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# How agriculture shapes careers and dreams

By Dennis Coetzee, group executive of human capital, NWK

**W**hen I started my career at NWK in 2003 and thus entered the agricultural industry, I did not expect to fall in love with it. My professional roots were in manufacturing, consulting and training, which are far removed from grain handling and storage, retail, mechanisation, and all the processing plants of NWK.

Agriculture was never on my planned career map. Yet today, I stand fully committed to it, grateful for the unexpected path that has shaped my career and my purpose. The agricultural sector has a quiet strength; it does not demand attention – it commands respect. It is an industry built on resilience, grit, and an unwavering responsibility to feed nations.

## The heart of agriculture

My journey began with an opportunity to improve processes and implement modern human capital systems. What I discovered was an industry rich with potential, deeply dependent on its people, yet often underestimated in both complexity and professionalism. While systems are important, people are the heart of agriculture. From silo operations to logistics, from research to engineering, from finance to frontline service teams, every individual plays a pivotal role in sustaining food security across Southern Africa. That realisation fundamentally reshaped my understanding of leadership.

Still, we face a challenge: the perception of agriculture as an outdated or limited career field. Too many young professionals overlook this sector, imagining it to be slow, unchanging, or lacking in opportunities. But the opposite is true. I have seen innovation driven by necessity, digital transformation in action, and leadership courage in times of severe drought and economic pressure. Agriculture is not behind but is evolving faster than many other industries.

Recognition has followed this evolution. I was deeply honoured to be nominated for Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) of the Year 2025, as well as one of Africa's Top 25 Human Resources (HR) Professionals by Workforce Africa. NWK was also recognised as one of South Africa's Top Employers in 2025, which is a milestone that demonstrates the calibre of HR and leadership practices emerging from the agricultural sector. These acknowledgements signal something important: Agriculture can compete with any industry when it comes to strategy, talent development, innovation, and organisational excellence.

Recognition, however, is not enough. The future of this industry depends on mentorship, coaching, and multi-generational synergy. Our workforce now spans five generations, each shaped by different histories, technologies, expectations, and life experiences. As I shared in my recent Grain Handling Organisation of Southern Africa (GOSA) address, we must never forget that while we may be using the term 'human capital', we are still working with human beings. Each person has their own story, pressures, and dreams. Effective leadership requires us to honour that humanity.

## Adaptive leadership

We must be adaptable to lead well in this environment. Leadership cannot be rigid or one-dimensional. We need to manage individuals, not groups. We must understand that the same leadership style will not inspire everyone. Younger generations seek purpose, rapid growth and autonomy, whereas older generations bring mastery, stability, and contextual knowledge. Mentorship becomes the bridge between these worlds – passing on experience while welcoming innovation. Coaching unlocks capacity and strengthens resilience. Combined, they create a culture where talent thrives rather than survives.

The agricultural industry has a unique opportunity to reposition itself as an



Dennis Coetzee.

employer of choice. Not by reinventing who we are, but by reflecting more intentionally on what already makes us extraordinary:

- A strong sense of community and contribution.
- Depth of technical expertise not found elsewhere.
- A culture of loyalty, accountability, and shared purpose.
- Resilience in facing market, climate, and regulatory pressures.
- A commitment to feeding and sustaining the nation.

I entered this industry unexpectedly. I remain in it wholeheartedly. My hope is that through intentional leadership, structured mentorship and meaningful coaching, we will cultivate a future where our people feel valued, supported, and inspired to build lifelong careers in this sector.

Agriculture feeds nations, but with the right leadership it can also feed the dreams and potential of the people who serve it. [🔗](#)

## CBH sets new storage record

According to a report from *World-Grain.com*, the CBH Group has reported storing a record 16,3 million tonnes of grain under tarp in open bulkheads for the 2025/26 season. This surpasses the previous record of 14,9 million tonnes set in the 2022/23 season.

Total grain receipts for the cooperative reached 24,1 million tonnes, with 131 000 tonnes received in the week leading up to the report on 19 January 2026, as the Western Australia harvest concludes. CBH, Australia's largest cooperative, had already established its total receipts record when it exceeded 22,9 million tonnes in late December.

The organisation's sites are now transitioning from harvest receipt to increased outloading activities for its 2026 export programme. "In December alone, more than two million tonnes were shipped through all four port terminals – the second highest monthly total on record," said Nelson Aylmore, acting chief operations officer for CBH. – *IndexBox.io*

## DoA halts unlicensed grain elevator purchases

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture (DoA) issued a cease-and-desist order against two organisations and two people for attempting to make purchases without a license. The entities, identified as Reddington Group Inc, Flaxsun Inc, Kent Duane Anderson and Austin Anderson, allegedly attempted to make purchases from North Dakota grain elevators without a license.

"These entities and individuals have never been licensed in North Dakota and have not pursued licensing," agriculture commissioner Doug Goehring said. According to North Dakota Century Code, all grain buyers in the state have to be licensed by the commissioner. The commissioner may issue a cease-and-desist to people or organisations violating any rules relating to grain purchases, without a complaint or hearing. The people and organisations have the right to be heard on the order within 15 days of its issuance.

Violation of the order can result in a criminal infraction and/or a civil penalty of an amount up to US\$5 000 for each violation. – *KX News*

## China-aid storage project handed over to Lesotho

In December last year, the handing-over ceremony of the China-aid Maseru Agriculture Storage and Logistic Infrastructure Project in Lesotho was held in Maseru. Chinese ambassador Yang Xiaokun and minister of agriculture Thabo Mofosi signed the handing-over certificate on behalf of the two governments. Prime minister Sam Matekane, eight cabinet ministers and representatives of all sectors, totalling over 500 people, attended the event.

Ambassador Yang Xiaokun said this project stands as a new fruit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. The Chinese side appreciates that Lesotho has shown support on issues of China's core interests and major concerns over the Taiwan question.

Prime minister Matekane expressed gratitude to the Chinese government, emphasising that this modern agricultural storage of international standards will help Lesotho overcome hunger and poverty, ushering in a new era of food security and self-reliance for the nation. He reaffirmed Lesotho's support for the one-China principle. – *Ministry of Foreign Affairs People's Republic of China*

## Information regulator enforcement notice against JSE

An important event for the grain and oilseed trading industry quietly occurred on 5 January this year when most of its participants were still on holiday. The information regulator, Adv Pansy Tlakula, delivered her enforcement notice on a complaint filed against the JSE by Inhlanhla Ventures. She set aside the JSE's refusal to disclose a series of share trades alleged by Inhlanhla to be suspicious, and ordered the exchange to notify all those involved in the trades so that they could submit representations on the release of the records requested by Inhlanhla.

The complaint related to a request for information that Inhlanhla had filed with the JSE in 2023 through a *Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA)* request. Inhlanhla had sought access to records and documents about trades executed on the JSE between 3 and 19 May 2020 in respect of shares of a company, enX Group Ltd.

The regulator confirmed that a contractual confidentiality agreement can never trump *PAIA*'s requirements of transparency and disclosure. It stated that "a duty of confidence cannot simply be created by agreement; non-confidential matters should not trump the constitutional right of access". This is also true for the JSE and its governing legislation – the *Financial Markets Act* or *FMA* – which prohibits the disclosure of confidential information "unless disclosure is required or permitted in terms of a law or a court order". The regulator confirmed that *PAIA* is a law that permits disclosure, and so *PAIA* must trump any supposed prohibition on disclosure under the *FMA*. – *SACOTA*

## Hangala Foods opens milling plant

Hangala Foods has officially inaugurated a N\$35 million (US\$2,1 million) milling plant at Ombanje Farm, near Otavi, bringing its own maize-meal brand Otavi Golden Maize to the Namibian staple foods market.

The Ombanje Milling Plant, completed following an 18-month construction period, incorporates advanced infrastructure, including modern grain-receiving systems, a dedicated laboratory for quality assurance, storage, a product house, a weighbridge, on-site offices and canteen facilities.

With a daily milling capacity of 50 tonnes, the facility is equipped with two 500-tonne silos to maintain a consistent supply chain throughout the year.

Operating on two shifts, the plant has generated 38 permanent employment opportunities in the Otavi area, while approximately 120 individuals were engaged during the construction phase.

The staple maize-meal market in Namibia has been largely dominated by Namib Mills and Bokomo Namibia. With Otavi Golden Maize now entering the market, the competitive landscape could shift. – *Milling Middle East and Africa*

## Libyan port begins grain silo complex construction

Benghazi's Jalyana Free Zone Port has announced the start of implementation of its Grain Silo Project, a major storage and logistics development that is scheduled for completion within one year.

The Free Zone confirmed that international expertise is being integrated into the project, with a French company responsible for the construction of the modern grain conveyor system, a Belgian company manufacturing Vegan brand grain conveyors, and a Turkish company undertaking the bulk of the works, including construction of the grain storage silos.

