# Status Report

ACTis | Anti-Corruption Tracker Information System

*ACTis provides risk analysis and early intervention recommendations against state capture and corruption in South African government institutions*

PUBLIC ENTITY

ACT | ACCOUNTABILITY TRACKER

ISS | INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY STUDIES

## Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa

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## About the Institution

The Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) provides public passenger transport, including urban commuter rail and long-haul intercity rail and bus services. It reports to the Minister of Transport. PRASA operates as a national government business enterprise and has two major subsidiaries, Autopax (bus services) and Intersite (property management). PRASA's Board is its accounting authority. In 2024/25, PRASA's operational and capital expenditure totalled R30.41bn.[1]

PRASA was implicated in historical cases of state capture during the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture, Corruption and Fraud in the Public Sector, including Organs of State (the Zondo Commission).[2]

## Flag Status

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |
| Improper appointments | Co-opting key functions | Climate of fear or favour | Corrupt awards | Financial malpractice | Obstructing accountability | Manipulating perceptions | Private gain | Shadow network |

## ISS Analysis

- ACTis has raised six flags for PRASA and placed one under monitoring.
- Legacy issues have persisted under the current Board. High levels of suspensions and acting appointments have undermined the executive leadership. There are signs that PRASA is characterised by a climate of fear or favour, with whistleblowers and dissenters victimised while wrongdoers face slow consequences. These factors inhibit internal resistance and professional independence and, compounded by weak internal controls, render PRASA vulnerable to informal control by corrupt networks.
- There are signs that networks, involving senior officials and even Board members, have corrupted contract awards and payments and are obstructing accountability. Weak oversight and a lack of cooperation with external investigations suggest formal accountability mechanisms have been neutralised or slowed down.
- The cost of this corruption and maladministration has been high. Between



January 2021 and June 2022, the monthly average was 1.7 million rail passenger trips, just 4% of the monthly average of 43 million trips taken between 1999 and 2008.[3] There has been some improvement over the last two years, with PRASA reporting a monthly average of over 6.4 million trips in 2024/25 and restoring 35 of its 40 priority railway lines.[4]

## Findings

### Flag #1
### Improper Appointments

The flag is raised because of concerns about the appointment and conduct of senior leadership and Board members.

- PRASA's Board chairperson, Nosizwe Nokwe-Macamo, was suspended as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PetroSA in June 2015. She reached a settlement agreement to leave in November 2015, after the entity reported a R15bn loss due to failed projects.[5]
- While Board member Boy Johannes Nobunga was CEO of the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency in 2023, he allegedly attempted to influence a witness in the civil trial between conservationist Fred Daniel and former Deputy President David Mabuza, who was accused of orchestrating a fraudulent land-claims scam in Mpumalanga.[6]
- Multiple sources, including a former Board member and an anonymous whistleblower, have accused unnamed PRASA Board members of manipulating tenders to benefit themselves and their allies and of abusing PRASA's resources to fund luxury accommodation and travel (see Flag #8: Private Gain).
- In 2022, PRASA's former Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Japhtalina Lesibana Fosu, was suspended by the Board, reportedly for questioning invoices related to emergency security contracts.[7] She reportedly received an R11.9m settlement in February 2024, having received full pay while suspended for two years.[8]
- Media reports, including one drawing on statements from the United National Transport Union,[9] have questioned the appointment of PRASA's acting Head of Security, Alexio Papadopulo, who has been in the role since 2021. Both the suitability of his qualifications and the correctness of the appointment process have been questioned.[10] In March 2026, allegations emerged that in 2022 Papadopulo had made efforts to facilitate the appointment of companies linked to the 28s gang, headed by Ralph Stanfield, which allegedly used violence and intimidation to extort work on PRASA's Central Line repair project.[11] Papadopulo reportedly left PRASA in May 2026.[12]
- PRASA's senior management structure is heavily reliant on acting appointments, with six of the 12 senior executive positions currently filled on an acting basis. As of March 2026, this includes the CFO and Head of Legal, Risk and Compliance.[13] In the 2024/25 audit, the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) found that PRASA had failed to address senior management vacancies.[14]

Flag raised | Flag lowered | Under monitoring

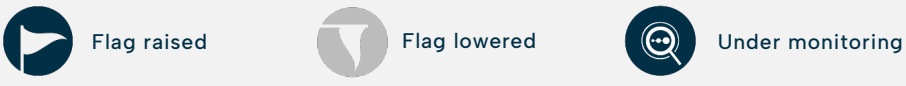
Flag #3

## Climate of Fear or Favour



The flag is raised because indications suggest the organisational culture may punish dissenters and favour compliant staff.

