

# OUTA

ORGANISATION UNDOING TAX ABUSE

STOP

CORRUPTION

## ANNUAL REPORT

2025/26

▶ ENTER

HOLDING GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE

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OUTA is a registered section 18A organisation, making your donations tax deductible through your annual tax submissions.

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## Report corruption

If you have facts and evidence relating to substantive corruption within government institutions or state-owned entities, report it through our secure whistleblower platform at <https://www.oua.co.za/whistleblowing>

# The OUTA credo

South Africa's sovereignty and constitutional democracy have been hard-earned. Its beauty and abundance of natural resources and diverse cultural heritage are precious to us.

Our potential for higher prosperity is immense and limited only by those in authority who consciously choose to abuse their power, joined by those who stand by and choose not to take action.

Corruption and cronyism are the products of leadership distracted by greed and matters of self-interest.

Silently and steadily, they carve away at our nation's soul. They disempower the poor of their rights and receipt of decent education, employment, health, water, housing and security.

We, the people, society and business, have two choices:

We can look away and do nothing.

Or we can take action and halt the decay.

**At OUTA, we choose to take action.**

We do so – without fear – through a focused strategy and motivated team that holds accountable those in authority who ignore their responsibilities and run roughshod over our constitutional values.

# OUTA

ORGANISATION UNDOING TAX ABUSE

**Holding government accountable**

# Vision, mission and values

## Our core statements

### PURPOSE STATEMENT

We exist to halt the abuse of power and mismanagement of public resources that weaken the government's ability to serve the people. We are driven by a deep sense of justice, accountability and citizen empowerment to stop the decay, restore trust and drive meaningful and positive change in South Africa.

### VISION STATEMENT

A South Africa where the government is well-run, public resources are used efficiently and corruption is addressed. A nation where democracy is strong, power is focused on the needs of the people, where governance prioritises accountability, transparency, fairness and human dignity.

### MISSION STATEMENT

We investigate and expose the abuse of power, engage with authorities to drive accountability, and mobilise society through strategic communication, thought leadership and advocacy. We challenge wrongdoing through legal and civil action, compelling changes in governance and influencing policy to build a more just, transparent and effective democracy.

## Our core values



### Integrity

**Why:** To ensure that we maintain credibility and moral authority in our mission.

**How:** Operate transparently, adhere to ethical principles and hold ourselves accountable to the same standards we expect from others.



### Courage

**Why:** Advocacy against maladministration and corruption often involves taking bold stands against powerful entities.

**How:** Be fearless in exposing wrongdoing, standing firm in the face of opposition and pursuing justice even under pressure.



### Justice

**Why:** The ultimate goal is to restore fairness and equity in governance and public administration.

**How:** Focus on outcomes that promote accountability, fairness and equitable use of resources for all citizens.



### Resilience

**Why:** Advocacy against maladministration often involves prolonged challenges and resistance from entrenched powers.

**How:** Stay persistent in the face of setbacks, adapt strategies to changing circumstances and remain steadfast in pursuing long-term goals.

# What we do and why support matters

OUTA is a civil society organisation that exposes corruption, maladministration and the abuse of public resources.

## What we do

South Africa does not lack laws to protect public funds and ensure accountable government. What it lacks is consistent enforcement. Public power is too often abused. Public money is wasted. Oversight falls short. Accountability is delayed or avoided.

OUTA exists to challenge this.

When government fails to hold itself accountable, civil society must step in. That is the role OUTA plays.

## Our methodology

A core part of our work is addressing maladministration, waste of public revenue, corruption and wasteful expenditure. To do this effectively, we follow a structured five-step methodology.

This approach allows us to move from investigation to accountability in a deliberate and strategic manner.

### Step 1: Research and investigate

Every project begins with careful research, where we investigate thoroughly to determine whether an issue is authentic, significant and relevant. This may involve analysing procurement processes, reviewing legislation and financial records, and assessing information provided by whistleblowers or other sources. Only after the facts have been established do we proceed.

### Step 2: Engaging the powers

Where concerns are identified, we engage directly with those responsible. This provides an opportunity for the relevant authorities or individuals to respond, explain, rationalise or rectify the matter. Engagement can often resolve issues before further escalation is required.

### Step 3: Exposing the powers

If engagement fails to resolve the issue, we expose the matter publicly. This may involve informing the media, the public and relevant authorities about the conduct or decision in question. Public exposure helps create pressure for corrective action and accountability.

### Step 4: Mobilisation

Where necessary, we mobilise public support to highlight the issue further. Mobilisation may include public campaigns, communication initiatives, protests, marches or other forms of civic action. These activities help bring greater attention to the matter and increase pressure on those responsible to change course.

### Step 5: Litigation

Litigation is used as a last resort. When necessary, we rely on the law and the protections provided by the Constitution to challenge unlawful decisions or conduct. This may involve litigation, mediation or arbitration. Strategic legal action can reverse unlawful decisions, compel transparency and establish important legal precedents.

## A flexible approach

While these steps provide a clear framework for our work, the methodology remains flexible. Each project is different, and steps may be adapted, repeated or rearranged depending on the circumstances.

What remains constant is the objective: To protect public resources, expose abuse of power and strengthen accountability in South Africa's public institutions.

## Our focus

We prioritise areas where governance failures have the greatest impact on the country and its citizens.

These include:

- public procurement and major infrastructure contracts;
- state-owned entities and public institutions;
- corruption in local government;
- transport and road administration;
- energy governance and regulatory oversight;
- higher education funding systems; and
- parliamentary accountability.

These sectors involve billions of rand in public expenditure and directly affect the daily lives of millions of people. Ensuring accountability in these areas protects both taxpayers and vulnerable communities who rely on functioning public services.

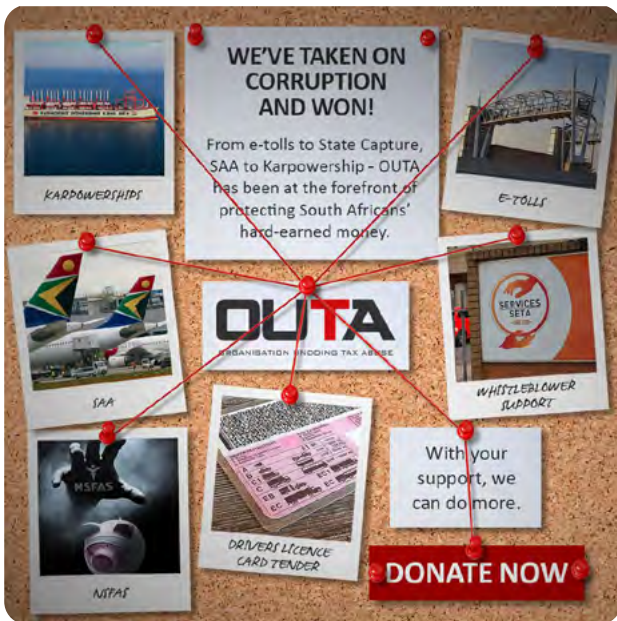
## Turning accountability into action

Our work often requires persistence over many years. Challenging powerful interests and entrenched systems of poor governance rarely produces quick results. However, sustained pressure can lead to meaningful change.

Over the years, our work has contributed to significant outcomes, including:

- the ending of Gauteng's **e-toll scheme**;
- halting the **Karpowership** electricity procurement deal;
- challenging and helping end the **national state of disaster** on electricity;
- exposing corruption within the **National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS)**;
- blocking the irregular **driving licence card machine contract**; and
- establishing legal precedent for consequence management through the delinquent director ruling against former SAA chairperson **Dudu Myeni**.

Beyond these high-profile matters, we continuously provide information and evidence to oversight institutions to assist investigations and strengthen accountability.



## Strengthening oversight systems

Accountability cannot rely only on exposing individual cases of wrongdoing. It also requires stronger institutions and better oversight mechanisms. For this reason, we invest significant effort in systemic reforms.

This includes initiatives such as:

- **ParliMeter**, a public dashboard measuring parliamentary oversight;
- annual **Parliamentary Oversight Reports** assessing the performance of Parliament;

- legal action aimed at closing gaps in accountability legislation; and
- advocacy for stronger whistleblower protection and transparency.

These efforts are designed to strengthen the institutions responsible for protecting South Africa's democracy.

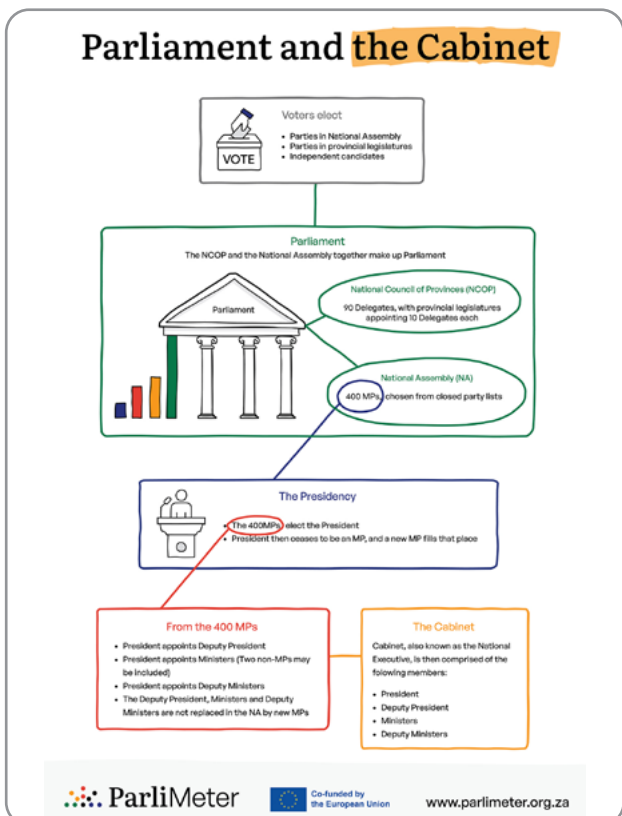
## Why this work matters

Corruption and maladministration are not abstract problems. They divert resources away from essential services such as education, healthcare, infrastructure and public safety, weaken the capacity of the state and undermine economic growth and also erode public trust in government and democratic institutions. Civil society organisations play a critical role in confronting these risks.

Our work helps ensure that public power is exercised responsibly and that public resources serve the public interest.

## Powered by public support

We are funded primarily by individuals and businesses who believe that accountability matters. Their support enables our team to investigate complex cases, pursue strategic litigation and advocate for stronger governance. Without public support, independent accountability work would not be possible. With it, citizens have a voice in the fight against corruption and abuse of power.



# Chairperson's report



“OUTA and civil society players must remain vigilant and continue the good fight of ensuring responsible use of tax revenue at all levels of government.”

**Simile Ndlovu**  
Chairperson



## Enhanced OUTA's resilience

Our Board of Directors, supported by the Executive Committee, took a courageous and necessary decision to review our operations and mandate. This was based on the culmination of strategic assessments that had been undertaken to ensure that we remain fit for purpose. This was important work to be done because the demands for our services are increasing. The Board resolved to responsibly cease activities that were not core to us. We provided financial and operational support to the three entities that were moved out of our stable to help smooth the transition. The decision has enhanced our resilience and has laid a solid foundation for securing the future of the organisation. This was done to ensure that we remained faithful to our vision of *“A prosperous country with an organised, engaged and empowered civil society that ensures responsible use of tax revenues throughout all levels of government.”*

The work to de-risk us has yielded impressive results. The focus on our mandate has led to the closure of 45 non-core projects, and on the financial side, we registered a 4% decline in operating expenses. We remain grateful and indebted to our individual and corporate donors for their continued support. During the period under review, we worked successfully on projects and initiatives relating to delinquent directors, whistleblower protection, Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), the energy and transport sectors and others. Well done to all our employees and partners for this great work.