Providing technical details, the general manager of the silos project, engineer Mohammed bin Attia, said the facility has been designed as a cylindrical silo system comprising 20 silos. The project occupies an area of approximately 9ha, placing it among the largest silo developments globally in terms of land footprint and capacity. Each silo will reach a height of 26m, while the silo towers will rise to 40m, with each unit having a diameter of 27,4m.

The project also includes a fully integrated grain bagging plant, a modern quality control and testing laboratory, and associated infrastructure works. These include the laying of electrical cables and the construction of a dedicated power station to ensure reliable energy supply for continuous and efficient operations.

The Free Zone Authority said the project is intended to support the establishment of a strategic grain reserve for Libya, reducing exposure to international market disruptions and supply volatility that could affect grain availability domestically or in neighbouring countries.

The silos are designed to store a wide range of commodities, including wheat, barley, soya beans and maize. – *Milling Middle East and Africa*

## Ancient rock-cut stores highlight role of grains

An Iranian village in Ilam province is drawing attention for a series of rock-cut grain storage structures believed to be up to 800 years old. The village of Zeyd, located on the Ilam-Darreh Shahr road about 25km from the city of Darreh Shahr, is home to more than 30 historic wheat storage chambers carved into rocky cliffs.


The stores, built with clay, stone and wood, were designed to preserve wheat for up to three years without spoilage, locals say. The structures are believed to date back between 700 and 800 years and were also intended to protect food supplies from attacks by bandits. – *Tehran Times*

## Court awards millions to LDC

A federal court judge has awarded a company that owned a Dawson Creek grain elevator \$21,6 million in lost profit. Louis Dreyfus Company (LDC) sued Canadian National Railway (CN) for failure to meet service obligations under the *Canada Transportation Act* in a dispute over the transportation of grain.

The Canadian Transportation Agency decided in October 2014 that CN failed to meet the obligations owed to LDC, which owned and operated ten Western Canada grain elevators during the 2013/14 crop year.

LDC claimed \$21,64 million in lost profit, USD\$3,72 million and \$335 978,90 for vessel demurrage, and \$3,5 million for harm to its reputation. According to Transport Canada, demurrage fees are amounts a shipper pays a carrier for the detention of a ship, freight car or other cargo conveyance during loading or unloading beyond the scheduled time of departure.

In his 25 November decision, Justice Alan Diner awarded the full amount for lost profit, but only US\$1,86 million and \$167 893 for vessel demurrage. – *Energetic City* 

# Growing people, not just grain: The new face of silo management in South Africa

By Koos du Pisanie, *Plaas Media*

**F**inding the right person to manage a silo in South Africa is no small task. The ideal candidate must possess the right technical qualifications, personality, leadership ability, and the desire to build a long-term career in an industry that is not exactly the first choice for many young people. And as the role changes, the challenge grows.

“In silo management, we don’t just store grain – we grow people. What if the future of our silos has less to do with the grain we store and more to do with the people we grow?” This is the question Dennis Coetzee, group executive of human capital at NWK, posed in his keynote address at a workshop of the Grain Handling Organisation of Southern Africa (GOSA) last year.

Coetzee pointed out that the silo industry faces plenty of operational and logistical challenges; however, the one that often slips under the radar is the people side of the business.

“We have a talent pipeline that’s leaking at both ends,” he explains. Young people

seldom view silo management as a career of choice, while senior silo managers – with decades of practical knowledge under their belt – are stretched so thin that they struggle to mentor the next generation. And when they retire, their expertise retires with them.

## A four-generation workplace

Like most industries today, silos are staffed by four different generations working side by side, each with their own expectations, values, and work styles.

Coetzee explains: “You have the Baby Boomers who are loyal, structured and experienced. They value respect for their years of experience. Then you have Generation X who are independent, pragmatic and want efficiency and balance. The Millennials are collaborative and purpose driven. They need feedback and meaning. And then there is Generation Z who is digital, ambitious and mentorship hungry, who want growth now.

“So, what is the leadership challenge? We cannot manage everyone in the same way. What inspires one generation may

frustrate another.” The key, he believes, is learning each generation’s ‘language’ and turning potential tension into teamwork.

## Why silo managers still matter

According to Coetzee, silo managers are far more than grain custodians. They safeguard the nation’s harvest. They are the face of their organisations in farming communities. They build trust with producers. And they keep the wheels of the agricultural value chain turning.

Yes, their job description includes measuring moisture, tonnage, and compliance, but how often do they measure mentorship, and employee development and engagement? “The risk,” Coetzee warns, “is that some silo managers spend their entire career creating the perfect silo, but no one else is ready to lead it tomorrow.”

A strong silo manager means a strong agricultural sector. The following is a summary of their core responsibilities:

- Custodians of food security.
- Link between producers and markets.
- Operational backbone of every grain flow.
- Risk managers, community anchors, and mentors.

## Skills and leadership styles

The silo manager of the future wears many hats. He or she must be technically proficient, with strong expertise in grain handling, fumigation, and regulatory compliance. Silo managers are people leaders who can coach, motivate, and guide their teams. They are also teachers who turn everyday work into learning opportunities. As effective communicators, they deliver messages that are clear, honest, and consistent across all levels of the organisation. Importantly, they are strategic thinkers who understand the broader agricultural ecosystem beyond the silo gates.

“There is no single right way to lead,” says Coetzee. “Some lead through structure,



others through inspiration. Some are task-driven, others are people-driven. But the best leaders are adaptive.”

His philosophy is simple: Don't lead people where you want them to be – lead them where they are. That is how trust, growth, and performance are unlocked.

The four leadership styles every manager should master:

- **Directing:** New, inexperienced but enthusiastic employees need clear instructions and close supervision.
- **Coaching:** Employees who are developing skills still require guidance and motivation.
- **Supporting:** Capable but uncertain employees benefit from less direction and more encouragement.
- **Delegating:** Skilled and motivated employees should be trusted, empowered, and held accountable.

Situational leadership, he adds, is not about control but connection.

### Building the next generation

Coetzee encourages managers not to treat people as 'average', but to understand them as individuals. “People are not difficult; they are different. Leadership becomes powerful when you stop managing average and start managing individuals.”

He suggests the following framework:

- **Personality:** Some people need structure, while others thrive on independence. Adjust your approach to give everyone the space they need to perform at their best.
- **Expectations:** Everyone works towards a better future, and for many, a job is a stepping stone towards that goal. Align their current role with what they hope to achieve.
- **Capability:** The ability to do the job well is essential for growth. Help employees build confidence through coaching and assignments.
- **Discipline and development:** Balance fairness with accountability.

So, how do we build a sustainable pipeline of future leaders?

Coetzee believes mentorship should rest on four pillars:

- **Exposure:** Give junior employees insight into why certain standards and procedures exist. Let them observe processes and decision-making to understand the reasoning behind them.
- **Experience:** Experience takes time, but it cannot be gained without practice. Provide small, meaningful tasks that allow them to learn by doing.
- **Engagement:** Mentorship is a powerful tool for developing new managers. Pair employees with mentors and involve them in meetings and discussions.
- **Empowerment:** Strong performance comes when people believe in the organisation's vision or the project's outcome. Empower employees by allowing them to lead projects and take ownership.

### A demanding but rewarding career

Being a silo manager – and a leader to employees, producers, and agents – is not easy. However, when approached with purpose, understanding, and a genuine commitment to developing people, it becomes an exciting and deeply fulfilling career. [a](#)

Contact Dennis Coetzee at 071 673 6327 for more information.

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# Agbiz gears up for a year of unity

By Susan Marais, Plaas Media

Cooperation will be the unifying key to unlocking success in the grain value chain in 2026. This message was conveyed loud and clear at the annual Agbiz Media Day, held at the Grain Building in Pretoria in December last year.

Logistics, legislation, and value chain functionality will all come under scrutiny, and collaboration within the value chain and with other stakeholders will determine whether the storage sector thrives or fails in a year that promises another bountiful grain and oilseed harvest.

## Policy landscape and progress

Agbiz CEO Theo Boshoff reflected on the policy landscape that affected South African agriculture in 2025, noting that the year began with significant disruption driven by misinformation and unexpected policy shocks. These included the signing of the *Expropriation Act, 2024 (Act 13 of 2024)*, activist pressure on crop protection products, the publication of employment equity targets without adequate consultation, and president Donald Trump's announcement of

American 'liberation day' tariffs, which unsettled international trade relations.

Despite these challenges, Boshoff pointed to encouraging signs of economic recovery, or so-called 'green shoots'. Significant progress was made in logistics reform, most notably the court-approved public-private joint venture at Durban's Pier 2 container terminal and equipment upgrades at the Port of Cape Town. "The equipment was purchased some time ago, but only installed in 2025," Boshoff said. While natural elements such as wind remain a stumbling block, the elimination of other obstacles deserves recognition.

