to the Commission for the recommendation. Through automation, staff data could be consolidated so that information on all staff members is easily accessible”**, concluded the Chairman.

The meeting visited various offices and Ministries upon its three-day conclusion, such as the Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare. It also paid a courtesy visit to H.E. the President, Dr E.D. Mnangagwa, at Rainbow Towers ahead of the Official Opening of the SADC Industrialization Week, which took place during the same week of the PSC-N visitation.



**PSC Chairperson Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs pictured with PSC Chairperson of Zimbabwe, Dr. Vincent Hungwe during the benchmarking visit.**



## Public Service Commission in a consultative meeting with the Omaheke Regional Council.



**PSC delegation pictured with the Omaheke Regional Council leadership during the regional courtesy visit.**

The Public Service Commission (PSC) visited the Omaheke Region in Gobabis from August 24 to August 27, 2024, engaging with stakeholders including Offices, Ministries, and Agencies (O/M/As) as well as the Regional Council (RC). Attendees of the meetings included the Omaheke Regional Council, heads of government offices, various ministries, agencies, and human resources (HR) offices.

The visit aimed to provide an overview of the PSC's organizational mandate, functions, and structural and operational framework. The Acting Regional Chairperson, Otjombinde Constituency Councilor Honourable Wenzel Kavaka, welcomed the PSC delegation at the Regional Council offices in Gobabis.

In his opening remarks, the Chairperson of the Public Service Commission, Salmaan D. Jacobs, stated that while the Omaheke region is known for many aspects, its history and significant involvement in Namibia's liberation struggle stand out.

He noted the region's considerable contributions to the national economy, highlighting the diversity of economic activities taking place there. **"This region is among the most important areas in our country, making today's visit invaluable,"** he said. He emphasized that the purpose of their visit was to communicate their vision and address recruitment-related issues in Omaheke.

The Chairperson further explained that the PSC's Monitoring and Evaluation division conducts HR audits, including files from the Government Institutions Pension Fund (GIPF).

Following post-implementation audits in the region, anomalies were discovered within the Omaheke Regional Council, prompting the Commission to intervene and explore solutions. He acknowledged that challenges sometimes create bottlenecks but asserted that the Commission is committed to fulfilling its mandate. **"When we come together to seek common ground, we can address all issues and challenges,"** he said.

He stressed that HR-related matters should be prioritized similarly to other essential issues, particularly given the vital role that public servants played during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chairperson urged the attendees to consider HR issues with the same level of importance as financial matters.



**PSC Chairperson:**  
Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs.

The visit began with discussions with management and HR officers, followed by presentations regarding the identified anomalies at the Directorate of Education in the Omaheke Region. Additionally, the PSC aimed to engage with various stakeholders, included HR staff members, who presented challenges faced in human resource management and suggested ways to mitigate these difficulties.



Stakeholders included Honourable Councilors, senior management from the Omaheke Regional Council, and staff from the human resources offices at the Regional Council, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Education, Arts, and Culture, the Ministry of Health and Social Services, the Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Land Reform.



**PSC delegation with the Omaheke Regional Council Management members and staff.**



**PSC visit to Omaheke Ministry of Education Arts, and Culture, Human Resource Offices.**

The objective of the visit was to discuss the challenges in human resource management faced by HR offices in the Omaheke region and to identify and resolve ongoing anomalies. Human resources audits at the Omaheke Regional Council were conducted from October 2 to October 6, 2023. Engaged stakeholders included the Omaheke Regional Council, the Directorate of Education, and the Directorate of Health. The scope of the audit covered human resource functions performed from July 8, 2017, to the date of the visit.

A total of 106 staff members were accounted for, and 57 files were audited, representing 51% of the total employee files.



# PSC Exhibits at Ongwediva Annual Trade Fair.

The Public Service Commission was again represented to showcase its service to the public at Ongwediva Trade, which ran from 13 August 2024 to 1 September 2024.

