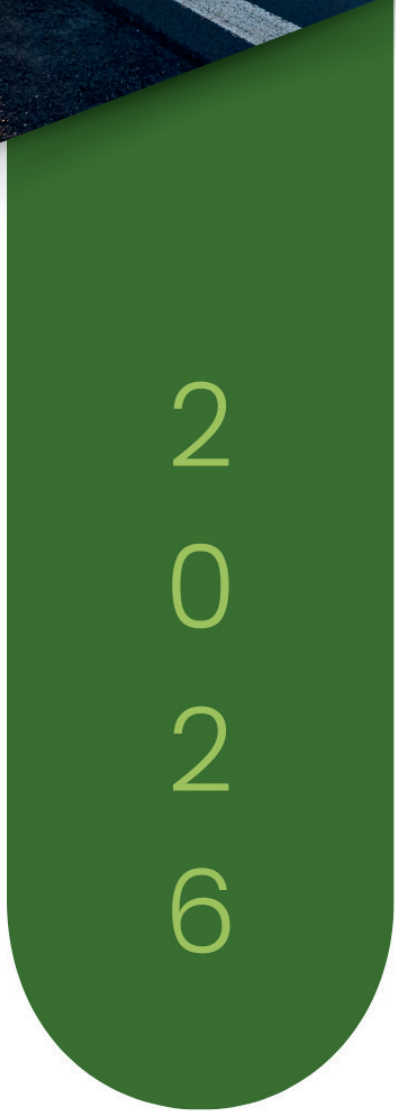




SANSBOC NATIONAL ELECTIVE CONFERENCE SPECIAL EDITION

SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL
SMALL BUS OPERATORS COUNCIL



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ELECTION DAY: CLOSED SESSION DAY ONE: MONDAY, 30 MARCH 2026

Programme Directors: **Thabiso Ramasike & Paul Zikhali**

SANSBOC ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTION FORMALITIES		
TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
08:30 – 10:00	Delegate Arrival & Registration	Conference Admin
10:00 – 10:30	Delegate Accreditation	Election Committee
10:30 – 11:00	TEA BREAK	ALL
11:35 – 12:30	Elections implementation plan confirmation / final accreditation and observer confirmation – Electoral Education Recap	Election Committee
12:35 – 13:20	LUNCH	ALL
OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE		
13:25 – 13:40	Prayer or Meditation / Motivation	Pastor Thomas Hadebe
13:45 – 13:50	Welcome Address by the Hosting Province	SANSBOC Gauteng Chairperson
13:55 – 14:15	Protocols, Schedules and Overall Reflections on the Conference Preparations	Ms. Sthembile Zondo
14:20 – 14:40	Confirmation of Conference and Support Status by National Department of Transport – Public Transport Branch	Mr. Lesiba Manamela
14:45 – 15:00	TEA BREAK	ALL
STATUTORY REPORTING PRIOR TO DISSOLUTION		
15:05 – 15:40	Formal Opening and Overview	Acting President: Mr. Frank Mathe
15:45 – 16:35	Organizational Report	Secretary-General: Mr. Final Kgadumo
16:40 – 17:10	Treasurer-General's Financial Report	Treasurer-General: Ms. Olivia Maponya
17:15 – 17:30	Discussion and Formal Adoption of Reports	All
17:35 – 17:45	Presentation and Adoption of Credentials	Election Committee
17:50 – 17:55	Dissolution of NEC	Election Committee
18:00 – 19:00	DINNER BREAK	ALL
19:05 – 19:55	Nominations Process, Voting Procedure, Counting and Certification, Public Announcement of Results, Dispute Window	Elections Committee

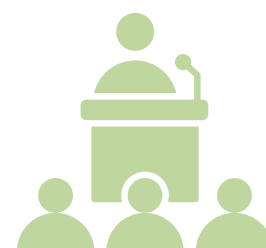


MAIN CONFERENCE DAY

DAY TWO: TUESDAY, 31 MARCH 2026

Programme Director: **Thabiso Ramasike**

Time	Activity	Responsibility
08:30 - 09:20	ARRIVAL, REGISTRATION/ TEA	Conference Administration
09:30 - 09:35	Arrival of Deputy Minister	Event Manager
09:35 - 10:00	Briefing to the Deputy Minister & MECs	Mr Manamela & Ms Manilal, Event Manager
OPEN SESSION		
10:05 - 10:15	Opening Prayer Rendition / Meditation	Pastor Thomas Radebe
10:20 - 10:35	Presidential Address	President Elect
10:40 - 10:45	Introduction of Deputy Minister	Acting DDG: Ms. Khibi Manana
10:50 - 11:25	Keynote Address	Deputy Minister of Transport Hon. Mkhuleko Hlengwa
11:30 - 11:55	Challenges faced by Emerging Bus Operators	Secretary General Elect
12:00 - 12:30	TEA BREAK	ALL
12:30 - 14:00	Panel Discussion One: Incorporating the Previously Disadvantaged Small Bus Sector in South Africa	Panelists: Dr Suzan Mangole (DDG); Mr Basil Govender
14:00 - 15:00	LUNCH	ALL
15:05 - 15:25	Presentation: Official Conference Sponsor/Partner CTU-Hollard	Business Development Head: Mr Oscar Shabalala
15:30 - 17:00	Panel Discussion Two: Making Every Journey to School a Safe One	Panelists: Mr Matome Kgatla; Mr Elmon Maake; Ms Ken Letselela
17:05 - 17:15	Day 2 Wrap Up & for Gala Dinner Announcements	Programme Director: Mr Thabiso Ramasike
17:20 - 17:35	MEDIA INTERVIEWS, EXHIBITIONS & NETWORKING	ALL





**GALA DINNER
HONOURING OUR VETERANS**

DAY TWO: TUESDAY, 31 MARCH 2026

Programme Directors: Thabiso Ramasike & Thomas Radebe

18:00 - 00:00

Time	Activity	Responsibility
18:00 - 19:00	Welcome Cocktails, Entertainment and Photos	Bokamoso Arts Institute
19:15 - 19:20	Official Opening	Programme Director
19:25 - 19:35	Welcome, Acknowledgements and Introduction of Guests	Treasurer General Elect
19:40 - 19:55	Outlining SANSBOC Vision and Call for Partnerships	President Elect
20:00 - 21:25	DINNER SERVED	ALL
20:00 - 20:25	Presentation by the Sponsor and Announcement – CTU-Hollard	Business Development Head: Mr Oscar Shabalala
ENTERTAINMENT		
21:30 - 21:50	Address by the Deputy Minister of Transport	Deputy Minister Hon. Mkhuleko Hlengwa
DESSERT		
22:00 - 22:30	Presentation of Awards – Founders & Veterans	Deputy Minister
22:35 - 22:45	Vote of Thanks and Announcements of Future Projects	Deputy President Elect
22:45 - 23:30	NETWORKING, ENTERTAINMENT & CLOSURE	All