He also highlighted the success of the Genset public-private partnership, which delivered two 500kVA generators and 120 additional reefer plug points at the Cape Town Container Terminal. "The project

cost R1,4 million but saved the industry at least R3 million, a clear demonstration of effective collaboration."

Rail reform progressed institutionally, with a finalised network statement enabling private-sector access, Competition Commission approval for collaboration, and the prospect of private operators entering key corridors. Attention is now shifting to the future of underutilised rural branch lines, many of which Transnet no longer intends to maintain.

On the trade front, global realignment triggered by United States (US) tariffs has accelerated diversification efforts. While negotiations with the US continue and some agricultural products have been exempted from tariffs, industry stakeholders are pressing for broader relief, Boshoff said. Through the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac), business and agriculture have identified Japan, South Korea, Southeast Asia, and Gulf countries as priority markets, while urging caution in dealings with China and India.

Other positive developments in 2025 included extended periods without load shedding, progress on a foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) vaccine strategy and agriculture-related master plans, withdrawal of potentially harmful legislation, and a renewed focus on local government reform and rural infrastructure. Looking ahead, the sector will closely monitor the practical application of expropriation legislation, rail concessions, trade diversification, the rollout of FMD vaccines, and regulatory reform.

## Key priorities for the grain sector

Dr Charl van der Merwe, general manager of Agbiz Grain, stressed that the grain industry's strong structures, which include



From the left are Wolfe Braude, Agbiz Fruit manager, Theo Boshoff, Agbiz CEO, Thapelo Machaba, agricultural economist and policy analyst at Agbiz, Dr Charl van der Merwe, Agbiz Grain general manager, Annelize Crosby, head of legal intelligence at Agbiz, Annelien Collins, personal assistant to Dr Van der Merwe, Maphuti Mawasha, Agbiz financial manager, Temba Msiza, digital communications manager at Agbiz, Retha Hart, Agbiz office administration and personal assistant, and Liezl Esterhuizen, member liaison and marketing manager at Agbiz.

commodity trusts, industry bodies, and research organisations, remain a major asset for South Africa. Agbiz Grain focusses on policy and regulation regarding grain handling and storage within the broader grain industry. The 12 businesses that are members of Agbiz Grain collectively own and operate 98% of the grain storage capacity registered and accredited by the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

Dr Van der Merwe added that price and production risks will remain a major concern for the grain industry in 2026. He noted that rainfall variability continues to pose a significant production risk, and aspects such as conservation agriculture, precision farming, and the adoption of new technological advancements (e.g., new breeding techniques and artificial intelligence) are expected to play an increasingly important role.

Looking ahead to 2026, the sector faces critical issues such as price volatility, increased chemical regulation, infrastructure challenges, and the profitability of the wheat value chain that is the subject of a section 7 investigation by the National Agricultural Marketing Council.

Agbiz Grain's priority projects for 2026 include developing a grain storage audit standard, actively engaging in rail branch line revitalisation, strengthening food safety protocols, combating organised grain fraud, and improving emergency preparedness through potential private-sector support.

Training is a key priority for Agbiz Grain. The first group of students in the Grain Depot Manager programme will complete the two-year programme in 2026. The fumigation programme will also be finalised this year, and development of the silo operators programme will commence.

Roads, rail, and other infrastructure will continue to be critical factors in the year ahead, while the role of local government in supporting a successful production environment cannot be underestimated.

### Regulatory changes in the pipeline

Annelize Crosby, head of legal intelligence at Agbiz, highlighted several potential legislative developments that remain uncertain, such as the *Firearms Amendment Bill*, carbon emission targets, and sectoral

budget allocations. She pointed out three major pieces of legislation that the industry must monitor closely in 2026: the Ekurhuleni expropriation test case, potential amendments to agrochemical legislation, and changes to the *National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998)*.

Crosby said expropriation will continue to be a contentious issue in the year ahead. "While the failed attempt to amend section 25 of the *Constitution* and the signing of the *Expropriation Act* brought temporary calm, new developments suggest the debate is far from over," she cautioned. A private member's bill has once again been tabled in parliament, seeking to abolish private property rights and compensation altogether. Although its prospects of success are slim under the current parliamentary composition, the move underscores the political appetite that still exists in South Africa for altering property rights.

A critical test case is the Ekurhuleni expropriation matter, where land was seized without compensation for housing purposes. "The municipality openly stated its intention to test the constitutional limits of expropriation," Crosby explained. The case is expected to proceed to court in early 2026 and will be closely watched for its implications relating to compensation standards.

Meanwhile, court challenges are underway to have parts of the *Expropriation Act* declared unconstitutional. Government has already conceded that section 19, which deals with disputes over the timing of compensation, is likely unconstitutional. In addition, proposed equitable access to land, though not yet tabled, may introduce new rules on land redistribution and possible land ceilings.

Another contentious legal issue Crosby will be monitoring closely in 2026 is the regulation of agricultural remedies, particularly agrochemicals. South Africa continues to rely on outdated legislation dating back to 1947 to govern this critical sector.

Concerns raised by non-governmental organisations and the Human Rights Commission about the safety of these chemicals have prompted parliamentary engagement – often without adequate consultation with the agricultural sector.

While this debate is global and not unique to South Africa, it has become especially pressing locally.

Crosby also noted the importance of heeding industry warnings against misconceptions that food security can be sustained without agrochemicals or through an immediate shift to biological alternatives. A rapid ban, without viable and affordable substitutes, could trigger serious unintended consequences for food production.

Government is expected to launch a comprehensive consultation process in 2026 to draft new legislation. In the meantime, the announced ban has underscored mounting regulatory pressure in this space.

### Water issues

Another major issue facing the industry in the coming year is the proposed amendment of the *National Water Act*, which Crosby warned poses a serious threat to irrigated agriculture. First published in draft form in 2023 and revised in 2025, the bill has been approved by cabinet and is expected to be tabled in parliament shortly.

Key proposals include:

- Establishing a 30m no-cultivation buffer around water sources in declared water-scarce areas, with no compensation for affected crops.
- Prohibiting the trading of water-use entitlements, overturning a Constitutional Court ruling that had confirmed such trading as lawful.
- Expanding ministerial powers to reallocate water across catchments, provinces, or sectors.
- Elevating race and gender transformation as criteria in water licence decisions.
- Requiring all water user associations to adopt mandatory transformation strategies.

Given that irrigation underpins 25 to 30% of national agricultural output, and up to 90% of fruit, wine, vegetable and potato production, uncertainty around water access could severely undermine investment, farm values, and long-term production capacity. [a](#)

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# Shaping the future of the grain storage industry

By Izak Hofmeyr

**T**oday's workplace is characterised by a pronounced generational divide, with employees from different age groups often struggling to understand one another. According to Francois Sieberhagen, executive head of human capital at VKB Group, the key lies in effectively managing this divide to unlock the full potential of the workforce and, in doing so, secure the future of the grain industry.

Broadly speaking, Sieberhagen explains, the workforce comprises several generations: Traditionalists (born between 1928 and 1945), who are now largely retired; Baby Boomers (1946-1964); Generation X (1965-1980); Millennials (1981-1996); Generation Z (1997-2008); and Generation Alpha (born between 2013 and 2029).

He specifically includes Generation Alpha, as they are expected to enter the workplace within the next seven years and bring with them a distinct set of characteristics that differ markedly from those of previous generations.

## Bridging the divide

"The bottom line," Sieberhagen says, "is that we must ensure these different generations understand one another better and are willing to make sacrifices for one another, without compromising standards in any way." All people, he stresses, value income, respect, and stability; however, the way each generation prioritises these needs, and what they are willing to trade to get them, evolves over time.

Generations are shaped not only by their year of birth, but by formative events that influence collective attitudes towards work, authority, risk, and fulfilment. An analysis of the current workforce reveals that Gen X and Millennials make up by far the largest proportion. Data relating to silo managers from a study involving the majority of cooperatives in South Africa show that more than 90% belong to Gen X and Millennials, with Baby Boomers accounting for 6,8% and Gen Z for 3,8%.

"By 2034, almost 80% of the workforce in developed economies will consist of Millennials, Gen Z, and the emerging Gen Alpha. It is therefore vital that we understand the mindsets of these generations."

## Harmful narratives

Different generations often have distinct perceptions of one another, often giving rise to harmful narratives that are counterproductive in the workplace. Here are a few common examples, and it isn't hard to guess which generation they target:

- They think having TikTok is a job skill.
- They think leadership is being the administrator on a WhatsApp group.
- Can they even write an email?
- Everyone wants a trophy these days.
- They cause all the problems but won't retire.
- Back in my day, we didn't need mental health days – we just kept working.