The department under the Office of the Prime Minister exhibited its service and engaged with the public from Queen's Hall, the biggest premises in the Ongwediva Annual Trade, which hosted more than 50 corporate exhibitors.

Apart from showcasing, the show featured presentations from different corporates, institutions, and individuals, such as the Namibia Training Authority (NTA), Media Park, BIPA, Ministry of Mines and Energy, Ministry of Urban and Rural Development, Development Bank of Namibia, and Nust Alumni.

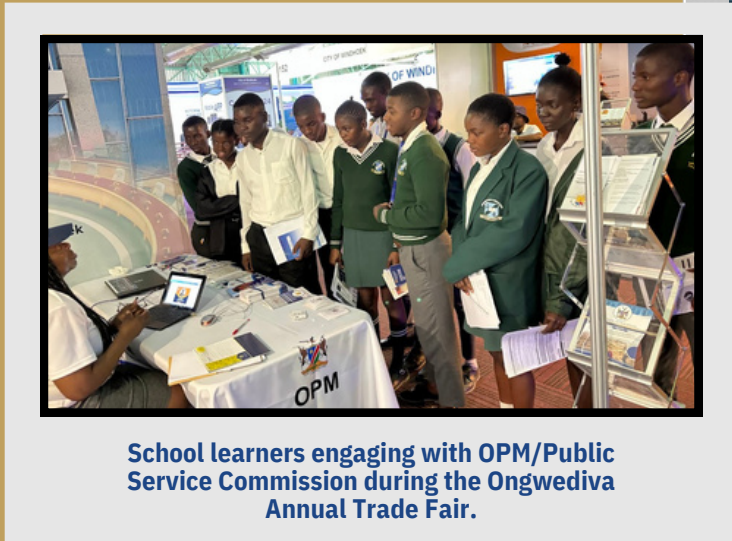


**The Prime Minister's Office and the Public Service Commission attended the Ongwediva Annual Trade Fair.**

The trade fair housed international and local exhibitors. As usual, Agricultural products such as winning an Ox caught the attention of exhibitors, who bought tickets on sight to win. Additionally, institutions and Ministries were judged in different categories.

The Municipality of Swakopmund scooped the award of best stand in the category of Regional Councils and Local Authorities, while the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the National Assembly were also recognized.

Vice President Dr Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah officially opened the Ongwediva Trade Fair under the theme **"Bridging Tradition and Innovation."**



**School learners engaging with OPM/Public Service Commission during the Ongwediva Annual Trade Fair.**





# Strengthening Regional Cooperation: Insights from the SADC Public Service Commission Forum

## Cape Town, South Africa

The Public Service Commission (PSC) of Namibia attended the SADC PSC Forum meeting held from 06-09 August 2024, at The President Hotel in Cape Town, Sea Point, South Africa.

The main objective of the meeting was to establish the SADC PSC Forum, where Public Service Commissions within the SADC Region would be able to convene and engage on matters of common interest, including collaboration and sharing best practices.

The secondary objectives included mobilizing resources and coordinating human resources-related matters, which will contribute immensely to the professionalization of public service administration within the SADC region and help establish relationships and reporting lines to the SADC and African Union structures.

The Namibian delegation was led by Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs, Chairperson of the PSC, Commissioner Batseba U. Katjuongua, Commissioner Gerson H. Kamatuka, whereas the Secretariat was represented by PSC Deputy Executive Director Alfred T. Tjihambuma and the Chief Information Officer Chalo Chanda.

The three-day meeting was officially opened by South Africa's Minister of Public Service and Administration Honourable,

Minister Nkosi Mzamo Buthelezi whereas Professor Somadoda Fikeni Chairperson of the Public Service of South Africa and Interim Convenor gave the opening welcoming remarks.

The countries in attendance included Angola, Botswana, The Kingdom of Eswatini, The Kingdom of Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, whereas The Comoros Islands, The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Seychelles and Madagascar attended virtually, whilst Malawi and Mozambique attended the meeting on the second day of the event.