## The headwinds ahead

South Africa started 2026 with great optimism. That has changed because of the war in the Middle East. Our fortunes have moved from a fiscal turning point to surviving a geopolitical crisis. Most recently, the price of petrol and diesel increased drastically, even after factoring in the temporary reduction of the fuel levy. The predicted 1.6% GDP growth pre-war will certainly be revised down. The South African Reserve Bank inflation target of 3% is likely to be negatively impacted. The year started with expectations of repo-rate cuts. Due to the war, this is no longer the case. The repo rate has increased and is expected to rise further. The sooner the war ends, the better for South Africa and the rest of the world.

These changes come at a point when South Africans had not fully recovered from the previous economic hardships. Ordinary South Africans, who fund us, and keep South Africa moving are likely to be hardest hit. Our supporters and donors will be under pressure; this poses a risk of reduced income for us. All of us must do more with less, and government in particular. The good news is that SARS has collected just over R2 trillion for the first time. We and civil society must remain vigilant and continue the good fight of ensuring responsible use of those tax revenues throughout all levels of government.

## Protection of our hard-earned democracy

We are confronted frequently with cuts in water supply, electricity shutdown, waste collection and rampant crime in our communities. Most of these boil down to dysfunctional local government. According to the Auditor General of South Africa (AGSA), there are no clear aggregate improvements in the finances of municipalities. Only 15% to 20% of municipalities achieve a clean audit. The perennial challenges of municipalities remain non-compliance to laws, fraud and corruption, lower rates collection, non-spending of infrastructure grants, ageing infrastructure and so forth. We have an opportunity to change that with the upcoming local government elections. These elections are as important as national and provincial elections because that is where the actual service delivery takes place.

We encourage every South African to register to vote and turn up in great numbers on the day of election. This is our number one civic duty that we cannot afford to abdicate. We plead with all voting age South Africans in our homes, streets, wards, social spaces, and in communities in general to vote for the party of their choice. Voting is the first part; the second part is to continue holding those that were elected to a higher standard. We will continue doing our part, but we need everyone to do their fair share of work to make a difference. Let us fight the culture of impunity. The revelations at the Madlanga Commission justify why we must give prominence to local government. We have heard of disgraceful conduct of City of Ekurhuleni and City of Tshwane employees in relation to procurement and payment of goods and services. Sadly, such shocking behaviour is also prevalent in other metros and municipalities across the country. We are encouraged by the Zondo and Madlanga Commissions linked arrests that have taken place to date, but this is not enough. More must still be done.

We will continue keeping track of the implementation of the Zondo Commission recommendations. Some Zondo Commission recommendations have been implemented, but the pace thereof is frustrating. We welcome the appointment of the new NDPP, Advocate Andy Mothibi, and we hope that he will accelerate the prosecution of the Zondo Commission cases, and those that emanate from the Madlanga Commission report. We need more senior people and politicians to be arrested, prosecuted and convicted. There should not be a space for people who live outside the values of the constitution. Consequences must be meted out without unjust delays. This is the surest way of crushing the culture of impunity and sending a message that nobody is above the law.

## Protection of whistleblowers and accountability professionals

The Protected Disclosures Act Bill was released for comments. Once it is law, the bill will help enhance the protection of whistleblowers. Whistleblowers are a lifeblood of many of our investigations. Without them, the criminals literally get away with murder. Many of the successes achieved by us were as a result of reporting by whistleblowers. They must be protected at all costs without fail. South Africa must also develop laws and mechanisms to protect accountability professionals in the public and private sector like forensic investigators, forensic auditors, liquidators, lawyers, prosecutors, who remain vulnerable to being victimised and harmed by those implicated in acts of criminality.

Lastly, I would like to extend my appreciation to the Board, the Executive Committee, every employee and our partners for the sterling work in the 2025/26 financial year.





“We restructured our accountability and communications teams for improved focus and productivity.”

**Wayne Duvenage**  
*Chief executive officer*



South Africa is not short of laws designed to protect public resources and ensure accountable government, but it is short of consistent enforcement.

Too often, those entrusted with public power do not face consequences for not only unlawful actions, but also gross maladministration and substantial waste of state funds. Processes are bypassed, oversight is weakened and in many cases the public only becomes aware of these failures once the damage has already been done and the money is lost.

We have seen this pattern play out over many years, across different administrations and institutions. Only the detail changes. What remains is the absence of accountability.

This is the terrain we operate in, because we choose to defend our hard-won democracy from the ravages of maladministration and corruption.

## Why this work continues to matter

Over the past year, we have repeatedly seen how deeply embedded governance failures permeate across multiple areas of the state.

Across different sectors and institutions, the same underlying problems keep surfacing.

- Manipulated procurement and supply chains
- Cadre deployment and nepotism which negate professional appointments
- Absent accountability and a lack of consequences
- Disregard for the rules meant to protect public funds

This directly flows into failing infrastructure, declining service delivery and growing frustration among South Africans who carry the cost or deal with lack of consistent water supply, degradation of roads and rail transport options, waste management and more. Large infrastructure projects and reforms like the failed Road Accident Fund are delayed for years. Corrective action remains slow, even when problems have been clearly identified.

In each case, the costs mount and society bear them.

While the extent of corruption and maladministration remains widespread, we know that every effort in this space counts and makes a difference with varying positive outcomes.

Collectively, billions of rand are saved and accountability is enforced where errant leadership would have been allowed to remain ensconced in their positions.

The most important people in the anti-corruption ecosystem are whistleblowers, who provide valuable information in our investigations. They are the heroes who risk their lives and livelihoods, exercising their moral courage to seek accountability and place barriers in the way of corruption and maladministration. During the process, we also engage with those in authority who are willing to listen, and those who choose to work with us to introduce corrective measures. Where our efforts and concerns are disregarded, we escalate the issues, to the attention of those higher up the chain of command, other oversight bodies and society at large.

This work requires time and persistence, careful analysis, focus and in many cases, the willingness to engage on matters through the courts. Our experiences have shown that when focused pressure is applied, change can and does happen.

## OUTA is a more focused organisation today

At the start of Q1 of 2025, we took a step back and reflected on our work, effort, impact and alignment with our purpose. This strategic exercise required us to ask difficult questions about our role and capacity constraints. We recognised that while we had remained true to our core focus areas of challenging corruption, maladministration and irrational government policies, we had also ventured into other initiatives with good intentions (such as water quality reporting, smart city applications and local government performance reporting). However, each of these other initiatives required additional resources and attention, which was becoming costly to support and a deviation from our core focus and purpose.

We made a tough decision to hive off or cease some of these projects and assisted in the launch of separate non-profit organisations (NPOs) for three of these initiatives (WaterCAN; JoburgCAN and the Community Action Network – CAN), while also providing limited financial support and back-up services. At the same time, we closed the municipal infrastructure reporting app (Link).

In addition, we restructured our accountability and communications teams for improved focus and productivity, which required us to go through a painful retrenchment process. The overall result was that after starting out in 2025 with 44 staff, we closed the year with 33 positions and a flatter structure, enabling a sharper and more focused team, concentrated on our core work.

While these were not easy decisions, they were very necessary. The outcome has been extremely positive on the organisation's energy and focus on its core mandate of challenging systemic failures in governance, largely at a national level. At the same time, the reduced costs have helped us become more sustainable over time.

## Cost containment pays off

Before our restructuring decision, we opened the 2025/26 financial year with 50 projects in progress. Our decision to move our local government and water projects to their new separate domains, along with a focus on our core mandate projects, enabled us to close 45 projects throughout the year, while opening another 24. This has left us with a more manageable workload of 29 open projects going into the new financial year.

Our manpower costs reduced by almost 9% on the prior year and overall operating expenses were down by 4%, as most of the headcount cost reductions took place in the second quarter, while our support to cover WaterCAN's budget continued throughout the financial year. Most of our cost containment measures will provide relief in the coming financial year.

## Project advancements

This annual report contains significant input and updates on several projects undertaken by us. We continued to work on inefficiencies, maladministration and corruption in the higher education space, because it is in this space that so much has gone wrong over many years within the **Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)** and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). In addition, the uptake and action undertaken at NSFAS has been positive on account of our reports on the student accommodation scams and irregularities.

Two other areas of attention have been in the **transport** and **energy** sectors. We were pleased to see the final court order to reverse the tender of the driving licence card machine contract, during which we, assisted by whistleblowers, were able to expose the gross irregularities of that tender. Our report pertaining to corruption and gross irregularities in the vehicle testing station sector has been encouraging, and a civil society and industry engagement with the Department of Transport is expected in the new year.

An important project that gained traction during the year pertained to Eskom's handling of its demands related to **small-scale embedded generation (SSEG)** systems, also referred to as residential solar and battery energy storage (SV-BES) installations. We were pleased to see Eskom change its approach to some of their conditions, however, this project continues to unfold into the new year, with significant disparity between municipalities and the national laws that govern these processes. We believe that the conduct and irrational processes being applied by Eskom and municipalities on the SSEG registration and permissions issue has become extremely damaging and confusing to society, as well as the SV-BES industry.



## The challenge of sustaining support

Another reality that we have had to confront is the growing difficulties of funding and the “donor fatigue” environment that civil society organisations are facing.

South Africans are under financial strain. Households are being forced to make more difficult choices. Businesses are operating under pressure. This inevitably affects the ability of many of our supporters to contribute financially to civil action organisations. At OUTA, we have been fortunate to have a few corporate entities that realise the importance of defending our democracy against the ravages of corruption and maladministration. Their support has largely, but not entirely, offset the decline in support from our wide base of individuals who give us an average donation of R125 per month.

At the same time, the demand for our work is increasing, more matters require investigation, more cases require legal intervention, more sustained pressure is needed to ensure issues are not allowed to fade from public attention.

In simple terms, the need for accountability and transparency is growing, while the resources available to support our work are under pressure and that tension is real.

## The role of our community

We do not operate in isolation. Our work is sustained by those in society who choose to be engaged, often despite their own constraints. People who follow the issues and question why our national prosperity levels remain constrained. These are the people who support this important work because they understand why it matters.

That support is not something we take for granted. We know all too well that it must be earned and maintained.

It is this community of engaged citizens that enables us to remain independent, focused and willing to take on difficult matters that others may choose to avoid

We closed the year with  
**33 positions**  
and a flatter structure,  
enabling a sharper and  
more focused team.



## Looking ahead

We are not expecting the environment to ease in the year ahead. Unfortunately, governance failures will continue to emerge and pressure on public resources will remain high. The need for independent oversight and civil action to curb the abuse and waste of state funds remains high.

There will be new matters, new whistleblower engagements, new challenges and areas where civil intervention is required.

Our role is to remain focused and deliberate in how we respond.

- To continue investigating where things go wrong
- To continue engaging where there is an opportunity to correct course
- To act where those efforts are ignored

This is not work that produces immediate results, but over time, sustained pressure does make a difference. It creates visibility, it strengthens oversight, and in some cases, it leads to decisions being reversed and systems being improved, even if it is limited to those areas where civil action organisations get involved. That is what we are here to do.

Because without consistent pressure, accountability and corrective action do not follow. And when accountability does not follow, the cost is carried by the public.