## Trends in job tenure

The average period for which members of the different generations remain in a job varies significantly. While Baby Boomers value stability, Gen X seeks meaningful career paths. Millennials prioritise flexibility and mobility, and Gen Z balances loyalty with growth opportunities. Understanding these differences helps employers create workplace policies that attract and retain talent in a rapidly evolving job market.

Statistics highlight the trends in job tenure:

- Baby Boomers: Long-term employees (15+ years).
- Gen X: Balanced workers (8-12 years).
- Millennials: Career changers (3-5 years).
- Gen Z: Job hoppers (1-3 years).

## Generation Z

Gen Z is often labelled as 'job hoppers', and while this is a negative term, says Sieberhagen, there are specific reasons for this that require careful consideration.

"Gen Z experiences the highest levels of anxiety and depression among generations. They were seldom taught how to cope with disappointment, receive feedback, or navigate difficult conversations. This has earned them the nickname 'silent quitters'. For example, rather than discussing salary expectations openly, they may choose to resign. And when they do muster the courage to have a frank conversation, they often expect a definitive yes or no. Being told that a raise may depend on achieving certain KPIs in the coming months can feel, to them, like an outright 'no.' This response is driven by the instant-gratification culture in which they grew up."

Despite being quick learners, Gen Z can feel overwhelmed when entering the workplace. A competitive, high-pressure environment can trigger significant stress and anxiety. Their intelligence and tech-savviness help them adapt, but their tendency to be quiet means that, without engagement from managers, they may disengage or quietly leave. This is not a favourable outcome and poses a serious risk to the talent pipeline and, ultimately, the industry.

As Baby Boomers retire, Gen Z is entering the workforce. It is essential that Gen X and Millennial colleagues and leaders receive guidance through leadership programmes on how to support and collaborate with younger generations. "We raised them; now we need to work with them," Sieberhagen notes.

Equally important are induction programmes designed to equip Gen Z with the tools to navigate workplace challenges effectively, ensuring they can thrive without compromising standards.

### Personal engagement matters

For Gen Z, regular one-on-one sessions with their leaders are essential. They don't just want feedback about work; they want to be seen and heard.

Growing up with social media, Gen Z experiences constant connectivity alongside high levels of insecurity, uncertainty, and loneliness. Ironically, being connected is causing a huge disconnect from the world, and they often turn to their devices, the very source of their disconnect, for comfort. Previous generations sought guidance, advice, and wisdom from experienced senior colleagues.

The goal of one-on-ones with Gen Z is to focus on personal, rather than professional, matters. Leaders can use these meetings to explore team members' aspirations, challenges, development goals, and the support they might need. Done well, these sessions can significantly reduce anxiety and depression, says Sieberhagen.

## Tips for silo managers

Sieberhagen offers the following strategies for silo managers to engage Gen Z employees in the workplace:

### Shift from command to coaching

Gen Z responds poorly to "because I said so". They've been raised to question and expect to be heard.

- Explain the purpose behind rules, systems, and traditions.
- Coach rather than criticise: Instead of "You did this wrong", try "Here's how we can improve next time".
- Set small, visible goals to track progress and provide regular feedback.

### Teach accountability without crushing spirits

Many younger workers may not be used to firm correction, but accountability is essential in high-stakes environments like grain handling.

- Be firm but fair - maintain high standards.
- Praise publicly, correct privately. This generation values dignity. Let them know mistakes are acceptable but owning them is non-negotiable.
- Use real examples to teach consequences of negligence or laziness, for example grain spoilage, safety hazards, or non-compliance.

### Mentorship: assign, don't assume

Gen Z wants guidance but may not ask for it. They expect mentorship and coaching as part of the package.

- Pair new hires with experienced mentors who are willing to teach rather than just give orders.
- Schedule structured check-ins (one-on-one sessions) to discuss progress, concerns, and career growth.
- Encourage reverse mentoring: Allow younger employees to teach older ones technology or new tools, fostering mutual respect.

### Use feedback loops instead of one-way orders

Gen Z is accustomed to instant feedback such as social media likes, comments, and scores. Harness this for workplace performance.

- Hold short weekly check-ins with questions like:
  - "What's one thing you learned this week?"
  - "What's one thing that could improve?"

- Provide real-time feedback on the job, such as "That was a solid way to load that truck faster. Well done."

### Embrace technology - with purpose

Gen Z expects digital tools; clipboards and paper-only processes feel prehistoric.

- Implement apps, QR codes, spreadsheets, and the like for inventory, scheduling, and safety.
- Let them lead tech initiatives: "Find a better way to track truckloads using mobile tools."
- Balance technology with manual skills: "Tech helps, but it can't fix a broken weighbridge."

### Foster resilience through reality

Many young workers have not faced hard failure. They need to learn that excellence is not handed out.

- Don't rescue them too quickly. Allow them to struggle (in a safe environment) and find solutions independently.
- Share your own mistakes, lessons learnt, and how you bounced back.
- Create learning opportunities through progressive responsibility: start with simpler tasks and gradually increase expectations.

### Communicate culture clearly

Gen Z won't automatically understand your values. They need them spelled out.

- Define what 'grit,' 'work ethic,' and 'integrity' mean at your silo complex.
- Make culture visible: post it in break rooms, discuss it weekly, and bring it to life.
- Use storytelling: "Here's what I learned after 30 years running bins in -10°C."

### Show purpose beyond the paycheck

Gen Z wants to know why their work matters.

- Explain the bigger picture: "Without this silo, the co-op can't fulfil orders and farmers lose time and money."
- Connect their work to broader goals, such as food security in South Africa.
- Celebrate tangible wins: "Because we hit our moisture targets this month, the operation saved this much in drying costs."

“Research shows that for Gen Z, a direct superior has more influence on their psychological well-being than therapists or doctors. Millennials and Gen X often underestimate the impact we have on Gen Z,” he notes. “Screaming or yelling only pushes them further into their shells. But exposing them to environments that show ‘different’ ways of being, can be life changing.

“It is within this context that I feel cell phones should be banned during meetings to encourage real conversation and connection. Help them experience life without their phones. Maybe they’d even learn to enjoy it. Remember, they may sound confident and with all the answers because of Instagram, but in reality, they’re still figuring things out.”

### Empathy is a superpower


The term ‘manager’ is becoming outdated, says Sieberhagen. “We should start referring to ‘leaders’, and leaders should be trained to be coaches and mentors. In this context, empathy plays a key role.

“There is a big difference between sympathy and empathy. What we need is empathy. People who excel in empathy can sense the feelings of others by imagining themselves in their lives or situations. They bring emotional intelligence (EQ) to the workplace, and research consistently shows that EQ is one of the strongest predictors of success in leadership.”

Empathy is more than kindness – it’s a strategic leadership capability that allows leaders to understand, connect with, coach, and mentor a multi-generational workforce. Empathy becomes the bridge that transforms generational tension into generational intelligence. When practiced, differences are no longer sources of conflict but opportunities for mutual learning.

### Set the stage for succession

Sieberhagen points out that each of us is just a small part of the relentless passage of time. As the Baby Boomer generation rapidly exits the workforce, the next generation is stepping in. We must recognise that we are not simply managing employees. We are shaping the future stewards of the grain industry. Gen Z and Gen Alpha bring energy, tech savviness, and adaptability. With the right leadership, these qualities can be paired with responsibility, loyalty, and innovation.

It is vital for silo managers to remember that empathy is a performance multiplier and not just a ‘human skill’. It transforms generational diversity into collaboration, reduces turnover risk, and enhances engagement and the overall employee experience. Empathy enables leaders to connect human experience with organisational purpose, aligning hearts and minds behind strategy. “In a multi-generational workplace,” Sieberhagen concludes, “empathy is the language of leadership that turns difference into belonging and belonging into performance.” 

For enquiries, contact Francois Sieberhagen at 082 055 9989.

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# Proficiency testing and the SAGL

By Theresa de Beer, SAGL NPC

Proficiency testing (PT) is a system used for the objective evaluation of a laboratory's performance by comparing its results to those of other laboratories analysing identical samples. The aim is to ensure that accurate and reliable results are reported in an environment where quality and cost are critical considerations. The Southern African Grain Laboratory NPC (SAGL) is committed to delivering accurate quality analyses to the agricultural industry and fulfilling its mission in a manner that is effective, independent, and trustworthy.

The SAGL first obtained accreditation from the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) in 1999 for chemical and physical analyses conducted within its Crop Quality Division, in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025 standards. The subsequent establishment of the Crop Protection Division led to further SANAS accreditation in 2017.