MAIN CONFERENCE DAY

DAY THREE: WEDNESDAY, 01 APRIL 2026

Programme Directors: Thabiso Ramasike & Thomas Radebe

SANSBOC CONFERENCE: JOURNEY FORWARD		
Time	Activity	Responsibility
06:30 - 08:25	BREAKFAST	ALL
08:30 - 09:00	Welcome Remarks and Recap	Facilitator
09:10 - 09:25	Presentation: TETA	CEO: Ms. Maphefo Anno-Frempong
09:30 - 09:45	Presentation: RAF	RAF Representative
09:50 - 10:25	Presentation: Summary of Panel Discussions	Facilitator
10:30 - 11:00	Discussion	All
11:00 - 11:30	TEA BREAK	ALL
11:35 - 12:20	Administrative Arrangements for Provincial Councils and Working Relations with Provincial Departments	Secretary General Elect
12:25 - 12:40	SANSBOC MoU with the Public Transport Branch – Guide for NEC Members for compliance	Acting DDG: Ms Khibi Manana
12:45 - 12:55	Vote of Thanks & Closure	SANSBOC President Elect
13:00 - 14:00	ANNOUNCEMENTS, LUNCH & DEPARTURE	ALL

FOREWORD FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Reflecting on the founding of this pivotal Council in 2009, we express deep appreciation for those who have supported its journey. The sentiment of gratitude, as Melody Beattie eloquently notes, *"unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity."*

As the organisation celebrates its 3rd National Elective Conference, its leadership recognises the importance of documenting its history not simply as a chronicle of events, but as a testament to the determination to economically empower those historically marginalised, yet vital to the sector

Recalling the Council's story is a bittersweet endeavor, marked by both achievements and setbacks. The founders fought valiantly for recognition, but many promises of economic advancement remain unfulfilled. The formalisation process validates the vision of the late Minister Dullah Omar, whose efforts planted the seeds for progress. Yet, questions persist about the second phase of process, which remains elusive more than a decade later.

The Council pays tribute to its pioneering leaders, including founding President Mr. Simlindile Hintsa and figures such as Ntate Ragimane, Ntate Kgolokwane, Mnr. Swartz, Rre Mathiba, Adv. Gededger, the late uBaba Zondi and others who served on the National Coordinating Committee. Although their aspirations have not yet been fully realised, their sacrifices continue to inspire those carrying the torch today. The evolution of the sector mirrors the nation's broader journey—from fragmentation to coordination, informality to structured participation, and marginalization to institutional influence. Progress has demanded adaptability, reform has required discipline and representation has called for unity.

The Council's resilience and collective responsibility are evident in its ongoing continuity. The future of public transport in South Africa will depend not only on infrastructure and legislation, but also on strong institutions, effective governance, professional operations and credible engagement.

The legacy handed down is about more than survival – it is about consolidation and progress. Sustaining mobility means sustaining opportunity and responsible council ensures lasting impact. The current generation is tasked with deepening capacity, strengthening unity, and ensuring that those who have sustained mobility for decades remain central in shaping its future.

On behalf of the NEC we extend thanks to the National Department of Transport and provincial departments for their ongoing support of emerging bus operators, expressing hope that the vision of the following ministers and deputy who are resting: Mr. Dullah Omar, Mr. Sbu Ndebele and Mr. Jeremy Patrick Cronin – **champions of the Council's mission - will soon be fully realised.**



"Happy reading as we recommit to the journey for economic empowerment of emerging bus operators"

FINAL KGODUMO

Secretary General

Dedication

This Special Conference Edition is dedicated to:

- The founding operators who organised when the sector was fragmented.
- The provincial pioneers who laid the foundations of representation.
- The early leaders who chose structure over division, and governance over informality.
- The veterans whose commitment sustained the industry through reform and uncertainty.

in recognition of the Ministers who were present during the formative period of SANSBOC's establishment:

- Mr. Dullah Omar
- Mr. Sibusiso (S'bu) Ndebele
- Mr. Jeremy Patrick Cronin

(Continue resting....)

Under whose tenure the policy environment and institutional engagements contributed to the formalisation process that enabled the creation of a national structure for emerging small bus operators. Their presence during a critical transition period forms part of the historical context within which SANSBOC was established.

This publication honours all who contributed directly and indirectly to the institutional recognition of SANSBOC.

"Mobility is more than transport - It is dignity in motion"

Before there was a Council... .

When Provinces Spoke Alone

Between 2007 and 2009, before the formalisation of a national structure, small bus operators across South Africa were organising independently.

- Each province carried its own frustration.
- There was no national coordination.
- No unified mandate.
- No recognised national voice.

Veterans recall that while the taxi industry had undergone structured reform through the National Taxi Task Team (NTTT) and the formation of SANTACO, small bus operators remained dispersed visible on the roads, but peripheral in policy.

One veteran reflects *"Each province had its own initiatives.....we were not organised at national level."* Operators who were members of SABOA often felt their interests were overshadowed by larger, established bus companies. Representation existed, but not ownership of the agenda.

Another veteran recalls *"We were there, but we were not benefiting implying that he and other small operators were not making any profit."* By 2008, delegations began approaching the National Department of Transport directly. The question posed to government was simple: Why was the small bus sector excluded from structured transformation processes?



The Minister Who Opened The Door

It was during the tenure of Minister Dullah Omar that the first serious engagement occurred. Veterans recount that meetings held around 2008 acknowledged a critical point: If taxis had undergone formalisation through a national task team, a similar pathway was required for small bus operators.

One veteran recalls:

“The same process that happened in the taxi industry must be replicated for the small bus sector.” This was the threshold moment. The process experienced interruption following the Minister’s illness and passing. Momentum slowed. But the institutional idea had already taken root. When the process was later resuscitated through departmental consultations and imbizo-style engagements, the foundation had been laid.

The 6 November 2009 Birchwood Consultative Conference did not emerge from protest. It emerged from negotiation and from insistence.

Minister Dullah Omar

Opening the Institutional Conversation

During his tenure as Minister of Transport, Dullah Omar presided over a period of transition in public transport policy. While much of the reform discourse focused on taxi recapitalisation and commuter restructuring, engagements with small bus operators in 2008 marked a significant institutional shift.

Although the process was interrupted by his passing, the principle had been established: Small bus operators required structured national representation. That acknowledgment would ultimately lead to the 2009 Birchwood Consultative Conference and eventually to the formation of the SANSBOC. The argument was not emotional. It was structural.

Veterans recall that the Minister acknowledged the structural imbalance between taxis, big bus companies, and small bus operators. His openness to replicating the NTTT model for the small bus sector provided the political doorway through which formalisation would later occur.



The period that led to the Summit

VETERANS SPEAK: The Birth of an Idea:

The origin of the SANSBOC cannot be told without the story of Free State emerging bus operators. It was between 2007 and 2009, when Free State small bus operators were experiencing a convergence of pressures. According to the one of the veteran the pressure was from the Interstate company deal they went wrong and was oppressing emerging operators. The veteran explained that they then went on to consult at a local consulting firm in Bloemfontein and in their consultation a document was developed that spoke on the formation of a council. In other words collective power.

Veterans continues to describe a growing frustration with the following interconnected realities:

Licensing Uncertainty

Operators who had once operated under indefinite or administratively stable permit systems found themselves navigating increasingly restrictive licensing regimes under post-1994 apartheid. Renewals were conditional.

Cross-border operations became administratively complex. Long-distance Interstate routes faced mounting scrutiny. One veteran reflects: ***"After democracy, the system changed but the empowerment did not follow."***

The regulatory shift felt like formalisation without inclusion.