- The Zondo Commission, which investigated what was happening at PRASA between 2009 and 2021, reported that the institution was characterised by an organisational culture that targeted those who spoke out publicly against maladministration.[15]
- The current Board – half appointed in 2020 and half in 2023 – has dismissed whistleblowers and former executives who testified at the Zondo Commission.[16] This is despite the Labour Court finding that the termination of two executives' contracts (Martha Ngoye, Group Executive of Legal, Risk and Compliance, and Tiro Holele, Head of Strategy) was unlawful.[17]
- Former CFO Fosu was suspended in 2022, reportedly for refusing to authorise payments related to emergency security contracts.[18]
- In 2023, PRASA was reportedly paying R50m a year to at least 22 executives and senior managers who were suspended with full pay. Many of these executives were suspended between 2019 and 2022 and faced prolonged disciplinary processes and subsequent Labour Court challenges. At least six executives have been reinstated through court orders.[19]
- The AGSA's 2024/25 audit warned of significant capacity and skills constraints in critical units.[20]
- PRASA employees had 162 cases before the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) in 2024/25.[21] Of these, 79 are closed and 83 are still pending. This is equivalent to around one in every 100 staff members. There were 71 cases before the Labour Courts, with 22 closed and 49 still pending. There were 280 internal disciplinary cases during 2024/25, with 246 closed and 34 pending. In total, almost four out of every 100 staff members were involved in formal proceedings over alleged misconduct during the year.[22]
- A 2026 media investigation reported that Ralph Stanfield, alleged leader of the 28s organised crime group, was linked to the violent intimidation and extortion of PRASA workers and contractors involved in the Central Line repair project in Cape Town in 2022. These alleged activities reportedly aimed to influence or secure security-related contracts associated with the project (see Flag #4: Corrupt Awards).[23]



Flag #4

## Corrupt Awards



The flag is being monitored to assess whether procurement irregularities form part of a wider pattern of the same companies or related actors receiving favourable treatment.

- In August 2026, a media investigation revealed that PRASA allegedly irregularly appointed Reshibile Aviation & Protection Services (RAPS), a security company with Paul Langa as its director, in 2021. They did this by 'piggybacking' on Airports Company of South Africa's (ACSA) panel of security companies, without conducting a separate procurement process. PRASA reportedly paid RAPS between R16m and R18m per month before the company was liquidated in March 2024, totalling more than R550m. The National Treasury reportedly stated that the regulation allowing 'piggybacking' does not apply to PRASA.[24]
    - The media investigation further alleged that after RAPS was liquidated in 2024, PRASA shifted the work to Reshibile Aviation Solutions (RAS), another company under Langa's directorship, without conducting a procurement process. RAS reportedly received R18m a month from March 2024, totalling R522m, bringing the total payment to the two companies to more than R1bn. PRASA defended the contract, saying RAPS changed its name to RAS. But the media investigation alleged that company records indicated RAPS and RAS are separate entities with different registration numbers. Langa reportedly has close ties to the African National Congress (ANC) and works as head of security at Luthuli House.[25] Following the media report, the Minister of Transport, Barbara Creecy, instructed the board to initiate a forensic investigation into the contract.[26]
- In March 2025, a detailed whistleblower report alleged that two signalling tenders worth nearly R18bn had been irregularly awarded to Maziya General Services (Maziya) and its Chinese partners in 2024.[27] The joint ventures consisted of the same companies: Maziya, China Railway International Group (CRIG), and China Railway Wuhan Electricification Group (CRWE). CRIG and CRWE are both subsidiaries of the state-controlled China Railway Group. In both tenders, the joint ventures failed to meet basic bid requirements, failed to post the required bid bond amounts, were not tax compliant, lacked bank accounts, and were not registered on the National Treasury's Central Supplier Database.[28] The joint ventures also subcontracted work worth R72m to Cromico Trading and Projects – a company owned by Robyn Delport, the daughter of Maziya's owner, Chris Delport. The Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation has stated that it is investigating these contracts.[29]
    - In 2015, the Public Protector's report into PRASA directed the National Treasury to conduct forensic investigations into PRASA contracts worth more than R10m. Subsequent investigations by ENS into various PRASA contracts found that 'it appears Maziya was appointed irregularly' in 2012. PRASA justified using a sole-