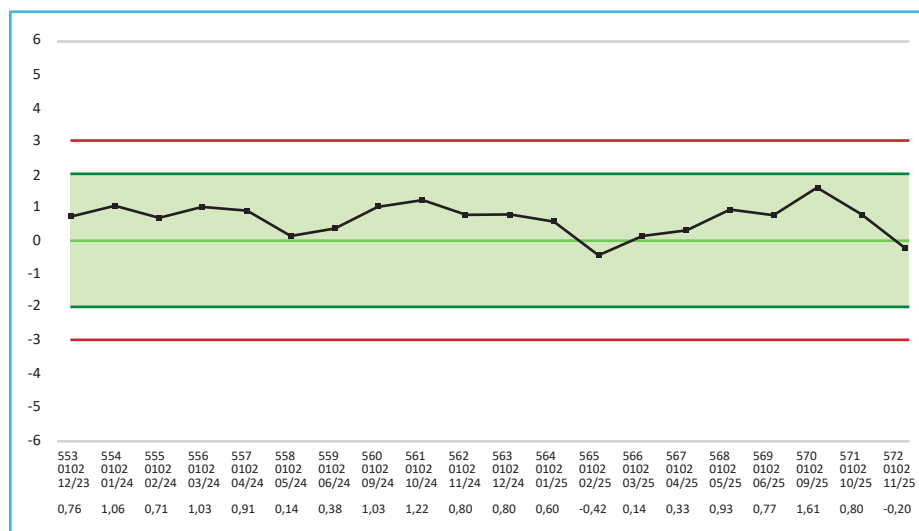
Compliance with these internationally recognised standards requires laboratories to meet stringent testing and calibration criteria, providing external assurance of the accuracy and reliability of results. This commitment to compliance strengthens the SAGL's credibility and reinforces its reputation as the reference laboratory of choice for the grain and oilseeds industries, both locally and internationally.

## Test parameters

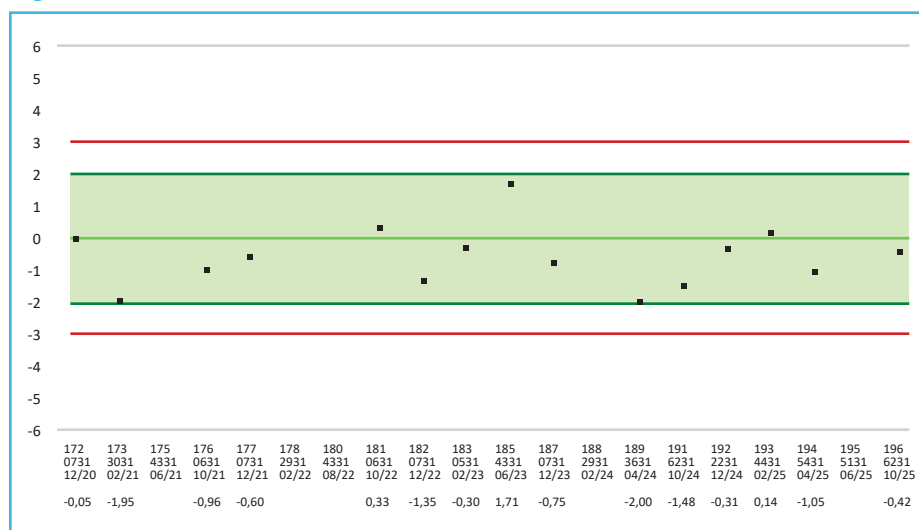
The SAGL participates in several internationally recognised proficiency schemes, including the International Bureau for Analytical Studies (Bureau Interprofessionnel des Etudes Analytiques or BIPEA), the Cereals & Grains Association (formerly AACCI), and Food Analysis Performance Assessment Scheme (FAPAS). Through these programmes, the laboratory conducts chemical and physical (rheological) testing, as well as vitamin, mineral, and mycotoxin testing. The scope of testing covers a wide range of commodities, such as cereals and cereal products, oilseeds, animal feed, yeast, and bread.

Test results are received from up to 130 participants worldwide and are

**Figure 1: BIPEA wheat flour protein (%) z-scores from December 2023 to November 2025.**



**Figure 2: DON z-scores from December 2020 to October 2025.**



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statistically analysed to assign a value for each test parameter. A z-score is calculated for each individual result to indicate its deviation from the assigned value: an absolute value below 2 is considered satisfactory, between 2 and 3 is questionable, and above 3 is unsatisfactory. After analysis, participants receive a confidential report, with results presented on a coded basis.

Figure 1 illustrates the SAGL’s performance for flour protein content over the past two years, during which all z-scores remained below 2, indicating satisfactory results.

Figure 2 shows the performance of the SAGL in analysing the mycotoxin deoxynivalenol (DON), consistently achieving z-scores of 2 or below over a five-year period.

One of the key benefits of participating in PTs is benchmarking. SAGL analysts are thoroughly trained, assessed for competence, and operate within a quality assurance system that continually monitors accuracy. PT participation further enables improvement by providing a benchmark against peers, helping to identify potential weaknesses in equipment or testing methods. Corrective actions such as preventive maintenance or targeted training can then be implemented to support ongoing competence development.

### Improving reporting accuracy

In alignment with ISO/IEC 17025 standards, which includes risk management, PT participation offers an effective mechanism to detect potential errors or biases early, reducing the likelihood of inaccurate reporting. For example, as shown in Figure 3, the SAGL recorded z-scores exceeding 2 and below -2, which, under our quality system, trigger a formal investigation. For the alveograph P-value parameter, the SAGL participates not only in the BIPEA proficiency scheme but also in AACCI and SAGL Wheat & Flour PTs. Results from these schemes were therefore included in the investigation.

The results for the AACCI PT and SAGL PT during the same periods, April 2024 and September 2025, are summarised in Figure 4. The z-scores fall within the acceptable range of 0 to 2, and it was concluded that the out-of-range results

Figure 3: Alveograph P-value z-scores from January 2024 to December 2025.

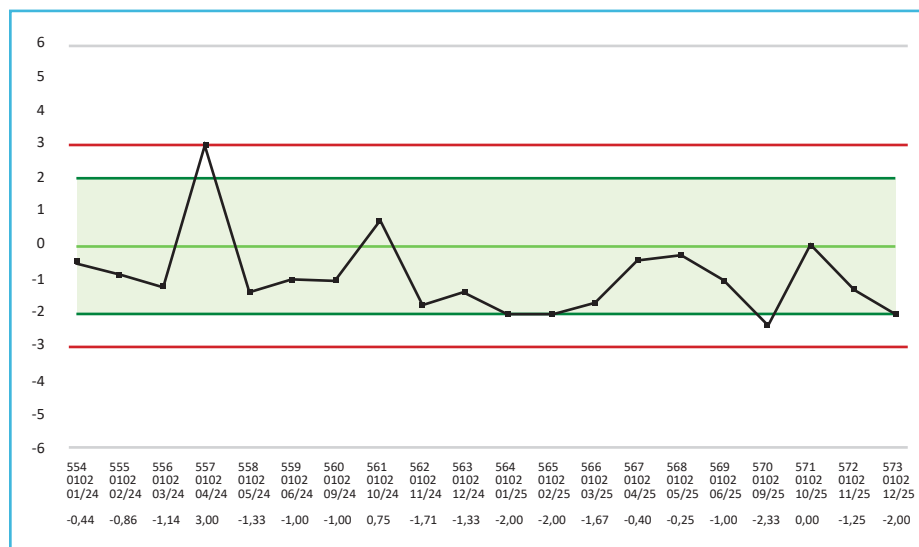
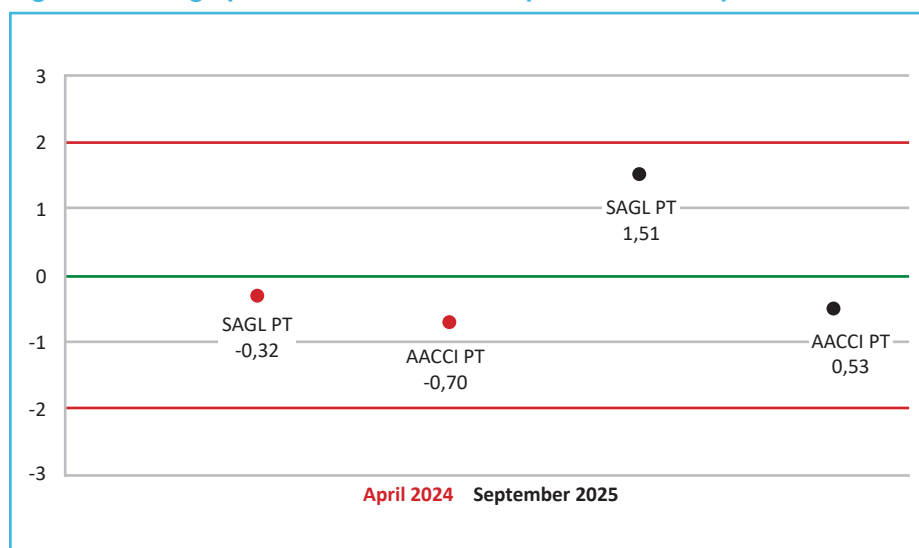


Figure 4: Alveograph P-value z-scores for April 2024 and September 2025.



for the BIPEA PT posed minimal risk of affecting other results.