The Chairperson of the respective countries' Commission attended the meeting presented a comprehensive brief overview of the mandates, functions, and roles of their countries' Commissions, and welcomed the need to forge ahead as a regional block with the establishment of the SADC Public Service Commission Forum.

The SADC Countries in attendance divulged their full support for this noble initiative, however, the initiative needed not to be rushed but it should be done so by laying a solid foundation that is in line with the SADC industrial strategy and road map and it should not sprout into a vacuum just occupied vacancies to build a legacy and foundation for the future.





Delivering his remarks Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs, Chairperson of Namibia Public Service Commission stated “This is indeed a historic occasion, where we will look back to say, this is how it all started. Namibia thus welcomes the establishment of this Forum within the SADC region where members of the Public Service Commissions in the region will now be able to convene and engage on matters of common interest” he emphasized.

Commissions tasked with overseeing recruitment and coordination of employment in the public service will now gather around the same table to collaborate and share best practices.

Participants further cautioned the need for further consultations with the country's respective principles to ensure that the creation of this forum complies with the approval protocols required by each member country's foreign and bilateral relations protocols, bilateral exchange agreements, and existing laws and regulatory frameworks of member SADC member states, SADC Blueprint, and African Union political structures.

Last but not least, the meeting had a consensus that the Forum should be used by SADC PSCs as a conduit through which they would be able to collaborate, benchmark, and capacitate different National Schools of Government for the training of Public Servants within the region.

Furthermore, this Forum pushes the agenda for human resource issues, public administration, and management issues to become discussion items, worthy to be discussed during SADC Summits by our Heads of State.

The Chairpersons of the respective PSCs presented a comprehensive brief overview of the mandates, functions, and roles of their countries' PSCs and welcomed the establishment of the SADC Public Service Commission Forum.

The delegates agreed that the interim structure under the stewardship of the Chairperson of the South African PSC, Professor Somadoda Fikeni, supported by South Africa's PSC Director General Advocate Dinkie P. Dube and a SADC PSCs Forum Technical Team from the Interim Executive Committee of nominated member states continue to lead the Forum until the new leadership is elected.

The SADC PSCs Forum Technical Team amongst other things was tasked to facilitate the finalization of the draft founding concept note and draft Constitution and will report to the Interim Executive Committee. These documents represent a significant milestone in establishing the SADC PSCs Forum's foundation and operational framework.

With regards to continental engagement Commissioner Salmaan mentioned that Namibia recently returned from Rabat Morocco, where Namibia attended the African Training and Research Centre in Administration and Development (CAFRAD), where it attended the 59th Governing Board meeting. Namibia serves as the SADC Executive Committee member representing the rest of SADC. CAFRAD is the Pan African Intergovernmental Organisation created in 1964 by African governments with the support of UNESCO.

CAFRAD was created with the mission to improve and promote the system of public administration and governance through research and various interdisciplinary training activities based on contemporary challenges and opportunities needed for the development of African countries. In addition, CAFRAD serves as a Centre of Excellence and supports the activities of governments in Africa and related agencies in capacity building, innovation, and performance in public administration for improved service delivery to citizens, visionary leadership, and participatory public policies.

Therefore, **“I urge other SADC PSC Forum members to make use of CAFRAD as we are likely to benefit from some of the activities and programs as a region. The visibility of CAFRAD and the benefits to our public servants will be strengthened by our participation as SADC member states. It is for us to purposefully intervene towards its programs and for our public servants to benefit from its activities in terms of capacity building, training, skills transfer, exchange programs, and international participation”** he revealed.

The meeting noted that the Forum formation should be guided by the institutional arrangements and by the legal instruments guiding the road map of SADC Regional structures such as the SADC Council of Ministers as agreed upon.