source procurement process for Maziya by saying it was improving transformation in the sector. The lack of record-keeping limited ENS's ability to comment meaningfully on the contract.[30]

- Maziya has also been implicated in irregular contracts at other state entities: in 2018, Maziya was fined R300 000 by the Competition Commission for colluding on a City Power Johannesburg tender with Cromico Trading and Projects;[31] in 2022, Maziya was reportedly irregularly awarded a R150m Independent Development Trust tender for the provision of oxygen plants to hospitals;[32] and Maziya's appointment by the Development Bank of South Africa as one of the contractors to rebuild Parliament following a fire in 2022 has raised concerns.[33]

- A media investigation, together with an interim forensic investigation report by Webber Wentzel (commissioned by PRASA), reported that three of the seven companies awarded refurbishment contracts under the 2022 R7.5bn General Overhaul (GO) programme were run by former PRASA employees who received contracts shortly after leaving the entity.[34] The investigation also found that capable firms were excluded in favour of poorly equipped companies, bribes were paid, and the work done was of poor quality or abandoned. One of the companies, Train Maintenance and Heavy Alternator (TMHA), entered into business rescue shortly after being awarded the contract.[35] As of July 2026, the Public Protector is investigating the GO programme.[36]
- In 2021, an internal audit reportedly found that private security company Intense Protection and Tourist Services (IPTS) was irregularly awarded a contract after other qualifying quotations for emergency security services were disregarded.[37] In 2018, an external forensic investigation reportedly found that IPTS was receiving payments from PRASA without a valid contract.[38]
- In 2022, various entities linked to Stanfield and his wife, Nicole Johnson, were allegedly involved in subcontracting arrangements on PRASA's Central Line repair project. These arrangements emerged in a context in which contractors working on the line had been subjected to sustained violence, intimidation and disruption linked to the 28s gang. Investigations indicated that PRASA's acting Head of Security, Papadopulo, allegedly facilitated and promoted engagement between contractors and entities linked to Stanfield.[39]
- A 2023 contract to reconstruct railway electrical substations in Krugersdorp, valued at R186m and awarded to KD Baula Projects, was flagged by a whistleblower as potentially corrupt. The concerns relate to the company reportedly lacking sector experience and allegedly submitting a fraudulent guarantee to secure the contract. [40]
- The Special Investigating Unit (SIU) is investigating PRASA for allegations of unlawful and improper conduct between 12 October 2004 and 16 February 2024. This relates specifically to contracts for the supply of train locomotives by Swifambo Rail Leasing and for an integrated security access management system by Siyangena Technologies,

fraudulent claims made by the insurance department, and the registration of 'ghost' employees.[41]

## Flag #5
## Financial Malpractice



The flag is raised due to systemic weaknesses in financial management and internal controls.