Subsidy Exclusion:

Free State operators were acutely aware of commuter subsidies flowing to long-established bus companies some of which had operated for decades under apartheid-era contract advantages. Routes were effectively locked. Tenders were rarely advertised in a manner that enabled emerging operators to compete.

Veterans repeatedly describe the imbalance:

- Large companies retained entrenched contracts.
- Small operators were expected to subcontract at minimal percentages.
- Negotiations around 10%, 15% and later 30% transformation allocations still remained unresolved.

The structural question became unavoidable: *"How do you compete where the routes are already permanently allocated?"*

Scholar transport fragmentation

In the Free State, scholar transport administration reflected broader national fragmentation. Responsibility moved between departments (education and transport), contracts were short-term, payment predictability was inconsistent and operators provided essential services to rural communities yet without long-term financial security to recapitalise fleets.

The contradiction was stark:

They were central to mobility. But peripheral to policy.

From frustration to framework:

It was in this context that Free State operators began drafting a model. Not a protest document but a structure. They observed how the NTTT had formalised and recognised the taxi industry into SANTACO. They saw that policy influence required a recognised national platform.

Veterans recall: ***"If taxis had a task team, why not us?"*** The Free State initiative began articulating the following:

- A NTTT model with representatives from provinces;
- A constitutionally recognised structure;
- A formalised engagement pathway with the National Department of Transport and MOUs with provinces.

This was the intellectual foundation that would later shape the 2009 National Consultative Conference at Birchwood.



The period that led to the Summit

Why South Africa Bus operator Association (SABOA)?

As the veterans reflect on the period between 2007 and 2009, a recurring theme emerges: representation without ownership. Many small bus operators were members of SABOA. But membership did not translate into structural inclusion.

One veteran explains: ***“Most of our members belonged to SABOA, but they were not benefiting.”*** The concern was not that SABOA lacked legitimacy. It was that its institutional orientation reflected a different scale of operators.

SABOA primarily represented:

- Large, established bus companies;
- Long-standing subsidised contract holders;
- Corporatised operators with entrenched market presence;
- Small bus operators, particularly those owning between one and thirty buses, experienced themselves as peripheral within that structure.

Another veteran recalls: ***“We were there, but our interests were not covered”.***

Structural Imbalance

The frustration was not personal. It was structural. Large bus companies operated within long-term subsidised commuter contracts many dating back decades. They had established infrastructure, guaranteed corridor access and institutional relationships with government.

Small operators, meanwhile were negotiating:

- Subcontracting percentages (10% and 15%);
- Scholar transport contracts uncertainty;
- Licensing transitions;
- Limited access to capital.

The veterans argue that SABOA could not simultaneously defend large incumbent interests and aggressively pursue transformation for emerging small operators. It was not hostility. It was divergence of interest.

Not a Breakaway – a necessity.

Importantly, the veterans are clear: The formation of a national small bus structure was not a rebellion against SABOA. It was a recognition of sector differentiation. *“It was not a breakaway. They were aware. They signed.”*

SABOA was aware of the process that led to the National Election Conference. In fact, representatives were present within early national discussions. The issue was representation scope not institutional legitimacy.

The Difference Between an Association and a Council

The decision to form a Council rather than an association was intentional. In the veterans’ framing: ***An association represents members and a council represents a sector.***

SANSBOC was designed to be:

- A constitutional body;
- A formal negotiating platform;
- A recognised interlocutor with government;
- A guardian of transformation and empowerment.

The veterans emphasise that the objective was not fragmentation. It was clarity.

“We were members – but not beneficiaries.”
“It was not about conflict. It was about fit.”
“Large operators had contracts. We had percentages.”
“You cannot outsource your transformation.”
“We needed a council, not a corner.”

The period that led to the Summit

“Before There Was a Council”

A Conversation with Members of the Interim Committee (2009–2012)

In the months leading up to the Birchwood Summit of 6 November 2009, small bus operators across provinces began engaging the National Department of Transport directly. This conversation reflects on that critical mobilisation period.

Q1: Before the 2009 Summit, what were the primary challenges facing small bus operators in your province?

The biggest challenge was structural exclusion. We were operating daily, transporting workers and learners, but we were not part of the mainstream subsidy framework. In many provinces, scholar transport contracts were short-term and unpredictable. There was no financial stability. Operators were surviving – not growing.

Q2: What motivated operators to begin approaching the National Department of Transport directly?

We realised that provincial discussions were not enough. Transport policy reform was happening nationally – integrated networks, contract restructuring, new regulatory models. Yet we were not clearly positioned within those reforms. If the framework is national, then engagement must also be national. That was the turning point.

Q3: At the time, did operators feel represented within formal transport policy discussions?

No, not in a structured way. The taxi industry had received focused attention through the NTTT. Large bus companies had existing contractual relationships. Small bus operators were operating in between – visible on the roads, but not fully recognised in policy architecture.

Q5: How would you describe the relationship between small bus operators and provincial transport authorities before 2009?

It varied by province. In some areas, engagement was cooperative but administrative. In others, operators felt decisions were made without consultation. What was missing was coordinated representation. Each province was speaking alone. That weakened our collective voice.

Q6: Was there frustration regarding access to commuter subsidies or scholar transport frameworks?

Yes, particularly regarding long-term inclusion. Many operators provided services in rural and peri-urban corridors but did not have access to structured commuter subsidies. Scholar transport administration was fragmented. Without predictable contracts, it was difficult to recapitalise fleets or secure finance.

Q7: What do you remember about the atmosphere leading up to the Birchwood Summit?

It was not confrontational. It was determined. Operators were not protesting – they were seeking structured dialogue. There was a sense that the sector had matured operationally and now required institutional identity.

Q8: When did the idea of forming a national structure first emerge?

During the engagements leading to the Summit, it became clear that individual complaints would not resolve systemic issues. The idea of a national platform was discussed seriously in 2009. Birchwood created the space where that idea gained collective agreement.

Q9: Looking back, how significant was the period between early 2009 and November 2009?

It was decisive. The sector moved from dispersed operators to an emerging institutional identity. We began thinking beyond contracts and compliance – we began thinking about governance and representation.



KEY DATES

6 November 2009

National Small Bus Operators Summit

6 November 2009 Birchwood Hotel

- Small bus operators from across South Africa convene in a structured national forum for the first time.
- The call for formal representation is consolidated.
- A NCC model is affirmed.

2010 - 2011

- Provincial Consolidation and NCC Structuring
- Provincial consultations are conducted.
- Two representatives per province are identified.

PROVINCE	NAME	NAME
Gauteng	Adv B Gededger	Ms B Mahapa
Mpumalanga	Mr D Sambo	Mr M.E Dlamini
Free State	Mr B.D Mhlahu	Mr S.I Kgolokwane
Limpopo	Mr N.J Ragimane	Mr H Mangwale
Northen Cape	Mr S.L Mathiba	Mr O.H Motshabi
North West	Mr S.J Mayekiso	Mr P.M Madiehe
Eastern Cape	Mr A Mkutu	Mr S Hintsu
Western Cape	Mr Johan Swartz	Mr G Makaluza
KwaZulu-Natal	Mr. B Cele	Mr. Ndimande
SABOA	Mr R.S Nche	Mr E. Cornelius

The NCC was operationalised as the interim national structure. Engagement with both the National and Provincial department of transport intensifies.