# Civic action and engagement overview

## Marketing and communications

At OUTA, marketing and communications is not about visibility. It is about people.

It is about building a community that pays attention. A community that asks questions. A community that refuses to accept silence, spin or inaction.

This is how accountability takes hold.

Because when people are informed, those in power have less room to hide.

## Keeping the public informed

Every investigation carries a responsibility. We therefore endeavour to put findings in the public domain clearly, quickly and without dilution. However, information alone is not enough, it must reach people in a way that they understand and can act on.

Over the reporting period, the focus was simple:

- turn complex governance failures into clear and usable information;
- respond while issues are still shaping public opinion; and
- keep issues visible long after the headlines move on.

This is how a community stays informed. An informed community is harder to ignore and manipulate.

## Building a community that pays attention

Our community is not passive. It is engaged, responsive and growing.

More South Africans are actively looking for credible, independent voices that explain what is going wrong and why it matters. They are not just consuming information. They are following issues. They are coming back. They are sharing.

This community engages across:

- national media, where issues are pushed into public debate;
- digital platforms, where information is immediate and accessible;
- newsletters and videos, where issues are unpacked in detail; and
- public spaces, where accountability becomes visible.

## From awareness to collective pressure

Information is the starting point; collective pressure is what follows.

The role of marketing and communications is to move people. One person paying attention matters. Thousands paying attention change the environment.

Across the year, this held. When we spoke on real national issues, the community responded. Engagement increased, traffic followed, and the media amplified it further.

This is how pressure builds. Not through noise, but through informed and collective attention.



## What this looks like in practice

This is how that community was reached, informed and mobilised:

- A total of **3 653** media clips secured, keeping accountability issues in constant public view.
- Up to **R392 million** in monthly media reach, pushing issues into national conversation.
- Over **250 000** website sessions, as people actively sought out information.
- A total of **16 million** impressions and **666 000** engagements, reflecting a responsive and engaged audience.
- Over **70** media statements issued, translating investigations into public-facing information.
- Nearly **200** organic social media posts, maintaining consistent visibility.
- A total of **60** videos produced, helping explain complex issues simply.
- A newsletter audience of over **25 000** subscribers, building a direct connection with supporters.
- A YouTube community exceeding **10 000** subscribers, engaging with deeper content.
- A total of **62** bridge brigades and protests, where the community took accountability into public spaces.

These are not just outputs, they reflect a community that is informed, engaged and willing to act.

## The challenge ahead

The community is there, engagement is there, but sustaining that support is harder.

Many supporters are under financial pressure. That affects their ability to contribute, not their belief in the work.

The focus now is to hold that connection:

- to keep communication direct and relevant;
- to stay close to the issues people care about; and
- to make it easier for people to remain part of the work.

Because attention fades; sustaining informed attention over time drives changes.

## Looking ahead

The role remains clear.

Keep people informed. Keep issues visible. Keep the community engaged.

When a community is paying attention, accountability is no longer optional.

# Holding power to account in a culture of secrecy and impunity

## Accountability and public governance

**At OUTA, accountability is not an abstract principle; it is about whether public officials follow the law, institutions do what they are meant to do, and whether public money is protected from abuse, waste and corruption.**

**Stefanie Fick**

*Executive Director: Accountability Division*



## Foreword

Behind every failure of governance is a cost borne by the public. That is why this work matters. That is the work of our Accountability Division.

Over the 2025/26 reporting period, we worked across multiple areas of government, including energy procurement, transport regulation, parliamentary oversight, higher education governance and public finance management. Some matters required lengthy legal battles. Others called for detailed investigation, policy engagement and sustained pressure on oversight bodies.

Our work takes place in an environment where transparency is often resisted, access to information is delayed or denied, oversight mechanisms are weakened and consequences for wrongdoing remain limited.

In this context, accountability is not achieved through a single intervention. It requires persistence.

Among the most important outcomes this year was the High Court judgment setting aside the electricity generation licences granted to three Karpowership projects. This effectively halted government's plan to procure electricity from floating gas-powered ships under the Risk Mitigation Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (RMIPPPP). It was a necessary intervention to uphold lawful process and protect the responsible use of public funds.

We also uncovered irregularities in the tender for a new driving licence card machine. This led to the Department of Transport approaching the court to have the tender reviewed and set aside.

Our work further included investigations into corruption at vehicle testing stations involving roadworthiness inspections, continued scrutiny of governance failures within SETAs, monitoring of fiscal policy and public

expenditure, and challenging regulatory and pricing decisions in the energy sector.

Our parliamentary oversight work continued to grow during the year. Through engagement with parliamentary structures, public participation initiatives and interactive symposia, we pushed for stronger oversight and improved public access to parliamentary processes.

The development of the Parliamentary Oversight Dashboard, PariiMeter, in partnership with Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG) and OpenUp and co-funded by the European Union (EU), made important progress in opening up parliamentary proceedings and performance to the public.

Parliament too, must be held accountable.

This work is often made possible by whistleblowers, access to information processes, public records and collaboration with civil society partners. These sources of information remain essential in exposing wrongdoing and supporting efforts to drive reform.

Many of the matters covered in this report remain ongoing. That is the nature of accountability work. Progress is often slow. Resistance is common. Meaningful reform takes time.

We remain committed to following the evidence, pursuing the law and insisting that public institutions serve the public, not themselves.



## Accountability by the numbers

**1 March 2025 to 28 February 2026**

Our Accountability Division investigates corruption, challenges unlawful decisions and advocates for stronger governance and oversight.

### Accountability projects

- 29** Total projects active at close of the year
- 24** New projects opened during the reporting period
- 45** Projects completed or concluded
- 33** Projects closed as successful

Examples include the Karpowership electricity licence judgment, the overturning of the driving licence card machine tender and the repeal of Johannesburg's CCTV by-law.

### Legal actions and litigation

#### Court cases initiated or ongoing

There were 14 active litigious matters during the year under review.

Key litigation matters during the reporting period included:

- judicial review of electricity generation licences issued to Karpowership;
- delinquent director proceedings relating to Helen Botes;
- constitutional litigation addressing accountability gaps in the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA);
- ongoing litigation relating to e-toll debt cases;
- ongoing litigation relating to the toll concessionaires;
- judicial review of the CEO appointment at Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority (INSETA); and
- Ernest Khosa's ongoing litigation against OUTA on the review and setting aside of an OUTA investigation report.

## When leadership fails, lives are lost...

Delinquent director case underway



Helen Botes, former CEO Johannesburg Property Company

**HELP OUTA HOLD HER ACCOUNTABLE**







**inseta**  
INSURANCE SECTOR EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING AUTHORITY

### Why The PFMA Has Weak Accountability

**PFMA (1999)**

- No "delinquent director" provision.
- Only weak sanctions: suspension/dismissal.
- Officials **who fail their fiduciary duties** walk away free.





## Policy engagement and submissions

### Formal submissions made to Parliament or government

In September 2025, we also submitted commentary on the 2025 Audiovisual Media Services and Online Safety Policy.

We submitted a research report titled: “Broadcasting Digital Migration: Delayed, Expensive and Lacking Oversight”, to provide the Portfolio Committee of Communication and Digital Technologies with an overview of the process to date and to assist the committee in their future endeavours.

During the 2025/26 reporting period, we maintained sustained engagement with South Africa’s national budget process, focusing on fiscal discipline, transparency and the need to address corruption and wasteful expenditure.

In April 2025, OUTA made a formal submission to Parliament supporting the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Amendment Bill, 2025, urging lawmakers to strengthen oversight and close loopholes that have historically enabled unchecked executive perks.

In June 2025, we made a submission to the national Department of Cooperative Governance as part of the review of South Africa’s White Paper on Local Government, emphasising that the root causes of municipal dysfunction lie in failed leadership, not inadequate laws or policy frameworks.

In August 2025, we welcomed the introduction of a second bill, named Constitution Twenty-second Amendment Bill, 2025, which addresses persistent wasteful expenditure and weak consequence management in government. We praised the bill’s emphasis on reinforcing accountability mechanisms across public entities, particularly proposals to tighten budgetary controls, curb inefficient spending, and impose clearer sanctions for maladministration and financial mismanagement.

Submissions made this year relate to:

- broadcasting digital migration;
- executive benefits oversight;
- ethical standards for public representatives;
- local government reform; and
- fiscal policy and national budget processes.

## Transparency and access to information

### PAIA requests submitted and ongoing

There were **20** PAIA applications submitted during the period under review.

### Internal appeals lodged and ongoing

There were **12** internal appeals lodged during the period under review.

### Complaints submitted to the Information Regulator and ongoing

There were **12** complaints submitted to the Information Regulator during the period under review.

These requests focused primarily on procurement decisions, governance failures and financial records held by public institutions.



## Major accountability interventions

### OUTA wins legal challenge against Karpowership plan

On 31 July 2025, we won a landmark legal challenge that overturned the electricity generation licences granted to three Karpowership projects. This action took three years and effectively ended the state's plans to procure power from floating gas-powered power ships owned by Karpowership.

We lodged our application in the Pretoria High Court on 26 April 2022, seeking a judicial review of the National Energy Regulator of South Africa's (Nersa) decisions to grant generation licences to the three Karpowership independent power producers. The court ultimately set aside Nersa's licensing decisions, finalising the matter.

The licences were a critical step in government's plan to sign 20-year "emergency" electricity contracts under the RMIPPPP. These contracts were expected to cost around R240 billion over a 20-year period, with the cost passed on to electricity consumers.

We argued that Nersa failed to properly consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of the projects, and that Karpowership lacked several key regulatory approvals. We also challenged the transparency and rationality of the decision-making process.

The judgment brought the matter to a close and prevented the implementation of a long-term electricity procurement deal.

## Driving licence card machine contract overturned after OUTA exposes irregularities

On 6 January 2026, the Pretoria High Court overturned the Department of Transport's award of the driving licence card machine contract to Idemia Identity and Security SA, ruling that the tender was irregular, invalid, unlawful and unenforceable. The contract, worth R898 million, was intended to provide a new machine for producing driving licence cards.

In September 2024, OUTA submitted a detailed report to the Minister of Transport exposing corruption and irregularities in the procurement process after receiving whistleblower information. The Minister referred the report to the AGSA. The AGSA subsequently warned of irregularities and referenced the information provided by OUTA.

In July 2025, Minister Barbara Creecy initiated legal proceedings to review and halt the tender award, which ultimately led to the contract being set aside by the court in January 2026. This case illustrates the impact of whistleblower disclosures combined with independent civil society oversight.



# Holding power to account in a culture of secrecy and impunity continued

## Challenging Johannesburg's CCTV by-law

During 2025, we successfully challenged the City of Johannesburg's attempt to regulate privately owned closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras through a municipal by-law that threatened constitutional rights and community safety.

In early 2025, the City of Johannesburg adopted a *Privately-owned Closed-Circuit Television Surveillance Camera By-Law*, which sought to impose extensive regulatory requirements on residents and businesses whose CCTV cameras overlook public spaces. These included mandatory registration and annual re-registration, fees, approval processes, restrictions on the use and sharing of footage, and broad powers for city officials to access footage and enter private property.

We raised serious concerns that the by-law was unconstitutional, irrational and procedurally flawed. We argued that the city was attempting to assume policing functions that fall outside municipal powers, while imposing onerous administrative and financial burdens on law-abiding residents and businesses. We further warned that the by-law undermined privacy rights, discouraged the use of CCTV as a crime-prevention tool, and risked weakening community-based safety initiatives at a time when crime levels remain high.