- The AGSA's 2024/25 audit found that PRASA had significant internal control deficiencies, resulting in material non-compliance relating to consequence management, expenditure and contract management.[42]
- In 2024/25, PRASA reported R5bn in irregular expenditure (16% of total expenditure). This was similar to the previous year's irregular expenditure of R5.7bn. The institution's cumulative irregular expenditure reached R33bn in 2024/25, equivalent to 109% of total expenditure.[43] In the 2024/25 audit, the AGSA also identified a new material irregularity (MI) related to under-utilised trains. This was noted alongside an unresolved MI from previous years related to payments made to ghost employees.[44]
- In the signalling contracts mentioned above, PRASA reportedly paid over R2.6bn in 2023 and 2024 directly to Maziya rather than to the contracted joint ventures as required. This reportedly included an upfront payment, which was unwarranted given the joint ventures' failure to submit the required bid bonds. The Directorate of Priority Crime Investigation's Serious Economic Offences Unit are reportedly investigating the matter. PRASA paid a further R259m to a vendor listed as 'Ground Transportation System Maziya', without any contract in place.[45]
- In the GO refurbishment contracts noted above, PRASA reportedly paid companies based on highly inflated invoices, some by over 2 000%, often for work that was not done.[46] The companies listed were Armtech, Commuter Transport Engineering KwaZulu-Natal, Karabo-Nhlamolo Projects Cooperatives (KNPC), Mirai Rail and TMHA. In one instance, PRASA paid a company for four tractor motors but only received one.[47]

## Flag #6
## Obstructing Accountability



The flag is raised because of a pattern of PRASA failing to cooperate fully with investigations, oversight processes and accountability mechanisms.

- In March 2026, Minister Creecy, the Department of Transport and PRASA reportedly refused several requests under the Promotion of Access to Information Act to make the Webber Wentzel forensic report on the GO programme available to the media.[48]



- In October 2024, the SIU reported to Parliament that poor document management at PRASA was hindering its investigations, with critical records related to irregular contracts missing or inaccessible. Implicated officials and companies cited the unavailability of these documents as a reason for delays, further impeding the SIU's progress.[49] They also reported that their investigations were delayed because the then-Minister of Transport, Sindi Chikunga, did not provide a supporting letter to broaden the Proclamation in 2023.[50]
- A 2025 forensic investigation by Webber Wentzel into the Maziya signalling contracts was reportedly delayed because PRASA executives, including CEO Emeran, refused to cooperate. Emeran reportedly withheld his laptop and cell phone, forcing an extension of the 30-day investigation deadline.[51]
- However, in 2024/25, PRASA received its first unqualified audit opinion in seven years, following four consecutive years of disclaimer opinions and two years of qualified audits.[52]

## Flag #8
## Private Gain

The flag is raised due to indications that the same individual(s) may have derived undue benefits from their positions or influence.

- In October 2025, an unnamed Board member's letter to Minister Creecy reportedly accused fellow Board members of influencing PRASA tenders to benefit themselves and their allies. The letter, reportedly confirmed by the Department of Transport's spokesperson, cites upgrades to the Benrose and Wolmerton depots in Gauteng and the Mazyia signalling contracts as examples of this rigging. The same letter accuses the Board of abusing PRASA's resources on luxury accommodation and travel.[53]
- In March 2025, an anonymous whistleblower alleged that advance payments to Maziya for signalling contracts were fraudulently redirected as kickbacks to PRASA Board members and unnamed politicians in exchange for awarding the tenders.[54]
- The 2025 interim Webber Wentzel investigative report into the GO refurbishment program (detailed in Flag #4: Corrupt Awards and Flag #5: Financial Malpractice) found that the winning bidder, YNF Engineering, paid kickbacks to PRASA's Head of Rolling Stock, Molefe Mosewu, and a Project Manager, Chabi Johannes Mbele, to secure preferential treatment in 2023. YNF Engineering secured the bulk of the work under the programme, around R970m. The kickbacks included a payment of R240 000 to Mosewu's company, MSM Engineering. Mosewu also reportedly received bribes from other companies from the GO programme, including Amtech, KNPC and Kabusha Rail.[55] Mosewu reportedly resigned in 2025.

Flag raised  Flag lowered  Under monitoring

Flag #9

## Shadow Network



The flag is raised because the same actors have repeatedly appeared across multiple flags.