5 December 2012

MOU Signed
Birchwood Hotel | Boksburg

The Department of Transport and the NCC formally signed the MOU. The NCC was recognised as the interim representative body. Formalisation and empowerment principles are codified. Resolution adopted to dissolve the NCC ahead of Council elections.

THE COLLECTIVE INAUGURAL LEADERSHIP

6 December 2012 – Birchwood Hotel

- At the 1st National Elective Conference - constitutionally mandated and election
- This marked the formal transition from interim coordination under the National Coordinating Committee (NCC) to collective constitutional governance.

Our inaugural leaders – 2012

POSITION	NAME	Province
President	Mr. Simlindile Hints	Eastern Cape
Deputy President	Mr. Cele	KwaZulu-Natal
Secretary General	Adv. Buessy Gededger	Gauteng
Deputy Secretary General	Mr. Ragimane Johannes	Limpopo

Additional members of the NEC:

- Mrs. Olivia Maponya (Limpopo)
- Mr. Biggs (Eastern Cape)
- Mr. Mathiba (Northern Cape)
- Mr. Kgolokwane (Free State)
- Mr. Swartz (Western Cape)
- Mr. Gordon Makaluza (Western Cape)
- Mr. Nche (Gauteng)
- Mr. Blondie Motswadira (North West)
- Mr. Final Kgodumo (North West)

Transitional Adjustments During the Term:

During the course of the term:

- The Secretary General, Adv. Gededger, (Gauteng) resigned and was later replaced by Mr. Final Kgodumo (North West) from 2017.
- Mr. Cele (Deputy President) and Ms. Castence (additional member) also resigned during the period.
- The council continued functioning through internal replacements and shared executive responsibilities.

Institutional Significance

The 2012 leadership collective assumed responsibility at a decisive institutional moment.

They inherited:

- Newly formalised Provincial Councils.
- A recently adopted Constitution.
- A signed MOU with the NDOT and Provinces.
- A sector transitioning from fragmentation to unity.

Their task was not expansion - but *It was consolidation.*

Under this inaugural collective leadership:

- Governance systems were normalised.
- Council structures were operationalised.
- Provincial representation was strengthened.
- National identity was formalised.

This period laid the constitutional foundation upon which subsequent administrations would build.

2012 - 2018 Phase Two: The Promise of Empowerment

Consolidation Without Acceleration:

The election of the inaugural leadership in December 2012 marked the completion of formalisation. The sector had:

- A Constitution;
- Provincial Councils.
- A recognised national structure.
- A signed MOU with government.

The expectation that followed was clear: Formalisation would lead to empowerment.

The Anticipated transition

The period of 2012-2018 was expected to usher in:

- Greater participation in subsidised commuter contracts.
- Structured inclusion in IPTNs.
- Capacity-building programmes.
- Access to capital and recapitalisation pathways.
- Clear scholar transport frameworks.
- Strategic economic positioning of small bus operators.

The foundation had been laid. The next phase was meant to be expansion.

A Structural Impasse

The sector was no longer invisible. But it was not yet integrated. The challenge was not council collapse. It was strategic stagnation. Formal representation alone did not automatically produce economic transformation.

Empowerment required:

- Programmatic clarity.
- Policy leverage.
- Financial mechanisms.
- Institutional assertiveness.

These instruments were not fully mobilised during this period.

The Importance of this Phase

Historically, this period is significant for a different reason. It reveals that institutional birth does not guarantee institutional power. The years between 2012 - 2018 tested the difference between:

- *Structure and strategy;*
- *Recognition and results;*
- *Representation and redistribution.*

This phase did not erase the gains of formalisation. But it exposed the limits of constitutional presence without sustained economic programming.

The Institutional Reality

2012 - 2018, however, progress proved slower than anticipated.

- The Council stabilised internally;
- Provincial structures continued functioning;
- Engagement with government persisted; and
- But structural breakthroughs did not materialise at scale.

There were:

- Limited shifts in subsidy allocation patterns;
- No systemic recapitalisation programme for small bus operators;
- Continued fragmentation in scholar transport administration;
- Persistent capital constraints;
- Limited entry into mainstream contract corridors;
- The architecture of inequality remained largely intact.

The maturity question

By 2018, a question had emerged within parts of the sector: Had formalisation been achieved — but empowerment delayed? The issue was not legitimacy. SANSBOC remained constitutionally intact. The issue was impact.

Operators continued to:

- Struggle with capital access.
- Operate under tight margins.
- Navigate uneven regulatory enforcement.
- Compete within constrained subsidy systems.

The anticipated structural shift remained incremental rather than transformative.

2nd National Election 2018:

Renewal Amid Reflection:

By 2018, SANSBOC had entered its sixth year as a constitutionally established National Council. The formalisation phase (2009–2012) had been completed. The inaugural leadership term had run its course. *The question before the sector was no longer how to form a council but how to renew it.* **On 11 December 2018, delegates gathered at the Southern Sun Elangeni Hotel, Durban North, KwaZulu-Natal, for the National Executive Elections.** This marked the second national leadership transition since the founding conference of 2012.

Dissolution of the Incumbent NEC

According to the official report, the outgoing NEC was formally dissolved prior to the nomination process. This procedural act was significant. It demonstrated adherence to constitutional governance norms:

- Leadership would not rollover by assumption.
- Authority would be renewed through process.

The election was chaired and audited under structured oversight.

The Electoral Process: *The nomination and voting process was conducted through a show-of-hands system, as outlined in the official election report. Delegates were demarcated between voting and non-voting participants to ensure procedural clarity.*

Positions contested included: *President, Deputy President, General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary, Treasurer General and Public Relation Officer.*

The process followed a structured format: *Nomination, Acceptance or decline Seconding Closure, Declaration This reflected institutional continuity rather than improvisation.*

Election Outcomes:

The 2018 results saw the following leadership elected:

- President Simlindile Hintsa (Eastern Cape) – *Appointed uncontested*
- Deputy President Frank Mathe (Northern Cape) – *Appointed uncontested*
- General Secretary Final Kgodumo (North West) – *Appointed uncontested*
- Deputy General Secretary Smangele Buthelezi (KwaZulu-Natal) – *Appointed uncontested*
- Treasurer General Olivia Maponya (Limpopo) – *Appointed uncontested*
- *Public Relation Officer: Paul Zikhali (Gauteng) - Appointed uncontested*

The absence of opposition in key positions suggests a moment of consolidation rather than contestation.

Expanded Executive Representation:

In addition to the five executive office bearers, eleven additional members were nominated by Provincial Councils, with each province contributing representation to the NEC. The total NEC structure consisted of sixteen members, with two positions reserved for Mpumalanga. The report further notes that two provinces did not participate fully in the nomination process – Western Cape and Mpumalanga.

This detail reflects the continued complexity of provincial alignment within the national structure.