### Accurate, reliable results

The SAGL’s involvement in external PT schemes allows the laboratory to organise and manage its own proficiency tests for the local grain (including some international participants) and oilseeds industry. Participation in PT programmes benefits the grain and oilseeds value chain by ensuring that laboratories produce accurate and reliable results, which are essential for grain trading and regulatory compliance.

The SAGL offers seven proficiency schemes across a range of commodities:

- Wheat and wheat flour.
- Maize and maize meal.

- Sunflower seeds and sunflower oilcake.
- Soya beans and soya bean oilcake.

By participating in internationally recognised PT schemes, the SAGL is demonstrating its commitment to accuracy, reliability, and continuous improvement. Aligning with the standards of ISO/IEC 17025 and benchmarking against global peers enhances the laboratory’s credibility and reinforces its position as the reference laboratory of choice in the agricultural industry. [a](#)

For more information, send an email to the author at [theresa.debeer@sagl.co.za](mailto:theresa.debeer@sagl.co.za) or visit [www.sagl.co.za](http://www.sagl.co.za)

# South Africa's changing labour laws: What they mean for agribusiness and grain storers

By Thapelo Machaba, agricultural economist and policy analyst, Agbiz

**S**outh Africa's labour-law framework is being reshaped into different phases. For agribusiness, especially grain handlers and storage operators, these changes are not just legal technicalities. The new reforms will influence who gets appointed, retained and promoted, how operations are staffed during peak periods, how accidents and illnesses are managed, and how quickly wage bills grow in workspaces.

In a sector that is seasonal, capital-intensive, and exposed to logistical challenges and price volatility, labour rules now form an important part of the business risk landscape.

## Employment equity

The first major shift is the new employment equity dispensation. The *Employment Equity Amendment Act, 2022 (Act 4 of 2022)* and 2025 regulations introduce sector-specific numerical targets for employers with 50 or more employees. This shifts employment equity from a compliance formality to a strategic agenda item.

Grain silos, depots, mills, and agro-logistics enterprises must confirm which sector classification applies to them and then align their employment equity plans with the published targets over the next five years if they would like to do business with the government. It is no longer enough to keep a plan on file; there needs to be a visible pipeline of black, female, and disabled employees progressing into supervisory, technical, and management roles across storage, logistics, processing, and head-office functions.



There are currently multiple court cases logged by different organisations to challenge the numerical targets set by the department, but industry specialists still maintain that business must get their ducks in a row and plan accordingly to make sure they reach the targets come the deadline, as there are no guarantees regarding the outcome of the court cases.

## Parental leave changes

The second important development is the Constitutional Court's Van Wyk judgement, which has effectively reset parental leave under the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act 75 of 1997)* or BCEA. Instead of long maternity leave for mothers and a few days for other parents, the law now recognises a shared pool of four months and ten days that parents can allocate between themselves, regardless of gender or how they became parents – adoptive or surrogacy parents also qualify.

For agribusiness and grain storage operators, this means leave planning can no longer assume that only women will be absent for long periods. Any key employee, from silo managers and plant supervisors to lab technicians and planners, may take extended parental leave. Companies will need gender-neutral policies, revised contracts and improved cross-training so that operations can continue when experienced staff are on leave. This must be aligned with the UIF reforms and will come with its own set of complexities as organisations will have to tap into uncharted territory.

## Other proposed amendments

Alongside these changes, a broader labour law reform package negotiated at Nedlac

proposes amendments to the *Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act 66 of 1995)*, the BCEA, the *National Minimum Wage Act, 2018 (Act 9 of 2018)*, and the *Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55 of 1998)*. These amendments have not yet been signed into law, but they do point to a tighter and more structured environment for disputes, dismissals, and non-standard work.

This is very pertinent for agribusinesses as the sector relies heavily on seasonal and temporary labour during harvest intake and export peaks, as well as outsourced services for security, cleaning, and maintenance. If the law clarifies and strengthens obligations towards these workers, agribusinesses will have to be disciplined in its contracts, record-keeping, and use of contractors and labour brokers.

## Workplace safety reforms

Reforms to the *Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993 (Act 130 of 1993)* or COIDA are already in force and are highly relevant to grain storage and handling, which are inherently risky activities. Employees at especially grain storage facilities work at different heights, around moving machinery and vehicles, in dusty conditions, with fumigants, and sometimes in confined spaces. The updated COIDA framework extends coverage, strengthens enforcement, and places more emphasis on rehabilitation and reintegration.

For employers, this means registration, contributions, and injury reporting must be impeccable; incident investigations, medical records, and corrective actions also need to be properly documented.

Businesses with robust safety systems are well placed, while those with informal practices will find that the cost of neglecting safety is rising.

Closely linked to this is the *Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Bill*, which is still in the legislative pipeline but clearly signals a move towards more professional safety management. If passed, the *Bill* is expected to strengthen health and safety committees, reinforce workers' rights to refuse dangerous work, and modernise key provisions of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act 85 of 1993)* or *OHSA*.

For agribusiness, this is a warning to invest early in safety culture and systems. Health and safety committees at silos, plants and depots should be active and credible; risk assessments for working at heights, confined space entry, fumigation, and machinery maintenance must be up to date; and procedures such as permits and lock-out systems should be consistently applied. If not, rising regulatory expectations and worker

rights can disrupt operations at the worst possible time.

### National minimum wage

The final significant change is the ongoing adjustment of the national minimum wage (NMW). Annual NMW increases are now a permanent feature of the landscape and directly affect many agribusiness roles at the lower end of the wage distribution, such as general workers, bagging and loading staff, cleaners, some security functions, and entry-level grain storage facility or plant workers. Each increase raises the wage floor and must be implemented for permanent, seasonal, and casual workers.

The more subtle impact, however, is on internal pay structures. If only the bottom grades move, or if the NMW is increased by, for example, 5% (as currently indicated) while other job grades receive 3 to 4%, the wage gaps between general workers, operators, and supervisors will narrow in ways that many employees could experience as unfair. This quickly leads to pressure for broader adjustments

up the wage ladder, with higher-earning employees also demanding increases that keep their relative position intact. Over time, this dynamic drives the total wage bill up and may exacerbate workplace tensions if not managed carefully.

### Future dynamics

Taken together, these reforms show that labour law in South Africa is moving towards more structured transformation expectations, modernised family and safety protections, and a steadily rising wage floor. For agribusinesses and the grain value chain, labour issues can no longer be handled as a back-office compliance function. They must be integrated into strategy, budgeting, and operational planning.

Businesses that respond early by aligning employment equity with real talent pipelines, updating human resources and leave policies, professionalising safety management, and planning carefully for minimum wage increases will be better placed to remain competitive and resilient in a difficult economic environment.<sup>a</sup>

Send an email to Thapelo Machaba at [policy@agbiz.co.za](mailto:policy@agbiz.co.za) for more information.

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# Energy performance certificates: What you need to know

By Christal-Lize Muller, Plaas Media

**A**gbiz and Agbiz Grain hosted their 12th virtual safety, health, environment, and quality (SHEQ) workshop late in 2025, focussing on energy performance certificate (EPC) regulations. Since 8 December 2020, building owners and accounting officers had been required to display and submit EPCs for their buildings and had until 7 December 2025 to do so. EPCs provide a clear picture of a building's energy consumption.

The workshop was led by experts from the South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI), including energy practitioners Sinovuyo Noji and Lesley Ramaila. They explained the purpose and importance of EPCs, unpacked the regulations, and outlined the application process. The session also featured a demonstration of building registration on the National Building Energy Performance Register (NBEPR), along with guidance on data analysis and calculation methods.

## What is an EPC and who oversees it?

Noji explained that an EPC is a certificate rating a building's energy performance on

a scale from A to G, with A representing the most efficient and G the least. EPCs are designed to improve the energy performance of existing buildings. They help owners assess current energy usage, identify areas for improvement, achieve better energy ratings, and reduce carbon emissions.

EPCs are a vital first step towards sustainable buildings. They provide reliable data and benchmarks for implementing energy-efficiency measures, supporting broader environmental sustainability goals.

In South Africa, EPC regulations are implemented through a structured policy framework involving two key institutions:

- **Department of Electricity and Energy (DEE):** Acts as the regulatory authority. It registers quality assurers who verify the work of registered professionals; monitors compliance with issued EPCs; and manages stakeholder engagement to ensure effective implementation.
- **SANEDI:** Serves as the implementing agent. It maintains the NBEPR, registers EPC professionals, and facilitates stakeholder engagement to support the rollout of regulations.