In June 2025, **we filed an application** in the Johannesburg High Court seeking to have the by-law declared invalid. The challenge formed part of a broader civil-society response, alongside actions by other organisations, reflecting widespread public opposition to the city's approach.

Following sustained legal and public pressure, the City of Johannesburg repealed the CCTV by-law in September 2025, before the matter was heard in court. We welcomed the

repeal as a victory for constitutional rights, common sense and public safety, noting that the city had ultimately conceded that the by-law was untenable.

Although the substantive relief sought was achieved through repeal, we are in the process of seeking an order for legal costs, emphasising that municipalities should engage meaningfully with public concerns and constitutional constraints, rather than forcing residents and civil society to resort to litigation.

This outcome demonstrates the importance of active civil oversight in local governance. Our intervention helped ensure that measures intended to improve safety do not, in practice, erode fundamental rights or undermine the very community initiatives that help keep neighbourhoods safe.

## Holding the powerful to account: the delinquent director project

During the reporting period we continued expanding our delinquent director project, a strategic litigation initiative aimed at holding senior decision makers in public entities personally accountable for misconduct and governance failures.

In July 2025, we filed an application in the Johannesburg High Court seeking an order declaring Helen Botes, then director and chief executive officer of the City of Johannesburg Property Company (JPC), a delinquent director in terms of section 162 of the Companies Act.

The case relates to governance failures and procurement irregularities linked to the management of the JPC's properties, including matters associated with the Usindiso building fire. Following the filing and service of the application, Botes was removed as a director of JPC.



During the reporting period the matter advanced through procedural stages. Botes expressed her intention to oppose the application, raising challenges regarding our standing and the substance of the allegations. In response, we resisted attempts to delay the proceedings and served a notice of bar to prevent any procedural obstruction.

By the end of the reporting period, pleadings had closed and the matter will continue during 2026. This case builds on our earlier litigation which resulted in former South African Airways chairperson Dudu Myeni being declared a delinquent director for life in 2020.

### **Constitutional challenge to strengthen accountability under the PFMA**

In August 2025, we launched a **constitutional challenge** aimed at closing an accountability gap in South Africa's governance framework.

While the Companies Act of South Africa, 2008, allows courts to declare directors delinquent, many state-owned entities are governed solely by the PFMA, which does not provide for similar accountability mechanisms.

We filed an application in the Pretoria High Court seeking to have sections of the PFMA declared unconstitutional to the extent that they fail to provide an equivalent mechanism for holding accounting authorities personally accountable.

Through this application, we are asking the court to give Parliament an opportunity to amend the PFMA and, in the interim, to extend delinquent-director provisions to accounting authorities of PFMA-governed entities.

The matter will continue during 2026.

### **OUTA challenges the RTMC over secrecy on transaction fees**

For more than three years, we have sought disclosure of how the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) calculates transaction fees charged to motorists for licensing and related services.

We submitted a Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) request in November 2022 seeking internal documents explaining how these fees are determined and how the revenue collected is used. After the RTMC refused the request and rejected an internal appeal, we lodged a complaint with the Information Regulator in April 2023.

In April 2024, the Information Regulator ruled in OUTA's favour and directed the RTMC to disclose the information. The RTMC objected to the enforcement order issued in February 2025 and indicated its intention to challenge it in court.

In August 2025, OUTA was notified that the RTMC opted not to contest the enforcement order and subsequently provided the requested documentation. After reviewing the information, OUTA concluded the project as successful. OUTA remains firm in its stance that the public is entitled to transparency regarding the calculation of these fees and the management of the revenue collected. See more [here](#).



**Why is OUTA taking Helen Botes to court?**

**Because failure has deadly consequences.**

**Repercussions:**

- **Declared unfit to lead:** Stripped of all directorships
- **Banned from power:** Blocked from controlling any company for up to life
- **Branded for tax abuse:** Her misconduct carved into legal record

**HELP US WIN THIS CASE**

**DONATE NOW**

**OUTA**  
ORGANISATION UNDOING TAX ABUSE



**Why The PFMA Has Weak Accountability**

**PFMA (1999)**

- No "delinquent director" provision.
- Only weak sanctions: suspension/dismissal.
- Officials **who fail their fiduciary duties** walk away free.

**OUTA**  
ORGANISATION UNDOING TAX ABUSE

# Holding power to account in a culture of secrecy and impunity continued



## NSFAS crisis continues

During the 2025/26 reporting period, we continued our work to expose governance failures and alleged corruption at NSFAS, while defending the right of civil society to publish investigative findings in the public interest.

Our engagement with NSFAS follows several years of investigation into systemic failures at the entity, including the mismanagement of student accommodation, weak oversight of service providers and alleged abuse of public funds. These investigations culminated in **detailed reports** published by us in 2023, which contributed to significant leadership consequences, including the dismissal of the NSFAS chief executive officer and the resignation of the board chair.

A major development during the reporting period was a high court judgment in July 2025 that upheld our right to publish investigative reports on NSFAS. The Johannesburg High Court dismissed an application brought by former NSFAS board chair, Ernest Khosa, who had sought to compel us to remove the report from our website and to provide him with a pre-publication hearing. The court found that we were entitled to publish the report and that civil society organisations are not legally required to offer a pre-publication hearing to individuals implicated in investigative reports.

The judgment represents an important victory for transparency and civil-society oversight. It affirmed that investigative reporting and advocacy carried out in the public interest should not be chilled by attempts to suppress disclosure through litigation. The ruling also strengthened the legal position of whistleblowers and

watchdog organisations seeking to expose maladministration in public entities. Although Ernest Khosa was granted leave to appeal, the appeal ultimately lapsed, leaving the judgment intact.

We continue to call for criminal accountability for those implicated in the abuse of NSFAS funds and remain engaged with law-enforcement agencies and oversight bodies. As governance and operational challenges at NSFAS persist, we will continue to monitor developments, defend our investigative work, and advocate for reforms that prioritise students, transparency and accountability.

For more on our work on NSFAS, click [here](#).

## Going to court to challenge the reappointment of the INSETA CEO

During the period under review, we escalated our work on governance failures at **INSETA**, moving from investigation and engagement to legal action. This followed sustained concerns about maladministration, weak oversight and a lack of consequence management at INSETA.

In December 2025, we filed an application in the Pretoria High Court challenging the reappointment of INSETA's chief executive officer, Gugu Mkhize, for a further five-year term. Our application asks the court to review and set aside the decision by Minister Buti Manamela to reappoint Ms Mkhize, to declare it invalid and unconstitutional and order the INSETA board to conduct a new, transparent and competitive appointment process. The respondents include the Minister of Higher Education and Training, the INSETA board, INSETA and Gugu Mkhize.



# Holding power to account in a culture of secrecy and impunity continued



## How SETA leadership directly affects YOUR opportunities



**Good SETA leadership**

- Creates **more opportunities**
- Funds relevant training
- **Pays on time**
- Builds ethical, efficient systems
- Helps the youth **become more employable**
- Helps **reduce unemployment** and drives growth

*Opportunity*

**Bad SETA leadership**

- Quietly **takes opportunities away**
- **Wastes or loots** millions of rand
- Fuels skills mismatch and **rising unemployment**
- Leaves thousands of young people behind
- Appoints **incompetent** or inappropriate skills development providers
- **Delays or bungles** certification of students

*Opportunity stolen*

**In 2025, more than four out of every ten young people aged 15 – 34 were not in employment, education or training.\***

**SETAs are critical for South Africa's future.**

Skilled, experienced, ethical leaders = More jobs and hope | Continued failure = Lost futures and rising unemployment

\* StatsSA, Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Nov 2025

decision making across the sector reinforced concerns that political influence continues to undermine accountability. While the placement of several SETAs under administration acknowledged the depth of dysfunction, we warned that administration alone is insufficient without time-bound interventions, credible

leadership appointments and firm consequence management. The exclusion of INSETA from these interventions, despite documented governance and financial concerns, further highlighted the need for urgent, system-wide reform to restore integrity and ensure SETAs serve their intended public purpose.

## Corruption in vehicle roadworthiness testing

During 2025, we conducted an investigation into corruption within South Africa's vehicle roadworthiness testing system, exposing serious weaknesses in oversight and enforcement that pose risks to public safety.

The investigation identified cases in which authorised vehicle testing stations issued certificates without conducting proper inspections or manipulated test outcomes to ensure vehicles passed. In several instances, vehicles with significant mechanical defects were reportedly certified as roadworthy and permitted to operate on public roads.

Our findings highlighted systemic problems within the regulatory framework governing roadworthiness testing. These include inadequate monitoring of testing stations, weak auditing mechanisms, conflicts of interest where testing stations have financial incentives to approve vehicles and limited consequence management when irregularities are detected.

The investigation also raised concerns about the lack of consistent enforcement action against operators and officials involved in fraudulent certification practices. This environment creates opportunities for corruption while undermining confidence in the integrity of the roadworthiness system.

Rather than releasing the investigation publicly, we submitted our findings to the relevant authorities in March 2025, including the Minister of Transport, to support further investigation and enforcement action. The minister instructed the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) to investigate irregularities and corrupt activities at vehicle testing stations under a transport proclamation issued to the SIU.

We recommended stronger regulatory oversight, independent auditing of testing centres, improved data monitoring and greater protection for whistleblowers reporting corruption in the sector.

The investigation formed part of our broader work to strengthen accountability in the transport sector and ensure that regulatory systems intended to protect the public function effectively.

## The ongoing saga of the driving licence card validity period

In South Africa, driver's licence cards are currently valid for five years, after which drivers are required to renew them. This frequent renewal process results in long queues, administrative burdens on licensing centres and unnecessary costs for citizens.

We have been **advocating for the extension** of the validity period to at least ten years, aligning with the international best practices. A longer validity period would alleviate congestion at licensing centres, reduce administrative costs and improve the overall efficiency of the system for both the government and motorists.

However, we emphasise that any changes to licence validity periods should be grounded in transparent research and international best practices. While we support the extension, we have raised concerns regarding the potential increase in fees, urging that any fee hikes must be based on clear and publicly available cost breakdowns.

For several years, we have engaged with the Department of Transport and the minister on this issue. We have also conducted research comparing South Africa's driver's licence renewal process with international standards.

The minister had committed to conducting a cost-benefit analysis to determine the financial implications of extending the licence validity period. This analysis was expected to be completed by October 2025.

In line with this commitment, we followed up with the minister on 26 November 2025 to request an update on the matter.

We continue to monitor developments and engage with government. Recent reports suggest that the Department of Transport is considering extending the validity period from five years to eight years, though no final decision has been made yet.

As of March 2026, media reports indicated that the Department of Transport missed the deadline for starting consultations on the proposed extension, as the cost-benefit analysis had not been completed. The analysis will ultimately determine whether the change will proceed.

While the government previously suggested that the extension would definitely occur, the matter remains under review.

## Broadcasting digital migration: delays persist as analogue switch-off looms

In March 2025, we submitted a [research report](#) to the Portfolio Committee on Communication and Digital Technologies, detailing key challenges that have plagued the Broadcasting Digital Migration (BDM) project for over a decade – most notably, persistent delays and irregular expenditure. We also called on Parliament to conduct an urgent investigation into the project's handling and to ensure that the parties responsible are held accountable for their actions.