*Mr. Simlindile Hintsa
President
(Eastern Cape)*



*Mr. Frank Mathe
Deputy President
(Northern Cape)*



*Mr. Final Kgodumo
Secretary General
(North West)*



*Ms. Sthembile Zondo
Dep. Sec. General
(KwaZulu Natal)*



*Ms. Olivia Maponya
Treasurer General
(Limpopo)*



*Mr. Paul Zikhali
Public Relations Officer
(Gauteng)*



*Ms. Mathild du Plessis
Management Committee
(Western Cape)*



*Mr. Joseph Menye
Management Committee
(Free State)*

OFFICIALS & NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2018 - 2026

Thank you for the Selfless Service!



*Mr. Jabu Khumalo
Chairperson & NEC
(Gauteng)*



*Mr. Washington Ntozini
Chairperson & NEC
(North West)*



*Mr. Phaphamani Zondi
Secretary & NEC
(Kwazulu Natal)*



*Mr. Juan Swanepoel
Chairperson & NEC
(Western Cape)*



*Mr. Israel Kgolokwane
Free State & NEC
(Free State)*



*Mr. Manelisa Sguqa
Secretary & NEC
(Eastern Cape)*



*Mr. Khotso Lehula
Secretary & NEC
(Northern Cape)*



*Mr. Richard Chauke
Treasurer & NEC
(Limpopo)*

Historical Assessment of the 2018 National Elective Conference

The 2018 National Executive Elections did not represent a dramatic shift in ideology or structure.

Rather, they represented:

- Institutional continuity
- Leadership renewal
- Procedural adherence
- By this stage, SANSBOC was no longer in its formation phase -it was in its maturation phase.

Yet, as the broader sector reflected, the central strategic challenge remained:

- Formalisation had been achieved.
- Empowerment remained incomplete.

The 2018 leadership therefore inherited not a fragile organisation but a stable one facing structural economic constraints.

A Transitional Moment

The 2018 National Elective conference can be understood as a bridge between two realities:

- The consolidation of governance structures.
- And the growing recognition that the sector required strategic renewal beyond procedural stability.
- The following years would test not the constitution – but the strategy.

The 2018 National Consultative Conference

From Establishment to Strategic Direction:

By 2018, SANSBOC was no longer in its formative phase. The organisation had survived its first constitutional cycle, navigated leadership transitions, and tested its internal structures. The 2nd SANSBOC National Election Conference held in 2018 therefore carried a different weight. It was not about founding. It was about defining direction. Where 2012 had been about institutional birth, 2018 became a moment of reassessment and strategic repositioning. A National Conference of Reflection and Correction. The 2018 gathering was both elective and consultative in nature. Delegates did not merely elect leadership. They interrogated the organisational model, government relations, and structural barriers facing small bus operators.

The mood of the conference reflected a maturing sector:

- There was recognition of progress;
- There was acknowledgement of stalled empowerment; and
- There was a call for sharper institutional clarity.

The conference shifted SANSBOC from structural consolidation to policy assertion. Key Strategic Resolutions
The 2018 Conference adopted resolutions across four central pillars:

1. Business Model Development

Delegates resolved that SANSBOC must develop a national business model capable of structured presentation to Government.

This model would:

- Be developed at National level
- Cascade to Provincial Councils
- Benchmark against AB 350 (Eastern Cape) and Kopano (Limpopo)
- Consider international best practice.

The shift was clear: **SANSBOC would no longer rely solely on advocacy. It would present structured economic proposals.**

2. Government Empowerment Framework

The conference took a firm position on empowerment mechanisms. **Resolutions included:**

- Negotiated contracts instead of open tender contracts where appropriate.
- Standardisation of scholar transport across provinces.
- Uniform commuter subsidy frameworks.
- Clear MOUs between Provincial Departments and Provincial Councils.

The concern was consistent: Small bus operators were often excluded not by capacity – but by procurement design.

3. Organisational Sustainability

Delegates acknowledged that long-term viability required internal strengthening. **The conference resolved:**

- Engagement with private sector sponsors.
- Uniform naming and branding of provincial structures.
- Finalisation of affiliation fee structures.
- Strategic alliances with SANTACO, NTA, SABRATA and SABOA.

The message was unmistakable: Institutional independence required diversified support.

4. Historical Assessment

In retrospect, the 2018 conference stands as a recalibration moment. It did not generate dramatic public announcements. It generated structured mandates.

The resolutions adopted laid groundwork for:

- The 2020 Five-Year Strategic Plan.
- More defined engagement with NDOT.
- A clearer articulation of small bus sector economic demands.

If 2012 was the birth of constitutional leadership, 2018 was the sharpening of institutional intent.

4. Regulatory Barriers

One of the most pressing concerns remained regulatory friction. The conference mandated engagement with National and Provincial Departments regarding:

- Operating licence constraints.
- Pro-rata payment duplications.
- Separation of vehicle licence and Certificate of Fitness processes.

The sector's frustration was procedural, not ideological. Operators sought fairness, uniformity, and administrative rationalisation. A Sector at a Crossroads unlike the inaugural conference of 2012, the 2018 gathering was not about forming identity. It was about asserting policy position.

The discussions reflected a growing awareness:

Formalisation alone was not empowerment. Recognition without economic inclusion was incomplete.

The 2018 Consultative Conference therefore represents:

- *A transition from structural formation.*
- *To strategic engagement.*

It positioned SANSBOC as a negotiating body, not merely a representative platform.

2020: The Five-Year Strategic Plan

From Representation to Programmatic Direction

By 2020, SANSBOC had completed its formalisation (2012) and consolidation (2018) phases. What remained was strategic clarity. The organisation required not only representation but direction. The years following the 2018 Elective Conference reinforced a central reality: governance alone does not deliver economic transformation.

Small bus operators continued to face:

- *Limited access to subsidised commuter contracts*
- *Fragmented scholar transport systems*
- *Capital constraints for fleet modernisation*
- *Inconsistent regulatory enforcement*
- *Uneven integration into public transport networks.*

In response: SANSBOC adopted a Five-Year Strategic Plan (2020–2025) a programmatic framework to guide institutional growth and sector positioning.

Strategic Priorities:

1. **Institutional strengthening:** strengthening governance, provincial alignment and administrative capacity.
2. **Economic mainstreaming:** advancing participation in subsidy programmes and contract systems.
3. **Policy engagement:** structured dialogue with government and participation in policy reform.
4. **Capacity development:** training, financial literacy, and preparation for compliance environments.
5. **Stakeholder partnerships:** engagement with finance institutions, manufacturers and industry partners.

Adoption in a Time of Disruption:

The Plan was adopted at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, a period of global uncertainty and reduced mobility. Despite these challenges, it provided institutional stability and strategic direction.

The 2020 Plan marked a shift:

From reactive advocacy to structured programmatic positioning, it signalled that SANSBOC was no longer defined by exclusion but by readiness.

2020 -2022: THE COVID-19

Resilience Under Constraint

In early 2020, as the 5-Year Strategic Plan was adopted, the global pandemic altered the operating environment of public transport with unprecedented speed. For small bus operators, the impact was immediate.

- **Mobility;** the very foundation of their economic activity was restricted.
- **Routes;** were suspended, passenger volumes declined sharply, schools were closed and commercial demand collapsed.

The sector entered its most uncertain period since formalisation.

Uneven Relief and sector Imbalance

During this period, government introduced relief mechanisms for segments of the public transport industry. However, the distribution of structured relief was uneven across modes.

