



Media Release

SARS strike and impact on service delivery

Johannesburg, 27 March 2018 – SAICA has taken note of the media reports that a significant number of SARS employees will be going on strike on 28 March 2019. Organised labour action has not been prevalent at SARS and SARS management have maintained an above average record in the public sector in reaching mutual agreement with its staff.

To minimise adverse impact on taxpayers SARS have issued a notification confirming the possibility of strike action. Taxpayers have been warned that picketing has been allowed by the CCMA at **SARS Alberton** and **SARS Head Office in Pretoria** (Le Hae SARS) and SAICA recommends that these branches be avoided until the industrial action has been resolved.

Based on the 2009 SARS industrial action, most offices remained functional but 10am-12pm was the most impacted time. Only certain offices had less than 20% staff and customs and border posts like Durban Harbour, Lebombo and OR Tambo were sporadically significantly affected. Unfortunately attempts to disrupt and blockade ports did result in South African Police Services having to intervene and we hope that this will not be necessary this time around.

Given the impact on SARS service delivery, SAICA advises taxpayers as follows:

- Avoid, if possible, branches where picketing is to occur or is occurring and rather reschedule with the relevant SARS Official but also contact SARS to inform them;
- Taxpayers should plan for significantly longer queues and time to resolve matters at SARS branches, including for manual tax return submissions like on Section 7C donations;
- There may be significant delays at the SARS call centre and taxpayers should first revert to SARS' website to clarify matters if possible;
- Use SARS eFiling for as many services as possible;

- Customs and border posts like Durban Harbour, Lebombo and OR Tambo may be affected and travellers and exporters may need to cater for additional delays.

SARS have not outlined any views on penalties and interest that taxpayers may incur due to services being unavailable and taxpayers being unable to comply. SAICA will seek to engage with SARS to clarify their position on such occurrences.

SARS have undertaken to communicate with taxpayers on an ongoing basis and SARS branches will do a daily assessment to determine branch functionality or other service limitations and possible temporary closure, if required.

To follow developments, please refer to the **SARS website** (www.sars.gov.za), **SARS FaceBook** page (South African Revenue Service) and **SARS Twitter feed** (@sarstax) before going to any branch or when experiencing other service. SAICA members can also report any incidences not already on the SARS communication channels of picketing, service delivery delays or branch closures to saica@saica.co.za.

About SAICA

The South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA), South Africa's pre-eminent accountancy body, is widely recognised as one of the world's leading accounting institutes. The Institute provides a wide range of support services to more than 46 000 members and associates who are chartered accountants [CAs(SA)], as well as associate general accountants (AGAs(SA)) and accounting technicians (ATs(SA)), who hold positions as CEOs, MDs, board directors, business owners, chief financial officers, auditors and leaders in every sphere of commerce and industry, and who play a significant role in the nation's highly dynamic business sector and economic development.

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