The BDM project was approved in 2008 and was designed to move South Africa from analogue to digital television broadcasting, aiming to improve signal quality, free up spectrum for mobile broadband, and create a more efficient broadcasting system. However, the process has been mired in years of delays, missed deadlines and wasteful expenditure. Despite repeated calls for action, digital migration remains incomplete, with the latest deadline – December 2024 – missed by a wide margin.

The failure to distribute set-top boxes (STBs) to vulnerable households, coupled with the absence of a public awareness campaign, leaves millions reliant on an outdated analogue system, risking loss of access to essential television services. Between 2.2 million and 4.5 million households may be affected, many of whom cannot afford to migrate to digital platforms without government support.

We have previously raised concerns about the ongoing wasteful expenditure and dubious tenders linked to the project, echoing the need for strong oversight and effective consequence management.

In the submission to Parliament, we emphasise the need for Parliament to fulfil its constitutional duty of oversight and accountability. As the final deadline approaches, we call on Parliament to act decisively to ensure that the transition to digital broadcasting is completed in a way that benefits all South Africans, especially those in vulnerable communities.

## Watching the budget

During the 2025/26 reporting period, we maintained sustained engagement with South Africa's national budget process, focusing on fiscal discipline, transparency and the need to address corruption and wasteful expenditure.

The year was unusual in that the Minister of Finance was required to return to Parliament multiple times to present revised versions of the budget after the initial proposals failed to secure sufficient political support. The revisions followed strong opposition to proposed tax increases and concerns about the broader direction of fiscal policy.



While the process reflected divisions within government and Parliament, it also demonstrated that budget proposals are not immune from scrutiny or challenge. The revisions highlighted the growing pressure on government to justify fiscal decisions and respond to public and political concerns.

In March 2025, we submitted proposals to the Minister of Finance identifying potential savings of approximately R500 billion annually through improved revenue collection, reduced wasteful expenditure and stronger procurement oversight.

We emphasised that South Africa's fiscal challenges are driven primarily by governance failures, inefficiency and corruption rather than a shortage of tax revenue. See more [here](#).

## Still waiting for transparency on toll concessionaire profits

Our legal challenge regarding the SANRAL concessionaire contracts has been a significant part of our efforts to ensure greater transparency and fairness within the South African tolling system. The focus of the challenge has been on the tolling agreements, particularly those involving the Bakwena and N3TC Concessionaires. These concession agreements are set to run until 2035 and we consistently raised concerns about their transparency, fairness and impact on commuters.

Our primary concerns regarding the concession contracts revolve around several key issues. We believe that there has been a lack of transparency with insufficient and unclear information provided on how toll fees are calculated and how the revenue generated from these tolls is managed. We have also raised concerns about the fairness and competitiveness of the procurement process for these tolling contracts, questioning whether SANRAL's practices have truly prioritised the public's best interests. See more [here](#).

We are currently involved in two significant concessionaire cases, each addressing concerns over the fairness, transparency and impact of tolling systems in South Africa. The Bakwena and the N3TC Concessionaire matters focuses on the lack of transparency in the concession's financial dealings and the long-term viability of the toll system. We seek to ensure that the public has access to information about how toll fees are set and how the revenue is utilised.

On 14 November 2023, the Pretoria High Court dismissed our application in the N3TC matter, which had challenged SANRAL's refusal to provide key documents requested in a PAIA request more than four years ago, particularly N3TC financial statements relating to the toll concession. SANRAL opposed the application and N3TC also joined the case to oppose the handover of the information.

Although we lost the initial court case against N3TC, we are in the process of appealing the Pretoria High Court's decision and the matter will be heard during 2026.

With regard to the Bakwena matter, the matter will be heard during April 2026.

These legal battles have been pivotal in our pursuit for transparency and accountability within the tolling system. It has also brought to the forefront the broader issue of privatisation of public infrastructure and its consequences for local communities.

While these cases are still ongoing, we remain committed to holding SANRAL accountable, pushing for a fairer, more equitable tolling system and ensuring that the interests of the public are adequately protected.

### **Advocating stronger oversight of executive benefits**

In April 2025, we made a formal submission to Parliament supporting the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Amendment Bill, 2025, urging lawmakers to strengthen oversight and close loopholes that have historically enabled unchecked executive perks. The submission responded to a Government Gazette notice proposing changes to the Ministerial Handbook, which in 2022 had quietly extended expensive benefits – including free water and electricity at official residences and expanded private offices – for ministers and deputy ministers, costing taxpayers an estimated R87 million annually.

We welcomed the intent of the bill as a crucial step toward restoring public confidence in government spending, emphasising that the current system allows changes to executive benefits without parliamentary scrutiny, costing transparency, or consultation with the independent commission tasked with advising on public office-bearer remuneration.

In our submission, we recommended that any changes to benefits for the President, Deputy President, ministers or deputy ministers should be:

- notified to Parliament within 30 days;
- preceded by a recommendation from the Independent Commission for the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers; and
- that the Ministerial Handbook be recognised as a delegated legislative instrument subject to parliamentary review.

We also called for mandatory public access to costing models and economic justifications, and for benefits granted outside the proposed process to be treated as unauthorised expenditure under the PFMA.

We stressed that we do not oppose fair and reasonable remuneration for public officials but argued that stronger checks, transparency and accountability are essential to prevent misuse of public funds under the guise of executive entitlements. The submission is [here](#).

### **Supporting structural reform through abolition of Deputy Minister posts**

In August 2025, OUTA made a formal submission to Parliament in support of a private member's bill introduced by Athol Trollip proposing the abolition of the office of Deputy Minister.

The bill sought to reduce unnecessary executive expenditure, streamline government structures and improve fiscal discipline by removing positions widely viewed as duplicative and costly, with limited operational necessity.

OUTA welcomed the proposal as a practical governance reform aimed at curbing excessive public spending and reducing political patronage opportunities within the executive.

In our submission, we argued that South Africa's constrained fiscal environment requires government structures to prioritise efficiency, value for money and constitutional purpose. We noted that eliminating non-essential executive roles could strengthen public confidence by demonstrating political willingness to reduce waste at the highest levels of government.

# Holding power to account in a culture of secrecy and impunity continued

We further emphasised that structural reforms of this nature should form part of broader efforts to improve consequence management, governance efficiency and responsible use of taxpayer funds.

Through this submission, OUTA reinforced its long-standing advocacy for leaner, more accountable government structures that better serve citizens while reducing avoidable public expenditure. Read our submission [here](#).

## Strengthening ethical standards for public representatives

Later in August 2025, OUTA submitted commentary to Parliament on a separate private member's bill introduced by Adv Glynnis Breytenbach, which sought to strengthen ethical governance by disqualifying former judges and Chapter 9 office bearers removed for misconduct from serving in Parliament, provincial legislatures or municipal councils.

OUTA welcomed this bill as a necessary constitutional safeguard to prevent individuals found unfit for high public office from re-entering positions of political authority.

In our submission, we argued that this reform would close a significant legal gap, strengthen consequence management and reinforce constitutional principles of integrity, accountability and ethical leadership.

We further recommended that future reforms expand such disqualification measures to include individuals convicted of serious criminal offences, those guilty of gross public sector misconduct, and delinquent directors declared under the Companies Act.

Through this submission, OUTA advanced its broader advocacy for stronger ethical eligibility standards in democratic institutions, helping to restore public trust and prevent the recycling of misconduct within the state. Read our submission [here](#).

## Leadership, not law, is the core challenge in local government

In June 2025, we made a submission to the national Department of Cooperative Governance as part of the review of South Africa's *White Paper on Local Government*, emphasising that the root causes of municipal dysfunction lie in failed leadership, not inadequate laws or policy frameworks. The submission argues that more than two decades after the original 1998 White Paper, systemic governance failures persist across municipalities, characterised by financial mismanagement, political interference, weak internal controls and declining public trust.

Our analysis highlights that oversight mechanisms exist but are often underused or ineffective due to lack of political will, cadre deployment, and a habit of filling leadership positions based on affiliation rather than competence. We underscored that corruption, nepotism and procurement irregularities continue to flourish in an environment where deterrence is weak, whistleblowers lack protection and law-enforcement responses are slow or inconsistent.

The submission also calls for greater citizen engagement in shaping and monitoring local government performance, noting that constitutional requirements for public participation are frequently superficial and tokenistic. We argued that genuine engagement – supported by accessible information on municipal budgets, project planning and performance – is essential if reform efforts embedded in the new White Paper are to have any meaningful impact.

Our intervention in the policy review process frames local government reform as a leadership and accountability challenge first, rather than a problem of legal frameworks alone, reinforcing our broader advocacy for ethical governance, professional administration and active civil oversight at the municipal level.

## Parliamentary Oversight Report again finds Parliament weak, but hopes for better

During the reporting period, we published our seventh annual Parliamentary Oversight Report (POR), assessing how effectively Parliament holds the executive to account. For the first time we utilised ParliMeter to bolster our quantitative research on parliamentary proceedings, increasing its portfolio committee analyses from 11 committees to all committees.

The report found that parliamentary activity had increased compared to previous years, with more committee meetings and written questions submitted by Members of Parliament (MPs).

However, the report concluded that increased activity has not yet translated into consistent accountability. The findings of this report were covered by the webinar on 29 October 2025 with the theme of *7th Parliament: The Review Nobody Escapes*, mirroring the title of the POR. The link to the website is [here](#). The link to the 2025 report is [here](#).

## Enhancing accountability: launching the ParliMeter

During 2025/26, we formally launched and continued developing **ParliMeter**, a new parliamentary oversight tool designed to strengthen transparency, accountability and public participation in South Africa's democratic processes.

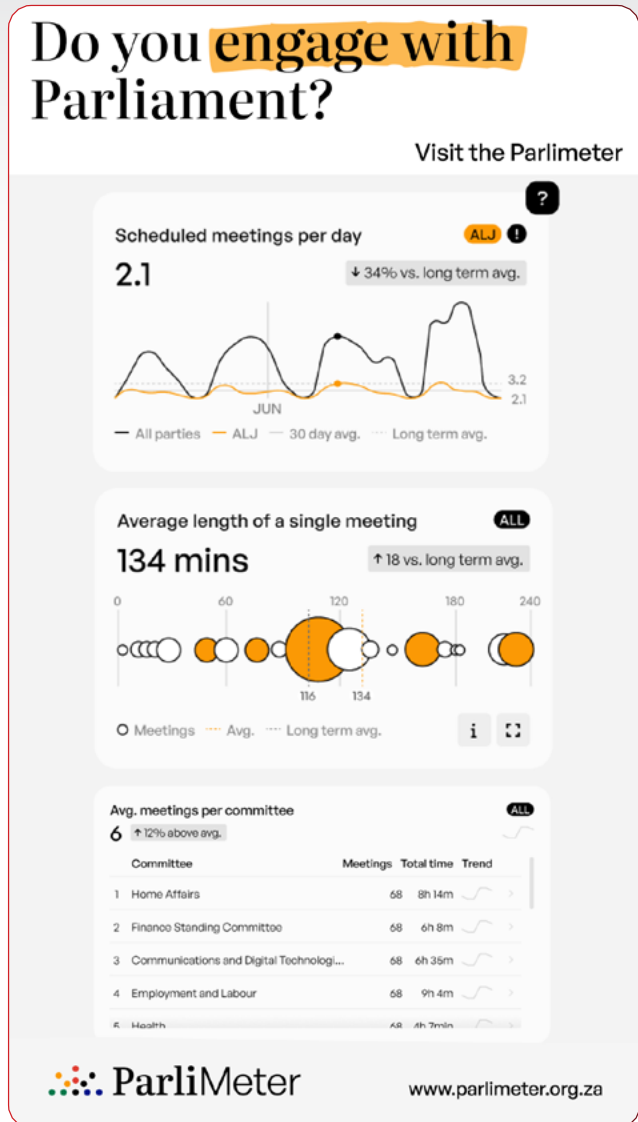
ParliMeter was officially launched on 6 March 2025 by us in collaboration with the **PMG** and **OpenUp**. All three organisations share a commitment to advancing open governance and enabling citizens to engage meaningfully with public institutions. The project is co-funded by the **EU** under its Enhancing Accountability and Transparency Programme, a multi-year initiative aimed at improving public access to governance processes and strengthening oversight mechanisms.