In public discourse, comparisons emerged between support measures provided to other transport sectors and the limited direct relief available to small bus operators. The pandemic did not create structural inequality. It illuminated it.

Operators who had long navigated narrow financial margins now faced liquidity constraints, fleet maintenance backlogs and operational uncertainty.

Lockdown and Operational Contraction

South Africa's national lockdown, declared in March 2020, severely curtailed public movement. For operators running commercial services, revenue streams declined almost overnight.

Unlike sectors operating within fully subsidised contract regimes, many small bus operators were dependent on:

- Daily fare revenue.
- Scholar transport contracts.
- Short-term service agreements (month to month)

The contraction of economic activity exposed the vulnerability of non-subsidised operations. Where scholar transport continued in limited form, some payments were sustained though often reduced. Where commercial routes dominated, financial strain intensified. The structural margins of the sector were tested.

Institutional Adaptation

For SANSBOC, the pandemic period required administrative agility.

- *National meetings shifted to virtual platforms.*
- *Terms of office were extended to ensure governance continuity.*
- *Engagement with departments continued under constrained conditions.*
- *The decision to extend the leadership term beyond the original cycle was not political, it was practical.*
- *Constitutional governance had to be preserved during restricted assembly. The Council remained intact. This continuity prevented institutional regression during crisis.*

Fleet Pressures and Safety Concerns

The economic slowdown had secondary effects. Reduced revenue limited operators' ability to:

- Maintain fleets.
- Replace ageing vehicles.
- Invest in compliance upgrades.

In a sector already facing recapitalisation challenges, the pandemic compounded long-term sustainability concerns. The relationship between capital access and operational safety became increasingly visible. The issue was no longer theoretical, it was structural.

A Sector Changed, But Not Broken....

By 2022, as restrictions eased and mobility patterns gradually stabilised, the small bus sector had endured a period of profound pressure.

Some operators exited the market, others consolidated operations and many absorbed losses quietly. But the sector did not collapse, its survival was not accidental. **It reflected: Adaptability!!!**

Community-rooted demand, operational resilience and the institutional framework that had been built over the preceding decade.

Lessons in Institutional Resilience

Historically, the 2020–2022 period represents more than economic disruption. It tested whether the formalisation achieved in 2012 had created durable institutional capacity. Despite financial strain, the Council:

- Maintained constitutional order.
- Preserved provincial structures.
- Continued policy dialogue.
- Retained organisational legitimacy.

The crisis did not dissolve the institution, it hardened it.

Historical Significance

COVID-19 will likely be remembered as the first systemic shock faced by SANSBOC. **These period saw the following:**

- The fragility of unsubsidised operations.
- The importance of strategic preparedness.
- The necessity of economic empowerment beyond representation.

If formalisation was Phase One and strategic planning was Phase Two then the pandemic became the crucible that tested both. The years that followed would shift the focus toward governance consolidation and economic positioning for the future.

2022–2025

Governance Consolidation and Institutional Maturity

From Survival to Stabilisation

By 2023, the immediate shock of the pandemic had begun to recede. Mobility patterns were stabilising. Schools had reopened fully. Commercial corridors were gradually reactivating. Yet the sector that emerged from the COVID-19 period was not identical to the one that entered it.

The experience of disruption had clarified a central truth: Institutional survival requires governance discipline.

The Shift Toward Internal Strengthening

Between 2023 - 2025, SANSBOC's focus turned inward – not as retreat, but as recalibration.

The priorities of this phase included:

- Strengthening constitutional compliance.
- Regularising provincial reporting.
- Clarifying leadership roles.
- Reinforcing accountability mechanisms.
- Stabilising membership alignment.

Where earlier phases focused on formation and strategy, this period emphasised consolidation. The Council recognised that influence is built upon credibility. Credibility is built upon governance.

Engagement Without Illusion

During this period, engagement with government continued but with greater realism. The lessons of the previous decade had revealed: **Policy recognition does not automatically translate into economic inclusion.**

Therefore, discussions increasingly centred on:

- Practical inclusion in subsidy regimes.
- Preparation for competitive contract systems.
- Economic empowerment pathways.
- Sector readiness for future public transport reform.

The tone of engagement matured, Less aspirational, More structured.

Institutional Identity Solidified

By 2025, SANSBOC was no longer in its formative phase. It was no longer simply consolidating provincial structures.

It had become:

- A recognised national stakeholder
- A constitutional entity
- A structured representative body
- An organisation conscious of its strategic responsibilities.

The vocabulary of the Council evolved.

- From grievance to governance.
- From marginalisation to positioning.
- From demand to preparation.

Economic Positioning and Preparation

A significant feature of the 2023–2025 period was the renewed emphasis on economic empowerment.

Discussions advanced around:

- Capacity-building workshops
- Financial literacy and compliance training
- Exploring partnerships with development finance institutions
- Engagement with bus manufacturers and suppliers
- Preparation for participation in non-set-aside tenders.

The objective was clear:

Small bus operators must not rely solely on protection mechanisms. They must prepare for competitive participation.

A Sector Reflecting on Its Journey

This period also brought introspection. The questions confronting the sector were no longer about existence.

They were about impact.

- Had formalisation matured into influence?
- Had representation matured into economic leverage?
- Had strategy matured into measurable progress?

These questions were not signs of instability. They were signs of institutional adulthood.

On the Eve of the 3rd National Elective Conference

As 2025 closed, preparations began for the 3rd National Elective Conference.

- Unlike 2012, the organisation was no longer being born.
- Unlike 2018, it was no longer simply renewing. It was evaluating itself.

The conference would not mark the creation of a council. It would mark the assessment of a decade-long institutional journey. Governance consolidation had prepared the ground. Institutional maturity now required strategic boldness.

Historical Significance:

The years 2023–2025 will likely be remembered as the stabilisation era.

- They did not produce dramatic headlines.
- They produced structural discipline and in the life of institutions, discipline often matters more than drama.

The next chapter would determine whether maturity translates into generational impact.

GOVERNMENT CORNER

Policy, Formalisation and Institutional Partnership
“Formalisation Was Not an Option – It Was a Necessity”
An Archival Reflection with Mr. Tshililo Jomo Mufamadi
National Department of Transport

The Context: 2009

By 2009, small bus operators were approaching the Department of Transport individually, raising consistent concerns about exclusion from the mainstream public transport system.

Their grievances centred on:

- Exclusion from subsidy regimes
- Limited participation in Integrated Transport Networks
- Absence from structured policy platforms.
-

The Ministry determined that fragmented engagement was unsustainable. A structured national intervention was required. This decision led directly to the National Small Bus Operators Summit of November 2009.

The Strategic Intent

According to Mr. Mufamadi, the Summit was not symbolic – it was strategic.

Two pillars were identified:

1. Formalisation of Small Bus Operator Structures
2. Skills Development and Capacity Building

Without structure, there could be no effective engagement. Without capacity, there could be no meaningful participation.

The Department’s strategy framed the intervention as one of *“Formalisation and Empowerment.”*

Q1: What formalisation meant?

Formalisation required:

- Governance structures
- Regulation and accountability
- Coordinated provincial representation
- A national body capable of engagement.