## Regulatory timeline

The EPC regulation was promulgated on 8 December 2020 under the *National Energy Act, 2008 (Act 34 of 2008)*. It mandates the display and submission of EPCs for qualifying buildings, which must be prominently displayed at a building's entrance or in the foyer. An amendment published in December 2022 extended the original compliance deadline from 7 December 2022 to 7 December 2025, granting building owners a total of five years to comply. The regulation applies to privately owned buildings with a net floor area exceeding 2 000m<sup>2</sup> and publicly owned buildings with a net floor area of 1 000m<sup>2</sup> or more.

A second amendment, effective from 2 August 2024, introduced the compulsory registration of buildings and redefined the term 'energy performance certificate'. While EPCs could previously be issued by an accredited body, from 1 August 2024 onwards, only EPC professionals registered with SANEDI are authorised to issue EPCs.

## Application of the regulation

Noji confirmed that the deadline for compliance for the four occupancy classes

was 7 December 2025: These building types are:

- **A1 – Entertainment and public assembly** (e.g., restaurants and halls).
- **A2 – Theatrical and indoor sport** (e.g., theatres and cinemas).
- **A3 – Places of instruction** (e.g., universities and primary schools).
- **G1 – Offices** (e.g., large office buildings and stand-alone office blocks).

Buildings in these classes must have been in existence for at least two years and must not have undergone major renovations within the past two years. The regulation applies exclusively to commercial buildings, not residential ones.

A major renovation is defined as any structural change requiring approval from a local authority. In cases of minor renovations, building owners and accounting officers are still required to obtain an EPC. Furthermore, all qualifying buildings must be registered on the NBEPR, which is available online.

Noji explained that failure to comply with the EPC regulation could result in severe penalties, including fines of up to R5 million, imprisonment for up to five years, or both. She also highlighted key deadlines: 2 August 2024 – compulsory registration of building type and size on the NBEPR; and 7 December 2025 – deadline for the public display and submission of EPCs.

An EPC remains valid for five years and must be renewed thereafter to ensure ongoing compliance and reflect any changes in a building's energy performance.

### EPC standards and stakeholders

The EPC regulation mandates that all EPCs follow South African National Standard (SANS) 1544:2014, which outlines the format and framework for issuing EPCs. SANS 10400-XA:2021 sets the minimum energy efficiency and sustainability criteria for building design.

In addition to the DEE and SANEDI, key stakeholders include:

- **The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS):** Develops and maintains the standards (SANS 1544:2014, SANS 10400-XA:2 021).
- **Quality assurers:** Ensure compliance with the regulation and standards.

- **Registered EPC professionals:** From 1 August 2024, SANEDI-registered professionals will collect energy data and issue EPCs.

### EPC process overview

The process begins with building registration. A building owner or accounting officer must first create a profile using the registration link on SANEDI's website ([www.epc.sandedi.org.za/login](http://www.epc.sandedi.org.za/login)). The other steps are:

- **Building information submission:** Provide details such as building type, size, and energy consumption.
- **System verification:** The system validates the information and issues a unique registration number.
- **Appointment of an EPC professional:** The building owner or accounting officer selects a registered EPC professional to continue the application process.

The responsibilities of a building owner or accounting officer under the EPC regulation include:

- Register buildings on the NBEPR and collect data for EPCs.
- Provide support to energy performance assessors (EPAs).
- Appoint a registered EPC professional (a list is available at [www.epc.sanedi.org.za/sanas-bodies](http://www.epc.sanedi.org.za/sanas-bodies)).

- Publicly display the EPC and submit a certified copy to SANEDI within three months.
- Develop and implement a strategy to improve energy performance based on EPC results.

Once the building owner or accounting officer provides the required energy bills and related data, EPC professionals are responsible for:

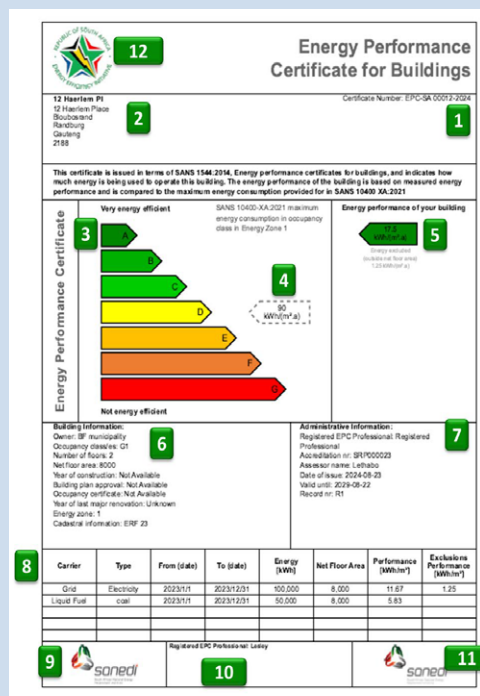
- Reviewing energy bills, meter data, and fuel delivery notes.
- Conducting a walkthrough of the building for verification.
- Inspecting metering points and assessing the building's energy mix.
- Issuing the EPC and providing a detailed report in line with the DEE's quality management system (QMS).

Noji stated that an EPC must comply with SANS 1544:2014 and incorporate 12 key features essential for accurate assessment and certification. An example EPC and its detailed components are illustrated in *Figure 1*.

### Data analysis and calculations

Lesley Ramaila focussed on building registration, data analysis, and EPC calculations. Before issuing an EPC, a comprehensive energy audit must be conducted to evaluate energy use and

Figure 1: Details on an EPC. (Source: SANEDI)



1. Unique energy performance certificate number
2. Physical address of the building
3. Energy performance scale (energy efficiency label)
4. Benchmark (SANS 10400-XA 2021)
5. Building's measured energy performance
6. Building's information
7. Administrative information
8. Types of energy carriers and building performance
9. Registered EPC professional logo
10. Registered EPC professional
11. SANEDI logo
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consumption and identify opportunities for improved performance. The audit aims to reduce energy costs through recommended energy-saving measures, identify inefficiencies in electrical systems and ventilation, and decrease carbon emissions and support green building initiatives.

Ramaila highlighted four key considerations, namely how and where energy enters the building, the path energy follows and how it is used within the building, the gap between energy input and actual energy use, and opportunities to improve overall energy efficiency.

He explained that a building’s energy performance is primarily determined by its annual energy consumption per square metre. Several factors influence this performance, including external factors (e.g., heat transfer, airflow, climate conditions, and solar gain) and internal factors (e.g., hot water systems, lighting, heating, cooling, and ventilation systems).

A clear understanding of these factors enables EPC professionals to accurately assess building efficiency and provide practical, targeted recommendations for improvement.

**Required Information for EPCs**

Ramaila explained that the following information is required to issue an EPC:

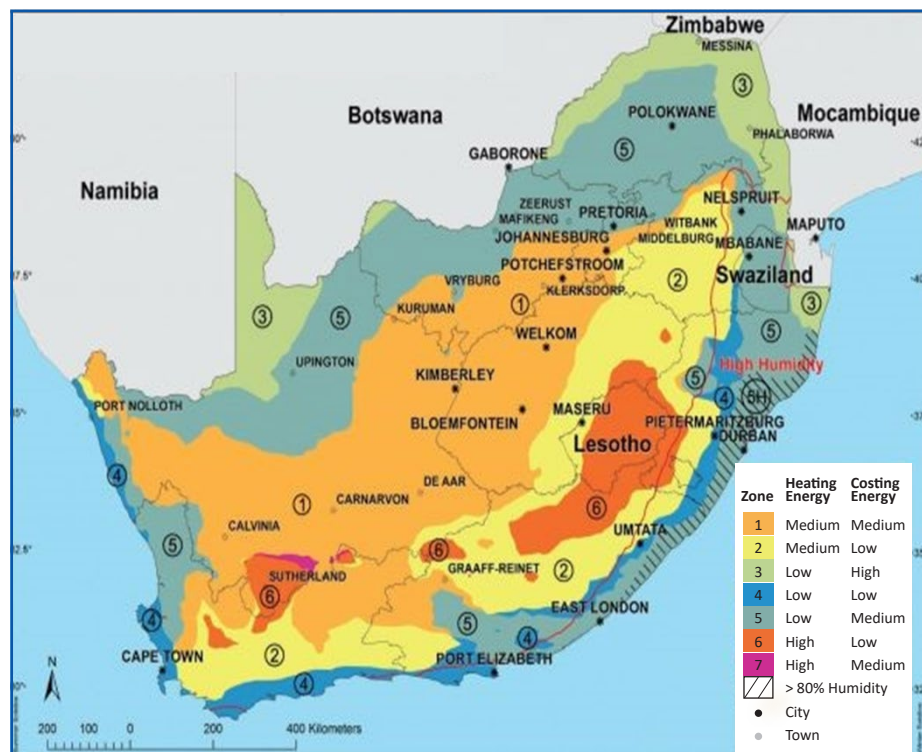
- Energy consumption data. The data must cover a 12-month period, recorded in kWh. Identification of all energy sources used, such as electricity, solar PV, and liquid fuels. Data may be obtained from energy bills, invoices, or meter readings.
- Building information such as floor plans, including net and total floor areas. Identification of unoccupied areas (e.g., vacant spaces) and exclusion areas (e.g., storerooms, basement parking, and garages).
- Building address and location.
- Number of floors.