ParliMeter is an online dashboard that makes parliamentary activity data accessible to the public. Drawing on information sourced through PMG, the tool tracks parliamentary attendance, committee activity and legislative processes.

The platform supports research, oversight and public engagement by providing structured data on parliamentary performance.

Since its launch, ParliMeter has also been used in webinars and engagements with civil society and governance practitioners, with user feedback helping to refine the platform and expand its practical usefulness. This includes two workshops in Gauteng and two workshops in the Western Cape, in September 2025.

The launch of ParliMeter represents a significant step in our broader parliamentary oversight work. As the tool develops, it has the potential to expand its scope to include additional datasets and functionality, further strengthening public oversight and contributing to more accountable governance in South Africa.



Observing the annual International Day of Parliament on 30 June, the webinar *Parliamentary Citizen Monitoring and Engagement: Unpacking the International Day of Parliamentarism* took place on 2 July 2025. Hosted by our own Robyn Pasensie, the panellists for this webinar were diverse, including Lethogonolo Letshele (Open Secrets), Ndodana Hadeba (Civil Society Unmuted Coalition of South Africa), Samantha Waterhouse (Equal Education) and Brent Simons (Parliament's Public Participation Task Team).

In August 2025, ParliMeter hosted a powerful webinar linked to *Women's Day on Women, Parliament and Parliamentary Processes*, exploring progress made, barriers that remain and alliances needed to strengthen women's influence in Parliament. The discussion was facilitated by Gabriella Razzano, with panellists Cynthia Chishimba and Namuma Mulindi. The recording is [here](#) and statistics on women and Parliament are [here](#).

As part of this project, our team has produced a collection of reports. These are available on both our website and the ParliMeter website.

# Holding power to account in a culture of secrecy and impunity continued

## Strengthening collaboration between civil society and provincial legislatures

In October 2025, we co-hosted a symposium with the Western Cape Provincial Parliament (WCPP) aimed at deepening collaboration between civil society organisations (CSOs) and the provincial legislature to improve oversight, accountability and meaningful public participation in governance. The event, held in Cape Town and funded by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), brought together CSOs, WCPP administrative staff, academics and oversight bodies to discuss how joint initiatives can rebuild trust in democratic institutions and enhance legislative scrutiny.

Participants at the symposium emphasised the need for structured engagement mechanisms between the WCPP and civil society, grounded in transparent processes that genuinely incorporate public input into oversight work. Practical proposals emerged from breakaway discussions, including creating a central repository for public submissions to committee processes, producing plain-language legislation summaries, extending participation timelines, and developing “report cards” to show how public contributions influence lawmaking.

Speakers highlighted that provincial legislatures oversee a significant majority of public spending – from schools and clinics to infrastructure – and thus must serve as anchors of accountability in their own right. There was broad consensus that civil society adds value through research capacity, community insights and by bringing citizens’ perspectives into legislative processes, while also acknowledging barriers such as mistrust, political dominance and limited technological infrastructure.

OUTA and partners reaffirmed our commitment to sustained dialogue and collaboration with the WCPP, signalling that strengthened partnerships between legislatures and civil actors are essential for effective oversight, responsive governance and rebuilding public confidence in democratic processes. Complementing the WCPP symposium, we organised a second symposium in November 2025, with the objective to deepen collaboration between Parliament, provincial legislatures and CSOs. Building on previous discussions in October 2025, the symposium highlighted ongoing challenges in public participation, such as limited access to information, weak feedback loops and political gatekeeping. However, it also emphasised a shared commitment from both civil society and parliamentary actors to rebuild trust through cooperation, transparency and stronger oversight.

Key discussions at this symposium focused on actionable strategies for improving the integration of civil society into legislative processes. The event culminated in a six-point action plan that emphasised collaborative oversight, improved civic education, accessible participation mechanisms and stronger performance monitoring for MPs and councillors. Additionally, the symposium reinforced the importance of consistent engagement, use of digital tools, and hybrid participation models to bridge South Africa’s digital divide and ensure greater inclusivity in governance. The ultimate goal was to make public participation more meaningful, transparent and effective, ensuring that citizens’ voices lead to tangible change.

More information on our work on parliamentary oversight is available on our [website](#).





# Webinars and public engagement



## For the EU project

Webinars:

1. International Day of Parliamentarism webinar, **2 July 2025**  
Theme: Parliamentary Citizen Monitoring and Engagement: Unpacking the International Day of Parliamentarism
2. Women's month webinar, **7 August 2025**  
Theme: Women in Public Governance: Where are we, and Where to Next?
3. Parliamentary Oversight Report (POR) webinar, **29 October 2025**  
Theme: 7th Parliament: The Review Nobody Escapes

## 7th Parliament: The review nobody escapes

Parliamentary Oversight Report 2025

<p>Facilitator</p>  <p><b>Dr Rachel Fischer</b></p> <p>Parliamentary Engagement &amp; Research Manager</p>	<p>Speaker</p>  <p><b>Naailah Parbhoo</b></p> <p>OUTA Senior Researcher</p>	<p>Speaker</p>  <p><b>Mudzuli Rakhivhane</b></p> <p>Founder and CEO of AK Strategy Group</p>	<p>Speaker</p>  <p><b>Jacques de Villiers</b></p> <p>Head of Parliamentary Research for ActionSA</p>
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## WEBINAR

Recorded: 29 October 2025

Co-funded by the European Union  ParliMeter



## Citizen education workshops

Two university workshops took place in February 2025 and four citizen education workshops were held in October 2025, targeting various demographic groups to enhance their understanding of parliamentary functions and the importance of civic participation.

## INVITATION Parliamentary Oversight Dashboard Workshop

We would like to invite you to the Introductory Workshop for the Parliamentary Oversight Dashboard, presented in partnership with the University of the Western Cape - EMS Democracy and Citizenship research niche area. The Parliamentary Oversight Dashboard is an innovative initiative developed by the Organisation for Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA) in collaboration with the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG) and OpenUp. This project is co-funded by the European Union.

### During this session, you will:

- Learn about the Parliamentary Oversight Dashboard and its potential to improve legislative monitoring
- Gain insights into the basics of parliamentary functions and how to engage with these processes
- Acquire foundational skills in public participation, empowering you to influence and advocate for transparent governance

**Date:** 20 February 2025

**Time:** 09:00 - 14:00

**Venue:** University of the Western Cape, New Education Building - Classroom 9

**RSVP by:** 17 February 2025. Please click [here](#) to RSVP

**Enquiries:** Dr Rachel Fischer; [rachel.fischer@outa.co.za](mailto:rachel.fischer@outa.co.za)



 ParliMeter

Co-funded by the European Union



**PUG**  
Publics & Urban Governance  
Research



## For the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) project on the parliamentary symposia

Overall theme: From Participation to Partnership: Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight Through Civil Society and Public Engagement

1. Symposium with civil CSOs and the WCPP, **21 October 2025**
2. Symposium with CSO and WCPP and parliamentary representatives, **17 November 2025**



# Civic mobilisation and campaigns

Over the period, OUTA participated in the following forums:

## OUTA networking

- Border Management and Immigration Anti-corruption Forum.
- Civil Society Electoral Reform Interest Group.
- Civil Society Working Group on political party funding.
- Civil Society Working Group on state capture.
- Civil Society Working Group on the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA).
- Civil Society Unmuted Coalition South Africa (CSUCSA).
- Health Sector Anti-corruption Forum.
- International Anti-corruption Court Initiative.
- Local Government Anti-corruption Forum.
- National Anti-corruption Strategy Reference Group.
- Parliamentary Public Participation Working Group.
- Presidential Johannesburg Working Group (PJWG).
- Public Protector of South Africa (PPSA).