Empowerment required enabling participation in:

- Bus Tendering Systems
- Negotiated Contracts
- Integrated Transport Networks
- National legislative instruments

The objective was not merely organisational recognition – but economic positioning

Q3: Institutional Milestones Achieved

Between 2009 and 2015, measurable progress occurred:

- National elective conference (2012)
- National election and adoption of SANSBOC (6 December 2012)
- SANSBOC Constitution Ver. 2 (2013)
- MOU signed (2014)
- Cooperatives empowerment model developed (2015).

These were structural achievements. They marked the transition from informal sector to recognised institutional actor.

Q2: The identified challenges?

The strategy openly acknowledged structural constraints facing SBOs:

- Lack of passenger subsidy access
- Fragmented scholar transport administration
- Limited access to capital
- Skills deficits
- Safety compliance gaps
- Market dominance by larger operators
- Intimidation in certain operating environments and the analysis was policy-grounded and systemic.

Q4: Monitoring and Accountability

The strategy aligned with the Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System. Impact assessments and reviews were considered essential. Institutional growth, Mr. Mufamadi emphasised, must be measured.

Risks Identified at the Time

The National and Provincial Department foresaw risks including:

- Capacity constraints within SANSBOC
- Delays in transport restructuring
- Funding mobilisation challenges
- Changing of SETAs environments.

Many of these risks remain structurally relevant today.

Renewal and Responsibility

Reflecting on the upcoming electoral cycle, Mr. Mufamadi emphasised: **National Elective Conference renew mandate** – but more importantly, they renew responsibility.

Leadership must articulate programs around:

- Subsidy literacy
- Tender development and bidding
- Economic empowerment positioning.

Formalisation was the foundation. Sustainability requires implementation.

Institutional Reflection

The Government Corner affirms an important historical reality:

- *The formation of SANSBOC was not accidental.*
- *It was the product of policy deliberation, strategic intervention, and structured partnership.*
- *From Summit to Strategy to Structure*

The responsibility now lies in translating structure into sustained economic participation.

SANSBOC CURRENT NEC AT ADVOCACY WORK

Policy, Incorporation and Systemic Reform

POLICY BRIEF - Integrating Small Bus Operators into South Africa's Public Transport Subsidy Framework

Submitted on behalf of: SANSBOC to the National Public Transport Subsidy Task Team

Presented by: Secretary General, Final Kgodumo – September 2021

Researched and Compiled by: Ofentse Madisha (Mokwena) & Letselela TJ

1. Purpose of the Brief

This policy brief summarises the key issues, evidence, and recommendations presented by SANSBOC in its submission to the Draft National Public Transport Subsidy Policy. It highlights the structural barriers facing Small Bus Operators (SBOs) and proposes actionable reforms to ensure equitable participation in the subsidy regime.

2. Background

SANSBOC was established through a process facilitated by the NDOT to represent emerging bus operators who had been excluded from mainstream empowerment and subsidy programmes. As the submission notes, SBOs have long raised concerns about *"being excluded in the mainstream economic empowerment, especially in the roll-out of IPTNs"*. Despite their contribution to mobility, employment, and rural access, SBOs remain largely outside the subsidy system and face structural disadvantages in tendering, contracting, and market access.

3. Historical Inequities

Large bus operators have benefited from decades of entrenched market dominance dating back to the 1950s. SBOs, by contrast, have only gained representation in the last 15 years and cannot compete on equal footing.

4. The Case for Prioritising Small Bus Operators

4.1 Economic Contribution

SBOs are a significant national asset:

- 1 500+ members, 35% women
- 9 000 buses across all provinces
- 22 620 direct jobs, with R1.8 billion in salaries
- R5.3 billion asset base
- R6 billion annual revenue
- 235 million annual passenger trips.

Yet less than 2% benefit from commuter subsidies, and no recapitalisation or administrative support has ever been provided.

4.2 Rural and Scholar Transport Dominance

- 70% of SBOs operations are in rural areas
- 80% operate in scholar transport
- Rural municipalities have an average efficiency of 38%, meaning “62% of the potential services that should be delivered are not”
- Scholar/learner transport requires universal accessibility, specialised vehicles and higher operating costs.

4.3 Structural Disadvantages

The Competition Commission found that the current subsidy system “prevents competition...” and serves as an artificial barrier to entry – especially for SBOs.”

SBOs faces:

- Unequal tendering conditions
- Lack of capitalisation support
- Poor rural road conditions
- Higher fuel and maintenance costs

5. Key Gaps in the Draft Subsidy Policy

5.1 Lack of Explicit Recognition

The draft policy does not acknowledge SANSBOC or explicitly identify SBOs as a previously marginalised group requiring targeted support.

5.2 No Differentiation by Operator Type

The policy uses generic terms such as “small enterprises” instead of distinguishing:

- Small Bus Operators - SANSBOC
- Large Bus Operators - SABOA
- Taxi Industry - SANTACO/NTA.

5.3 Insufficient Rural–Urban Distinction

The subsidy formula is urban-centric and does not account for:

- Rural terrain
- Long travel distances
- Higher operating costs
- Weak municipal capacity.

5.4 Learner Transport Not Adequately Addressed

Although learner transport is recognised as a special category, the subsidy structure does not explicitly provide for:

- Universal accessibility
- Higher per-trip costs
- Rural school-community linkages.

5.5 Tendering Disadvantages

The policy states that “assistance will be offered to disadvantaged operators”, but does not specify mechanisms to ensure fair competition.

6. Policy Recommendations

6.1 Explicit Prioritisation of SBOs

- Recognise SBOs as a distinct operator category
- Identify SBOs as a previously disadvantaged group requiring targeted inclusion.

6.2 Differentiated Subsidy Framework

Develop a subsidy model that accounts for:

- Operator type (small bus, big bus, taxi)
- Service type (learner, scholar, commuter and tourism)
- Geography (urban vs rural)
- Cost structure (terrain, vehicle type and accessibility requirements).

6.3 Implement the 30% Set-Aside

- Apply the national 30% set-aside for small enterprises to commuter bus contracts.

6.4 Rural– Urban Subsidy Distinction

Create separate subsidy parameters for rural and urban contexts, reflecting:

- Higher rural operating costs
- Poor road conditions
- Longer travel distances
- Weak municipal capacity

6.5 Long-Term Developmental Contracting

Shift from short-term tendering to long-term developmental contracting to enable SBO growth and sustainability.

6.6 Capitalisation and Technology Support

Provide support for:

- Fleet recapitalisation
- Automated fare collection
- APTMS and monitoring systems
- Universal accessibility upgrades.

6.7 Integration into Transport Planning

Ensure SBOs representation in:

- Integrated Transport Plans Committee
- Learner Transport planning committee
- Rural and urban mobility strategies committee
- Subsidy allocation committees

7. Implementation Priorities

- Formal recognition of SANSBOC as a national stakeholder.
- Development of an SBOs - specific subsidy model.
- Immediate inclusion of SBOs in commuter subsidy pilots.
- Dedicated rural transport support mechanisms.
- Capacity-building for municipalities to manage learner and rural transport.
- Capitalisation programmes tailored to small bus operations.