# PSC Courtesy Stakeholder's Engagement with the European Union (EU) Mission in Namibia



**Ambassadorial:**  
PSC Commissioners and EU delegation in a joint picture after the meeting.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) has been engaging identified stakeholders, potential donors, or funders to explore the possibilities of cooperation in the area of capacity building which is important for the implementation of its reforms, drive towards innovation and automation of the Human Resource functions of the Commission and the public service.

Therefore, it was on this basis that the Commission (PSC) on Wednesday, 14 August 2024 had a courtesy meeting with the European Union (EU) Ambassador to Namibia to discuss pertinent issues that could address some of these challenges.

The objectives of the visit were to give a brief overview of the PSC organizational mandate, functions, and structural and operational framework and to explore the opportunities to tap into the EU for assistance with expertise in terms of capacity building by strengthening the implementation of the PSC mandate and help it seek expertise to realize the implementation of its reforms.

Present during the courtesy meeting were the EU Ambassador H.E. Ambassador Ana Beatriz Martins and two of her support staff responsible for programs, whereas the Commission delegation was led by its Chairperson Commissioner Salmaan D. Jacobs, Commissioners, and its Secretariat management.

In her opening remarks, The EU Ambassador gave an illustration of the EU structure and how it operates. The EU subscribes to the same principle as Namibia and thus they subscribe to what has been presented that her office is fully responsive towards the Professionalisation of the Public Sector and fully supports Namibia's initiatives, especially considering the country has introduced access to information law which is an instrument that requires public entities to willingly and lawfully avail information when required to so. Such efforts are commendable by the EU and as equal partners in areas of Good Governance, Digitalization, and Automation of Human Resources functions and this is one of the key priority areas that they operate in and are always willing to assist.

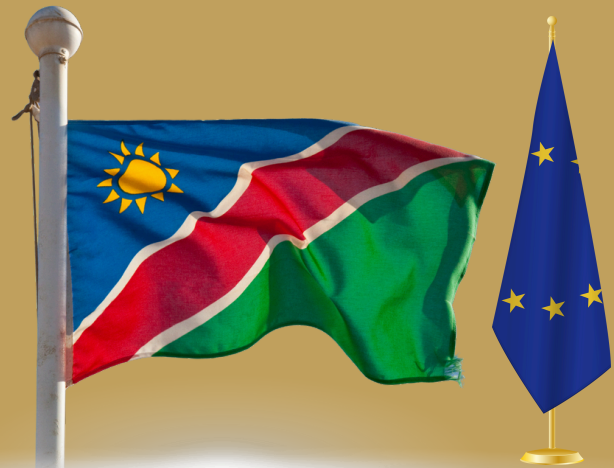


Furthermore, Ambassador Ana Beatriz Martins stated that Namibia has been categorized as an upper-middle-income country since 2009. However, its upper middle-income country status is characterized by high socio-economic inequality and environmental challenges. As such Namibia is considered to be a country that is on a path towards industrialization, therefore its Portfolio is considered on the peer-to-peer exchange of digitalization or hardware requirements, technical assistance in terms of information traceability, accountability, verifiability which is one the millennium strategic goal SG 15.

Ambassador Ana Beatriz Martins pointed out that the EU that they have with Namibia's second-largest trading partner for Namibia and thus its relationship is based on an immeasurable degree of trust and has three priority areas namely:

- **Human Development:** Education over the past 10 – 15 years.
- **Green Industrialization:** Growth of Green Energy and Green Industrialization with The Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia.
- **Governance/Standards:** Strengthening governance and the fight against gender-based violence through support to Namibia's Anti-Corruption Commission and the Ministry of Gender Equality on Governance, Civil Rights and Gender Issues (General Rights).

The Commission was advised to engage the National Planning Commission for guidance on how best it can solicit from the EU through the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) instrument of the European Commission. Technical Assistance (TA) Unit under the EU-Namibia Agreement, European Development Fund (EDF). Under these agreements applications for technical assistance by the applicant should be submitted through the National Planning Commission through the National Planning Commission (NPC)Development Partners Coordination office.