# Civic mobilisation and campaigns

continued

## Bridge brigade protests

**4 March 2025:** Linksfield Road Bridge over N3, Linksfield

**17 March 2025:** Grey Avenue Bridge over N3, Alberton

**24 March 2025:** Main Road Bridge over N12, Benoni

**6 March 2025:** Hans Schoeman Bridge over N1, Boskruiin

**20 March 2025:** Enoch Sontonga Road Bridge over M1, Johannesburg

**18 June 2025:** Elizabeth Road Bridge over N12, Benoni

**2 June 2025:** Rivonia Road Bridge over N1, Rivonia

**22 May 2025:** Guthrie Road Bridge over N17, Wadeville

**6 June 2025:** Olifantsfontein Road Bridge over N1, Halfway House

**30 May 2025:** Modderfontein Road Bridge over N3, Modderfontein

**20 June 2025:** Le Roux Avenue Bridge over N1, Midrand

**30 June 2025:** Jean Avenue Bridge over N1, Centurion

**14 July 2025:** Heidelberg Road Bridge over N17, Elsburg

**27 June 2025:** Cydonia Road Bridge over N3, Bedfordview

**7 July 2025:** Aerodrome Road Bridge over N12, Aeroton

**22 September 2025:** Main Road Bridge over N12, Benoni

**12 September 2025:** Bowling Road Bridge over N1, Bedfordview

**5 September 2025:** Marlboro Drive Bridge over N3, Linbro Park

**15 September 2025:** Atlas Road Bridge over R21, Kempton Park

**8 September 2025:** State capture protest outside Johannesburg High Court, Johannesburg CBD

**26 September 2025:** Elizabeth Road Bridge over N12, Impala Park

**6 October 2025:** Solomon Mahlangu Drive Bridge over N1, Pretoria

**13 October 2025:** Kings Highway Bridge over N1, Pretoria

**3 October 2025:** Farquharson Road Bridge over N17, Brakpan

**10 October 2025:** Jean Avenue Bridge over N1, Centurion

**22 October 2025:** Protest outside Tembisa Hospital, Tembisa, Ekurhuleni

**20 February 2026:** Hans Schoeman Road over N1, Boskruiin

**9 February 2026:** Aerodrome Road over N12, Aeroton

**23 February 2026:** Main Road over N1, Bryanston

**16 February 2026:** Guthrie Road over N17, Wadeville

**6 February 2026:** Grey Ave over N3, Alberton

**7 April 2025:** Kingsway Road Bridge over N1, Pretoria East

**17 April 2025:** Viking Road Bridge over N1, Devland

**31 March 2025:** Meiring Naude Road Bridge over N4, Silverton

**11 April 2025:** Old Potchefstroom Road Bridge over N1, Diepkloof

**25 April 2025:** Marlboro Road Bridge over N3, Linbropark

**12 May 2025:** Aeroton Road Bridge over N12, Aeroton

**5 May 2025:** Faquaharson Road Bridge over N17, Brakpan

**16 May 2025:** Grey Avenue Road Bridge over N3, Alberton

**9 May 2025:** Hans Schoeman Road Bridge over N1, Boskruin

**29 April 2025:** Linksfeld Road Bridge over N3, Linksfeld

**24 July 2025:** State capture protest at auction of Gupta properties, Saxonwold

**31 July 2025:** Protest outside CETA offices, Midrand

**21 July 2025:** Main Road Bridge over N12, Benoni

**25 July 2025:** Linksfeld Road Bridge over N3, Edenvale

**1 August 2025:** Elizabeth Road Bridge over N12, Impala Park

**28 August 2025:** Protest outside Services SETA offices, Parktown

**5 August 2025:** Protest outside INSETA offices, Illovo

**1 September 2025:** Main Road Bridge over N1, Fourways

**18 August 2025:** Heidelberg Road Bridge over N17, Elsburg

**4 August 2025:** Farquharson Road Bridge over N17, Brakpan

**24 October 2025:** Grey Avenue Bridge over N3, Alberton

**1 November 2025:** Joburg Water protest, Braamfontein

**10 November 2025:** Viking Road Bridge over N1, Devland

**27 October 2025:** Cydonia Road Bridge over N3, Bedfordview

**3 November 2025:** Main Road Bridge over N12, Benoni

**18 November 2025:** Farquharson Road Bridge over N17, Brakpan

**2 February 2026:** Le Roux Ave over N1, Midrand

**20 January 2026:** Linksfeld Road Bridge over N3, Edenvale

**2 December 2025:** Hans Schoeman Road Bridge over N1, Boskruin

**26 January 2026:** Marlboro Road Bridge over N3, Linbropark

**8 December 2025:** Le Roux Avenue Bridge over N1, Midrand

**21 November 2025:** Elizabeth Road Bridge over N12, Impala Park

# Partnerships and networks

## Civil society forums and coalitions

### We connected with the following organisations:

- Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA).
- Defend our Democracy.
- Enhancing Accountability, Technical Assistance Facility.
- European Union (EU).
- French Aid.
- Good Governance Africa (GGA).
- Independent Regulatory Board of Auditors (IRBA).
- Institute of Directors SA (IoDSA).
- Inyathelo.
- Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS).
- OpenUp.
- Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG).
- Public Affairs Research Group (PARI).
- Public Protector of South Africa (PPSA).
- South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA).
- Special Investigations Unit (SIU).
- WaterCAN.
- Western Cape Provincial Government (WCPP).



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# Support services and operations

## Strategic focus and transition of initiatives

During the past year, we implemented an important strategic decision to transition some initiatives that had previously operated within the organisation.

### Strengthening focus for greater impact

Following a comprehensive review, we concluded that our greatest contribution to South Africa's democratic landscape lies in our core work: challenging corruption and maladministration and advocating for accountable governance.

As a result, initiatives such as WaterCAN and JoburgCAN were supported in transitioning towards independent governance structures, allowing them to continue their valuable work while enabling ourselves to focus our resources more directly on our core mission.

This transition process was carefully managed to ensure continuity of impact, including governance support, operational assistance and transitional funding where appropriate.

Both initiatives continue to play important roles in strengthening civic oversight and public participation within their respective focus areas.

In addition, we successfully concluded our involvement with the CAN and the Link municipal reporting platform, further streamlining our operational footprint.

This strategic focus has significantly strengthened our organisational sustainability while allowing us to concentrate our energy and expertise where it can deliver the greatest national impact.

### Support services, governance and systems

#### Building the institutional strength behind OUTA's impact

Behind every successful investigation, legal challenge, policy reform or public accountability campaign, stands an organisation capable of sustaining that work over the long term. For us, 2025/26 was a year of strengthening that institutional backbone.

During the year, we undertook a strategic refinement of our organisational structure and operational model. This process was guided by a simple but important principle, to focus our resources where they deliver the greatest impact in strengthening accountability and protecting the responsible use of public resources.

The outcome was a more focused, resilient and strategically aligned organisation. By streamlining certain initiatives and strengthening internal capability, we are now better positioned to deliver sustained impact in our core

mission of exposing corruption, challenging maladministration and defending democratic accountability in South Africa.

For our supporters and funding partners, these changes represent an important signal of organisational maturity. We are not only an organisation that demands accountability from public institutions, we apply that same discipline and transparency in our operations.

### Support services

#### One organisation – One operational engine

To support our strategic focus, we consolidated our finance, human resources, information technology, governance and office management functions into a unified Support Services Division.

This integrated structure ensures that our operational backbone functions as a coordinated system rather than isolated administrative units. The result is improved efficiency, robust governance oversight and an intuitively responsive support structure for the programme teams working on complex investigations and advocacy initiatives.

The Support Services Division now provides the organisational infrastructure that enables our public impact through:

- professional human resource management and staff development;
- rigorous financial management and forecasting;
- strengthened internal controls and compliance oversight;
- modernised systems and integrated operational platforms; and
- proactive organisational governance support.

This shift has transformed support services from a largely administrative function into a strategic enabler of our mission.

Equally important, it ensures that donor contributions are used as efficiently as possible. By reducing duplication and strengthening internal systems, a greater proportion of resources can be directed towards programme work that delivers measurable public impact.

Also, with oversight on project intent and impact, support services can reduce cost and ensure better cash flow, complementing operational teams to capitalise more when achieving milestones.

# People, culture and capacity

## People behind the mission

### Teamwork. Purpose. Culture

At the heart of our work is a diverse, committed team of professionals who share the common purpose of strengthening accountability and protecting the responsible use of public resources in South Africa.

Our impact is driven by a multidisciplinary team that combines investigative expertise, legal capability, policy analysis, communications excellence and operational support. Together, they enable us to pursue complex investigations, challenge irrational policies and hold institutions accountable in the public interest.

As they say, “Culture trumps strategy every time”. During the 2025/26 year, we undertook a series of activities to redefine the organisation’s culture and to implement the changes deemed necessary to enhance unity, strengthen teamwork and ensure alignment following our strategic shift.

An internal organisational energy assessment highlighted high levels of commitment, renewed clarity of purpose and strong motivation across the team following the strategic restructuring process. All the results confirmed strong alignment between the team and the organisation’s mission.

By the end of the reporting period, our staff complement stood at 33 team members, reflecting a more cohesive organisational structure designed to maximise efficiency and impact.

Beyond internal frameworks, we continue to prioritise the development and well-being of our people. Advocacy and accountability work often takes place in complex and demanding environments, requiring resilience, integrity and strong professional capability. For this reason, we actively invest in maintaining a supportive and mission-driven work environment where staff can thrive and grow.

Our values remain central to our culture. Integrity, courage, justice and resilience guide how we operate internally and how we approach our work externally.

We also continue to invest in professional development, recognising that strong institutions depend on capable people. Training opportunities, skills development, mentoring and knowledge sharing remain important components of our long-term sustainability.

For donors and partners, the strength of our team provides confidence that the organisation has the expertise, diversity, professionalism and resilience required to sustain our work in the future.



# Governance, ethics and systems

## Governance, ethics and organisational integrity

### Accountability starts at home

Our work often involves challenging powerful institutions and exposing failures of governance. To do so credibly, we must uphold the highest standards of integrity within our own operations.

Against this backdrop, we have continued strengthening our governance framework to ensure that the organisation remains a model of transparency, accountability and responsible stewardship.

Our governance environment is aligned with best-practice frameworks, including the King V Report on Corporate Governance for South Africa, and is supported by comprehensive board oversight, transparent financial reporting, internal auditing and rigorous internal control systems.

An annual ethics and risk assessment is conducted to ensure ethical alignment of organisational values and processes.

During 2025/26, we further strengthened these systems through:

- refinement of governance frameworks and policy structures;
- enhanced financial oversight and reporting mechanisms;
- a comprehensive organisational ethics assessment; and
- an internal and external auditing process.

The results confirmed a strong alignment between our internal practices and the values we promote publicly.

Governance is not simply about compliance. It is about creating an organisational culture that sustains courage, integrity and resilience over time.

At OUTA, we believe good governance is not a checklist, rather, it is a tangible and measurable asset.

## Systems, cyber security and operational resilience

### Technology enabling accountability

In today's world, the ability of CSOs to operate effectively depends increasingly on the strength of their digital infrastructure.

For an organisation such as OUTA, which regularly investigates corruption, challenges powerful interests and protects sensitive whistleblower information, robust technology systems are essential.



Over the past year, we continued strengthening our digital ecosystem to ensure that our systems remain secure, resilient and capable of supporting our national impact.

Our integrated operational environment supports key organisational functions including:

- supporter relationship management and donor engagement;
- digital communications and advocacy campaigns;
- secure financial and operational reporting;
- internal collaboration, workflow and project management; and
- protected document management and data storage.

Security remains a core priority. Our systems are continuously monitored and protected through layered security protocols designed to safeguard sensitive investigations, donor information and organisational data.

Automation and system integration have also improved operational efficiency across the organisation. By streamlining workflows and improving data visibility, we are able to reduce administrative overheads while strengthening accountability and transparency.

For donors and partners, this provides confidence that contributions are managed within a secure, professionally governed and technologically capable organisation.

## Tired of corruption and tax abuse? Power the fight and donate to OUTA

**DONATE TO OUTA TO FIGHT CORRUPTION**

**OUTA**  
ORGANISATION UNDOING TAX ABUSE

### Why supporting OUTA matters now

The past decade has exposed how corruption, weak governance and the abuse of public resources can erode institutions, weaken service delivery and undermine public trust.

The consequences are felt across society; from failing infrastructure and collapsing municipal services to rising economic pressure on households and businesses. Restoring accountability within public institutions is not simply a governance issue, it is essential for economic stability, social justice and the long-term health of South Africa's democracy.

CSOs play a crucial role in this environment. Independent oversight, evidence-based advocacy and the ability to challenge wrongdoing are fundamental pillars of a healthy democratic system.

For more than a decade, we have been one of South Africa's leading civic accountability organisations. Through investigations, legal action, public advocacy and strategic engagement with authorities, we have helped expose corruption, challenge irrational policies and protect public resources.

What distinguishes us is not only the courage of our work, but the institutional strength behind it.

The organisational improvements implemented during 2025/26 strengthened governance systems, modernised the operational infrastructure and allowed for a sharpened strategic focus, all of which ensure that we are equipped to sustain our work in the future.

For donors and partners, supporting us represents more than contributing to a single campaign or investigation.

It is an investment in a resilient, trusted civil institution that strengthens democratic accountability in South Africa.

Every investigation pursued, every policy challenged, and every public resource protected ultimately contributes to a broader goal, ensuring that our government serves its people well. Our supporters make this work possible.

**OUR  
CITY,  
OUR  
VOICES**

**OUTA**  
ORGANISATION UNDOING TAXABUSE

Together, we continue to build a stronger culture of accountability, one that protects public resources, strengthens institutions and helps secure a more just and prosperous future for South Africa.