8. Conclusion

SBOs are essential to South Africa's mobility ecosystem, particularly in rural and learner transport markets. Their exclusion from the subsidy system undermines equity, efficiency and national development goals. The Draft National Public Transport Subsidy Policy presents a historic opportunity to correct these injustices. A reformed subsidy framework must explicitly recognise SBOs, differentiate between operator types and provide targeted support to ensure their sustainable integration into the public transport economy.

Incorporating the Previously Disadvantaged Small Bus Sector in South Africa: Policy Gaps, Structural Barriers, and Pathways for Transformation

Compiled and presented by Letselela TJ to the Transport Forum – 06 June 2024

Abstract

Small Bus Operators (SBOs) constitute a critical yet marginalised segment of South Africa's public transport system. Despite their significant economic footprint—particularly in learner transport and rural mobility—the sector remains excluded from mainstream transport planning, subsidies, and empowerment initiatives. Drawing on insights from the South African National Small Bus Operators Council (SANSBOC), this presentation examines the historical context, structural challenges, and policy disconnects that hinder the incorporation of previously disadvantaged SBOs. Through a policy analysis and a brief literature review, the paper argues that the gap between legislative intent and implementation has entrenched inequality within the public transport value chain. The article concludes by proposing a structured, measurable incorporation framework to advance transformation and economic inclusion.

1. Introduction

Public passenger road-based transport in South Africa is characterised by fragmentation, uneven subsidy allocation, and persistent exclusion of emerging operators. Although the state has repeatedly articulated commitments to transformation, the small bus sector continues to operate at the margins of the transport economy. As the SANSBOC presentation notes, SBOs have long raised concerns about **“being excluded in the mainstream economic empowerment, especially in the roll-out of Integrated Public Transport Networks (IPTNs)”** (Transport Forum Presentation). This presentation explores the structural and policy factors underpinning this exclusion. It synthesises SANSBOC's sectoral insights with academic literature on transport governance, empowerment policy, and informal/formal transport dynamics.

2. Background and Formation of SANSBOC

SANSBOC was established through a consultative process facilitated by the National Department of Transport (NDOT). Its formation responded to widespread concerns that emerging bus operators were systematically overlooked in subsidy allocations and empowerment programmes. *“The formation of SANSBOC was facilitated by the National Department of Transport... after operators raised concerns about being excluded in the mainstream economic empowerment.”* Launched nationally in 2012, SANSBOC was envisioned as a vehicle for structured empowerment and incorporation of SBOs into the formal transport economy. However, more than a decade later, the anticipated transformation has not materialised.

3. Economic and Sectoral Profile of SBOs

The SBO sector is economically significant:

- 1 508 members
- 9 048 buses
- 22 620 employees
- R5.3 billion asset base
- R6.1 billion annual revenue
- 235 million passengers transported annually

Yet, despite this scale:

- 80% operate in learner transport
- Less than 2% access commuter subsidies
- 0% receive direct administrative budget support

These figures illustrate a paradox: a large, economically active sector that remains structurally peripheral.

4. Literature Review: Transport Governance, Informality, and Empowerment

4.1 Transport Governance and Fragmentation

Scholars such as Khumalo (2020) and Mokonyama (2018) argue that South Africa’s transport governance is characterised by institutional fragmentation, weak intergovernmental coordination, and inconsistent policy implementation. This fragmentation disproportionately affects smaller operators who lack political leverage

4.2 Informal–Formal Transport Dynamics

The small bus sector occupies a hybrid space—neither fully formalised nor informal. Research by Schalekamp & Behrens (2013) shows that hybrid operators often fall through policy cracks, receiving neither the flexibility of informal operators nor the support afforded to formal operators.

4.3 Empowerment and Set-Asides:

Empowerment literature emphasises that transformation requires deliberate, measurable interventions (Pooe & Mafini, 2021). Without targeted set-asides, emerging operators struggle to penetrate established value chains dominated by legacy operators.

These themes align with SANSBOC’s observation that empowerment “cannot be an automated exercise” and requires “a deliberately driven process for specifically identified groups.”

5. Policy Analysis: Why Exclusion Persists:

Despite strong legislative frameworks, the SBO sector remains excluded. The presentation poses the central question: *“Why despite good legislation, political pronouncements, available development institutions and bureaucratic means, Small Bus Operators continue to be excluded...?”*

5.1 Policy–Implementation Gap

South Africa’s transport policies (e.g., NLTA no. 5 of 2009, White Paper on National Transport Policy) articulate transformation goals but lack:

- Specificity on SBO incorporation
- Enforcement mechanisms
- Dedicated custodianship.

5.2 Absence of a National Incorporation Framework

There is no uniform model guiding how SBOs should be integrated into:

- Subsidy systems
- IPTN operations
- Value chain opportunities
- Recapitalisation programmes.

5.3 Structural Power Imbalances

Established operators and the minibus taxi industry wield significant influence, shaping subsidy allocations and procurement processes. SBOs lack comparable bargaining power.

5.4 Administrative and Financial Barriers

The presentation highlights that SBOs receive:

“No recap programme, No Covid-19 relief fund, No administrative budget allocation.”

This absence of institutional support entrenches inequality.

6. Current State of the Sector

SANSBOC’s assessment is unequivocal:

“SBOs are still operating in the economic periphery.”

Key indicators include:

- *No set-asides*
- *No protection from unfair competition*
- *No formal empowerment model*
- *No dedicated government unit*
- *Less than 2% subsidy access*

This reflects systemic neglect rather than isolated policy failures.

7. Identifying the Disconnect

The presentation summarises the disconnect across four domains:

- **Government:** No framework, no custodian, no allocation
- **Industry:** No support, bypassing systems
- **Beneficiaries:** No model, no impact
- **Policy:** No specificity, no enforcement

This multi-layered disconnect explains the persistent exclusion of SBOs.

8. Recommendations: Towards a Structured Incorporation Framework

8.1 Government-Level Interventions

- Introduce set-asides for SBOs in subsidies, IPTNs, and procurement
- Establish a dedicated incorporation unit within DoT
- Provide capital funding, operational systems, and skills development
- Ringfence learner transport for SBOs.

8.2 Industry-Level Interventions

- Strengthen collaboration between SABOA and SANSBOC
- Develop a national database of compliant SBOs
- Promote subcontracting and partnership models.

8.3 Structural Interventions

- Create protection mechanisms against unfair competition
- Develop a national incorporation strategy with measurable milestones

These recommendations align with the presentation’s call to:

“Develop a common model for industry driven economic empowerment.”

9. Conclusion

SANSBOC and its members are indispensable to South Africa’s mobility landscape, yet it remains structurally excluded from the transport economic mainstream. The gap between policy intent and implementation has entrenched inequality, undermining transformation objectives. A deliberate, measurable incorporation framework—supported by government, industry and organised SBO structures — is essential to unlock the sector’s potential and advance inclusive mobility.

SBOs ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

SBOs are a significant national asset:



1 500+ MEMBERS, **35%** WOMEN



9 000 BUSES ACROSS ALL PROVINCES



22 620 DIRECT JOBS
R1.8 BILLION IN SALARIES



R5.3 BILLION ASSET BASE



R6 BILLION ANNUAL REVENUE



235 MILLION ANNUAL PASSENGER TRIPS





transport

Department:
Transport
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



SANSBOC

SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL SMALL BUS OPERATORS COUNCIL

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