**Joint Photo:**  
PSC Commissioners, Secretariat, and EU delegation in a joint picture after the Courtesy meeting.



# Exciting News: The Public Service Commission Greenlights Continued Service Beyond Retirement Age!

The Public Service Commission approved the retention and re-appointment of staff members beyond the retirement age. The PSC observed that OMAs and RCs prefer to retain staff members in their current positions rather than placing retired staff members in additional roles, as outlined in the Public Service Act.

The decision is in line with the provisions of Section 24 (2) of the Public Service Act, 1995 (Act 13 of 1995): “If it is in the interest of the Public Service to retain any staff member in employment in the position held by them or in an additional role beyond the age at which they would normally retire, this may occur with their consent and the approval of the Prime Minister, granted upon the recommendation of the Commission. Such retention may be granted for any period that does not extend beyond the last day of the month in which the staff member turns 67 years old.”

Additionally, Section 14 (3) of the Public Service Act, 1980 (Act 2 of 1980) states: “If it is in the public interest to retain any officer in their position beyond the retirement age, they may be retained with their consent, based on the recommendation of the Commission and subject to Cabinet approval for a further period that does not extend beyond the last day of the month in which they turn 67 years old.”

OMAs and RCs are therefore encouraged to retain any staff member beyond the retirement age, provided they make budgetary provisions to allow for the retired staff member to remain in an additional role and advertise the position held by that staff member to accommodate a new hire.

This process will enable the retained staff member to transfer necessary skills and knowledge to their successor.

If OMAs and RCs choose not to follow this process, their request to retain a staff member must include a solid justification for why the staff member cannot be placed in an additional role and must also include the requirement to advertise the position for consideration by the Commission.

The Commission endorsed the circular and it was circulated to all Human Resource Personnel in OMAs and RCs on 19 December 2024 through PSC Circular No. 01 of 2024.





# HOW TO SUBMIT GRIEVANCES, COMPLAINTS & APPEALS ...

## Division: Grievances, Complaints and Appeals



**The Division Grievances, Complaints and Appeal is headed by a Deputy Director and is responsible for ensuring that the provision of all Public Service legal frameworks and the Public Services Staff Rules are complied with at all times**

*As such, the prescribed procedures for grievances/complaints to PSC as stipulated in PSSR.J/I/II and PSC Circular No. 04 of 2019 are viz:*

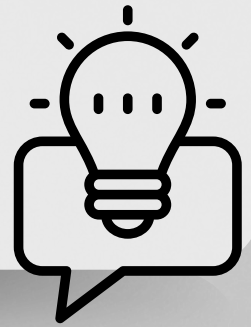
1. First exhaust the internal avenue by lodging a complaint to the concerned Executive Director (ED) or Chief Regional Officer (CRO);
2. Make at least three (3), monthly interval follow ups with the ED or CRO when no response received before approaching the PSC;
3. When approaching PSC the following must be noted:
  - Complaint to PSC must be of the same contents as the one to ED or CRO;
  - All copies of correspondence with Executive Director or Chief Regional Officer must be attached;
  - Personal details of the complainant;
  - Failure to comply with the above requirements, the complaint is referred back to the complainant to follow the laid procedures;
4. Complaint lodged with complete pack, responded within three (3) months;
5. Complainant not satisfied with the PSC's response, appeal to other avenues of choice.



# FEEDBACK COMMENTS COMPLAINTS

For any suggestions, want more information,  
not satisfied with the standard of service we render or wish to comment about anything  
we have mentioned,

**Contact our Office at;**  
Deputy Executive Director  
Department Public Service Commission Secretariat  
P.O. Box 1117, Windhoek  
Tel: +264 61 287 3172  
Email: [PSCCommunications@opm.gov.na](mailto:PSCCommunications@opm.gov.na)



## YOUR VIEWS & OPINIONS MATTERS:



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and talk to us through the feedback button



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