# Board and executive committee

## OUTA board



R

**Simile Ndlovu**

Non-executive Director, Chair from 27 September 2023

**Date appointed:** January 2022



R A

**Thuto Skweyiya**

Non-executive Director, Vice-Chair from 30 May 2024

**Date appointed:** January 2022



R

**Zoë Lees**

Non-executive Director

**Date appointed:** July 2024



R

**Linda Mokwena**

Non-executive Director

**Date appointed:** June 2024



A

**Zwanda Mukwevho**

Non-executive Director

**Date appointed:** November 2021



A R

**Paul Pauwen**

Non-executive Director

**Date appointed:** April 2012



A

**Kiyasha Thambi**

Non-executive Director

**Date appointed:** September 2024



A R

**Wayne Duvenage**

Executive Director: CEO

**Date appointed:** April 2012



**Adv Stefanie Fick**

Executive Director

**Date appointed:** April 2018

### Committees

● Chairman

● A Audit and risk committee

● R Remuneration committee

## OUTA executive committee



**Wayne Duvenage**  
CEO



**Kerry de Jonge**



**Adv Stefanie Fick**  
Executive Director



**Julius Kleynhans**



**Greig Morrison**



**Samantha van Nispen**

## OUTA directors' attendance at board meetings

Director	2 May 2025	3 June 2025 AGM	25 June 2025	23 September 2025	20 January 2026
Simile Ndlovu (Chair)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Thuto Skweyiya (Vice-Chair)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zoë Lees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Linda Mokwena	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zwannda Mukwevho	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Paul Pauwen	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kiyasha Thambi	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Wayne Duvenage	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Adv Stefanie Fick	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗

## Board committees and attendance

### Audit and risk committee (meets quarterly)

Director	16 April 2025	18 June 2025	17 September 2025	13 January 2026
Zwannda Mukwevho (Chair)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Paul Pauwen	✓	✓	✓	✓
Thuto Skweyiya	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kiyasha Thambi	✗	✓	✓	✓
Wayne Duvenage	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Remuneration committee (meets annually)

Director	10 September 2025
Thuto Skweyiya (Chair)	✓
Paul Pauwen	✓
Simile Ndlovu	✓
Zoë Lees	✓
Linda Mokwena	✓
Wayne Duvenage	✓

# How OUTA is funded

## OUTA's funding journey from March 2012 to February 2025

Over the 14 years since OUTA's inception in March 2012, OUTA has generated donor support of R425 million. The table below shows that 65% of our support comes from individuals, while 30% is from business (largely from the small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMME) sector), with 5% from donor foundations which is usually allocated for spending on specific projects.

### OUTA income breakdown for the 14-year period 2012/13 to 2024/25

	<b>Total income (14 years)</b>	<b>Average per annum</b>	<b>% of total</b>
<b>Total donation income</b>	<b>R425 424 245</b>	R30 387 446	100%
Individuals	<b>R274 864 172</b>	R19 633 155	64.6%
Business	<b>R126 770 700</b>	R9 055 050	29.8%
Other and donor foundations	<b>R23 789 373</b>	R1 699 241	5.6%

### Two distinct funding eras

OUTA's revenue-generating strategies need to be seen in the light of the two distinct eras of the organisation's existence.

#### Four years (March 2012 to February 2016): The Opposition to Urban Tolling Alliance

The first four years from March 2012 to February 2016, when OUTA was funded largely by fleet industry organisations who set out to review the government's e-toll decision in the high court.

During this period, OUTA comprised an alliance of non-governmental organisations (NGOs): the South African Vehicle Renting and Leasing Association (SAVRALA); the Retail Motor Industry Organisation (RMI); the South African Travel Services Association (SATSA); the QuadPara Association of SA (QASA); and the South African National Consumer Union (SANCU). SAVRALA and its members (mainly the car rental industry) were the major funders of the early litigation cases during 2012 and 2013.

Unfortunately, their support ended in 2013, due to government pressure brought against their support of the anti-e-toll challenge.

### Ten years since March 2016: The Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse

The period since March 2016 to date, represents the OUTA that went "beyond e-tolls", with a new memorandum of incorporation and name of Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse. This was when OUTA set out to become the broader anti-corruption and challenger of maladministration of taxpayers' funds. It was at the outset of this period in 2016, that OUTA introduced its crowd-funding model, focussed on driving support from individuals and SMMEs. Since 2022, larger corporate donors have begun to contribute to OUTA's work, signifying a growing realisation of the need to assist in defending South Africa's democracy from the destructive forces of corruption and maladministration. The organisation also secured funding from donor foundations, which was allocated to specific projects, the largest of these being approximately R14 million from the EU, to develop a Parliament performance and transparency dashboard (ParliMeter), between the years of 2024 and 2026.

**Over the past ten years under its new MOI, OUTA has opened 350 projects and employed an average of 41 people per annum.**

# Project-specific funders

## European Union

Co-funding OUTA's project – developing a Parliamentary Oversight Dashboard (ParliMeter) – under the EU's Enhancing Accountability and Transparency Programme (a project partnership between OUTA, the Parliamentary Monitoring Group and OpenUp)

## The Social Justice Initiative

Funding for OUTA's Delinquent Director project

## French Embassy Aid

Funding for WaterCAN's water quality map and data management platform upgrade

## Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)

Funding for the printing of the *Tips for MPs* booklet as distributed during the 7th Parliament's MP induction, as well as funding the hybrid (in-person and online) Civil Society-Parliament Symposia held on 21 October and 17 November 2024

## FUNDERS



## COLLABORATORS



# Performance and financial overview

**29 projects**

still in progress

**11%**

increase in operating expenses (excluding staff costs)

**11%**

decrease in deposit yields

**R76 222**

surplus for the year

## Diversified funding and support

The 2025/26 produced a very similar financial performance to the prior year, with more growth in the corporate donor segment, compensating for a slight decline from our crowd funded income stream (individuals and SMMEs), who are feeling the weight of a tougher economic environment. Large companies are now realising the importance of donating to organisations that fight corruption and maladministration in South Africa, doing so through their corporate social investment (CSI) allocations. This also enables donors to obtain a partial tax relief, due to OUTA's section 18A Public Benefit status.

## A year of focus and restructuring

OUTA's annual strategy review at the beginning of 2025, gave rise to OUTA's executive management and board decision that OUTA should extract itself from several non-core initiatives that it had undertaken over the past few years, which had grown in stature and were requiring additional resources. WaterCAN was the largest of these initiatives and was set up as a separate NGO in May 2025, which OUTA continued to provide limited funding and support throughout the year. We also closed our Link app initiative, which provided residents with digital notification of infrastructure issues to municipalities. Unfortunately, this app had a low uptake and was not meeting its targets and objectives.

## Notable changes

- As with most CSOs, manpower remains our biggest expense, which came in at R29.4 million this year, which was 8% down on the prior year's manpower expenses (of R32 million), due to the retrenchment and restructure programme following its re-focused strategic intent.
- Our operating expenses excluding manpower, increased by 11% from R17.5 million to R19.4 million, due largely to higher expenditure on litigation projects and more work undertaken on the (EU-funded) ParliMeter project. This project will come to an end by September 2026.
- OUTA's provisions (largely for future litigation matters) are invested in fixed-term deposits, and generated a yield of R2.3 million, which was 11% down on the prior year, due largely to reduced interest rates from investment houses and banks during the reporting period.
- OUTA's surplus after provisions was slightly above breakeven at R76 222, which was in line with last year's surplus of R75 274.
- OUTA opened the year with 50 projects still in progress, which was a lot higher than past years and indicative of the amount of work being undertaken – due to the wider range of initiatives that OUTA had become involved in. We managed to close 45 projects throughout the year, while also opening 24 new projects, leaving us with 29 open projects carried over into the new year.



## Financial year

**2025/26**

**2024/25**

R46.1 million

**Donor income**

R46.9 million

R14.2 million

**Direct costs** (including litigation provisions)

R13.5 million

R29.4 million

**Employee costs**

R32.0 million

R5.2 million

**Admin and other operation costs**

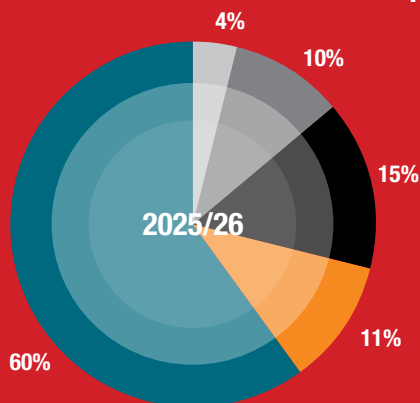
R3.9 million

R2.8 million

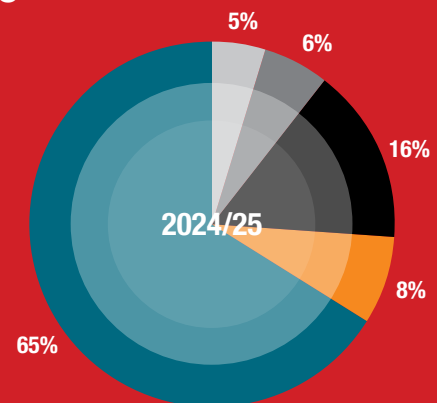
**Other income**

R2.6 million

## Ratio of total expenditure



- Advocacy
- Litigation and provisions
- Other direct costs
- Admin and other operation expenses
- Employee costs



36

**Head count** (annual average)

44

24

**Number of new projects**

40

45

**Number of closed projects**

25

29

**Number of open projects carried forward**

50

# Abbreviations

<b>AGSA</b>	Auditor-General of South Africa
<b>Bakwena</b>	Bakwena Platinum Corridor Concessionaire
<b>BDM</b>	Broadcasting Digital Migration
<b>CAN</b>	Community Action Network
<b>CCTV</b>	Closed-circuit television
<b>CEO</b>	Chief executive officer
<b>DLCA</b>	Driving Licence Card Account
<b>GFIP</b>	Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project
<b>INSETA</b>	Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority
<b>IPP</b>	Independent Power Producer
<b>IRBA</b>	Independent Regulatory Board for Auditors
<b>IRP</b>	Integrated Resource Plan
<b>JoburgCAN</b>	Johannesburg Community Action Network
<b>JPC</b>	City of Joburg Property Company
<b>KAS</b>	Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
<b>MOI</b>	Memorandum of Incorporation
<b>MPs</b>	Members of Parliament
<b>MTBPS</b>	Medium-term Budget Policy Statement
<b>MYPD</b>	Multi-year Price Determination
<b>N3TC</b>	N3 Toll Concession
<b>Nersa</b>	National Energy Regulator of South Africa
<b>NPA</b>	National Prosecuting Authority
<b>NSFAS</b>	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
<b>OUTA</b>	Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse
<b>PMG</b>	Parliamentary Monitoring Group
<b>PARI</b>	Public Affairs Research Institute
<b>PAIA</b>	Promotion of Access to Information Act
<b>PFMA</b>	Public Finance Management Act
<b>RMIPPPP</b>	Risk Mitigation Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme
<b>RTMC</b>	Road Traffic Management Corporation
<b>SETA</b>	Sector Education and Training Authority
<b>SAA</b>	South African Airways
<b>SANRAL</b>	South African National Roads Agency Limited
<b>SAPS</b>	South African Police Service
<b>SARS</b>	South African Revenue Service
<b>SIU</b>	Special Investigating Unit
<b>SOC</b>	State-owned company
<b>SOE</b>	State-owned entity
<b>Trac</b>	Trans African Concessions
<b>VAT</b>	Value added tax
<b>WaterCAN</b>	Water Community Action Network
<b>WCPP</b>	Western Cape Provincial Parliament

# Contact details

## Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse NPC

Company registration number: 2012/064213/08  
Unit 4, Boskruin Office Park  
Corner President Fouché Drive and Hawken Avenue  
Bromhof  
Gauteng  
2188

Telephone: 087 170 0639

[info@outa.co.za](mailto:info@outa.co.za)

[www.outa.co.za](http://www.outa.co.za)



@outasa



@OUTASA



OUTA – Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse



@OUTASouthAfrica



OUTA South Africa