- Papadopulo, Stanfield and Johnson have been flagged for allegedly pressuring contractors to hire particular security subcontractors; there also appears to be a connection between Stanfield's 28s gang and the intimidation of PRASA workers on the Central Line. Papadopulo's reportedly irregular acting appointment has facilitated this.
- Mosewu and Mbele reportedly worked together to provide contractors on the GO programme with preferential treatment, allegedly receiving bribes and approving inflated invoices.
- Maziya has reportedly benefitted from two irregular contracts alongside its Chinese joint venture partners and from irregular payments. It is also linked to allegations of bribery involving PRASA Board members.
- Some PRASA Board members are implicated in allegations of bribery, undue influence and the abuse of perks. Two questionable Board appointments have been made. The Board has also been responsible for a high level of executive vacancies and for perpetuating a culture of targeting whistleblowers.

## Recommended Actions

| | DUTY BEARER | ACTION(S) | ASSOCIATED FLAGS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Minister of Transport | • Publish Webber Wentzel's reports into signalling contracts and the GO programme.<br>• Implement the recommendations of these two reports.<br>• Initiate independent investigations regarding allegations of private gain against the Board. | Flag #1: Improper Appointments<br>Flag #4: Corrupt Awards<br>Flag #5: Financial Malpractice<br>Flag #8: Private Gain<br>Flag #9: Shadow Network |
| 2. | Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa | • Make permanent appointments for senior positions, after thorough due diligence processes. | Flag #1: Improper Appointments<br>Flag #3: Climate of Fear or Favour |
| 3. | Special Investigating Unit | • Advocate for an expansion of Proclamation R153 of 2024 to include more recent PRASA tenders, including those addressed in the findings of this report. | Flag #4: Corrupt Awards<br>Flag #5: Financial Malpractice<br>Flag #8: Private Gain<br>Flag #9: Shadow Network |
| 4. | Portfolio Committee on Transport<br><br>Standing Committee on Public Accounts | • Call the Minister of Transport and PRASA Board to respond to the findings of internal investigations, and the implementation of the investigation report recommendations.<br>• Request that PRASA provide an update on the status and cost of suspended PRASA executives. | Flag #1: Improper Appointments<br>Flag #3: Climate of Fear or Favour<br>Flag #4: Corrupt Awards<br>Flag #5: Financial Malpractice |

Flag raised  Flag lowered  Under monitoring

## The 9 Flags

### Flag #1
**Improper Appointments**

Improper appointments, dismissals or failure to remove individuals in senior positions may be used to drive a corrupt agenda.

### Flag #2
**Co-opting Key Functions**

Informal control may be established over critical functions within the institution to abuse them.

### Flag #3
**Climate of Fear or Favour**

The working culture favours loyalty over duty; alignment with a corrupt agenda is rewarded, and resistance is punished.

### Flag #4
**Corrupt Awards**

Contracts, licences, partnerships, loans and/or investments may be awarded irregularly and repeatedly benefit the same actors.

### Flag #5
**Financial Malpractice**

The institution's financial management practices may be abused to advance a corrupt agenda.

### Flag #6
**Obstructing Accountability**

The institution's internal operations might be deliberately obscured to hide potential misconduct.

### Flag #7
**Manipulating Perceptions**

A public narrative that frames misconduct as innocence may be promoted.

### Flag #8
**Private Gain**

Illicit gains may be distributed to benefit the same actors.

### Flag #9
**Shadow Network**

The same public and private actors may collude to gain control over an institution's assets and functions, benefiting repeatedly.

## About ACTis

### What is ACTis?

The Anti-Corruption Tracker Information System is an initiative of the Anti-Corruption and Accountability Project at the Institute for Security Studies. It provides analysis on corruption and state capture in South Africa, to inform early intervention and enforcement. It utilises a system of indicators and an AI-driven data-collection and analysis tool, validated by human experts. It identifies risks within individual government institutions and produces actionable recommendations to address them, with a view to disrupting patterns of state capture and corruption. Findings are shared directly with government and other duty-bearers, civil society organisations, the media and the public, empowering authorities to intervene, strengthening accountability, and enabling citizens activism.

### Links to ACTis Information:

**Further project information may be found at the following links:**

Terms and Definitions

Project Methodology and Analytical Framework

About the Anti-Corruption and Accountability project

About the Institute for Security Studies

**Contact us:**
actis@issafrica.org

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Flag raised | Flag lowered | Under monitoring

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