Occupancy details are also required, including an occupancy certificate (optional), building operational hours, year of major renovations (optional), occupancy rate, type of occupancy (single or multiple), and occupancy class (A1, A2, A3, or G1).

**EPC and benchmark calculations**

Building energy performance (BEP) is calculated using the formula:

**Figure 2: Energy zone map of South Africa. (Source: SANEDI)**



**Table 1: Maximum annual energy consumption per building classification for each energy zone (kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/a) – energy zones as shown in Figure 1. (Source: SANEDI)**

Class of occupancy	1		2						
	Energy zones								
	1	2	3	4	5	5H	6	7	
<b>A1: Entertainment and public assembly</b> Occupancy where persons gather to eat, drink, dance or participate in other recreation.	75	75	95	70	95	95	80	80	
<b>A2: Theatrical and indoor sport</b> Occupancy where persons gather for the viewing of theatrical, operatic, orchestral, choral, cinematographic or sport performances.	95	95	110	90	110	110	105	105	
<b>A3: Places of instruction</b> Occupancy other than primary or secondary schools, where students or other persons assemble for the purpose of tuition or learning.	110	155	110	125	140	140	120	120	
<b>A3: Places of instruction</b> Occupancy where school children assemble for the purpose of tuition or learning.	60	65	55	60	55	60	65	65	
<b>A4: Worship</b> Occupancy where persons assemble for the purpose of worshipping.	70	45	45	40	50	40	70	70	
<b>G1: Offices</b> Large multi-story office buildings, banks, consulting rooms and similar uses with lifts and energy consuming services that operate on a typical daytime occupancy.	90	105	110	95	110	95	100	100	
<b>G1: Offices</b> Stand-alone blocks and/or campus of buildings that form an office park but operate separately.	70	150	190	145	180	165	75	75	

$$BEP = \frac{\text{net energy consumption (kWh)}}{\text{net floor area (m}^2\text{)}}$$

Net energy consumption refers to the total energy used by the building over a 12-month period, measured in kWh. Net floor area is defined as the sum of all areas between vertical building components (such as walls or partitions), excluding garages, car parks, and storerooms.

The multiple of reference value is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Multiple of reference value} = \frac{BEP}{\text{benchmark}}$$

Ramaila said the benchmark is a reference value specific to the building type and is used to assess its energy performance relative to similar buildings. He noted that an EPC is issued based on the usable internal area (net floor area) and is issued per building according to its calculated BEP.

An energy zone is determined by the geographic location of the building, using the energy zone map provided in SANS 10400-XA:2021 (Figure 2).

The benchmark is determined by the energy zone and the occupancy class of the building, as specified in SANS 10400-XA:2021. Before appointing an EPC professional, it is advisable to determine the applicable benchmark in order to understand the building's required energy performance.

Table 1 provides the maximum annual energy consumption per building classification for each energy zone, as shown in Figure 2.

Ramaila provided an example to illustrate the concept. Polokwane, located in Zone 5 as shown on the energy zone map, demonstrates how building energy performance varies by occupancy class (e.g., G1 for offices, A1 for entertainment/public assembly). For instance, if a building is classified as G1 (offices) in Zone 5, the energy performance benchmark is 95 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year. A building scoring above 95 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year is considered **not energy efficient**,

Figure 3: Building X.



- Size of the building: 15 000m<sup>2</sup>
- Occupancy class G1 – Offices
- Ownership: Private
- Location: Sandton, Johannesburg
- Occupancy rate: 100%
- Excluded area: 5 000m<sup>2</sup>
- Energy sources: electricity – 1 500 000 kWh, diesel – 500 000 kWh, solar PV – 1 000 000 kWh
- Energy consumption in excluded area: 250 000 kWh
- Assessment period: 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

while a score below 95 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year indicates it is **energy efficient**.

### Energy performance calculation

Ramaila explained the energy performance calculation using a case study for Building X. The profile of Building X (Figure 3) includes the following details:

#### Energy performance assessment for Building X

Total energy consumption is the total energy consumed by the building for 12 months. The formula is:

$$\text{Total energy consumption per annum} = \text{electricity} + \text{diesel} + \text{solar PV}$$

Calculation:

$$\text{Total energy consumption/a} = 1\,500\,000 \text{ kWh} + 500\,000 \text{ kWh} + 1\,000\,000 \text{ kWh} = 3\,000\,000 \text{ kWh/a}$$

The net energy consumption/a formula:

$$\text{Net energy consumption} = \text{total energy consumption} - \text{energy consumption in excluded area}$$

Calculation:

$$\text{Net energy consumption} = 3\,000\,000 \text{ kWh} - 250\,000 \text{ kWh} = 2\,750\,000 \text{ kWh/year}$$

Occupied net floor area formula:

$$\text{Net floor area} = \text{occupancy rate} \times (\text{total floor area} - \text{excluded area}).$$

Calculation:

$$\text{Occupied net floor area} = 100\% \times (15\,000\text{m}^2 - 5\,000\text{m}^2) = 10\,000\text{m}^2$$

#### Benchmark calculation for building X

Based on the aforementioned profile, Johannesburg falls within Zone 1. The benchmark for G1 office buildings in this zone is 90 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year. If the BEP is less than 90 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year, the building is considered energy efficient. If the BEP is greater than 90 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year, the building is not energy efficient.

The BEP is calculated by dividing the net energy consumption by the occupied net floor area, as shown in the formula:

$$BEP = \frac{\text{net energy consumption}}{\text{occupied net floor area}}$$

Calculation:

$$BEP = \frac{2\,750\,000 \text{ kWh}}{10\,000 \text{ m}^2} = 275 \text{ kWh/m}^2/\text{a}$$

The benchmark for G1 offices in Zone 1 is 90 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/a and since the BEP (275 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/a) is greater than 90, Building X is not energy efficient.

**EPC assessment for Building X**

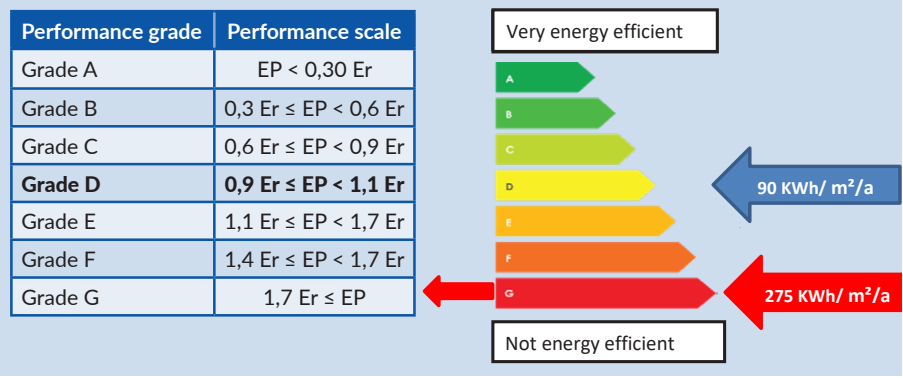
The multiple reference value formula is:

$$\text{Multiple reference value} = \text{BEP} \div \text{benchmark}$$

Calculation:

$$\text{Multiple reference value} = 275 \div 90 = 3,056$$

**Figure 4: Building X performance scale. (Source SANEDI)**



The performance scale, based on the calculation, is indicated in Figure 4. Building X is rated a Grade G, which is not energy efficient.

**Building registration on the NBEPR**

You do not need EPC professionals to register a building – just the building type and size. Follow these steps:

- Visit the SANEDI website: Search for SANEDI EPC on Google.

- Navigate to EPCs: Under Programs, select Energy Efficiency, then Energy Performance Certificates.
- Access the system: Click Registered EPC Professionals to view approved professionals.
- Register your building: Click Log In, then Register to create a profile. Verify your email before logging in.
- Enter building details: Provide building type, size, stand number,

- and address. Complete six steps, including contact, energy, and occupancy information.
- Submit and receive a registration number: Once submitted, a registration number will be issued.
- Certified copy: After receiving the EPC, submit a certified copy within three months.
- Bulk upload: For multiple buildings, use the bulk upload option. [a](#)

For more information, send an email to Sinovuyo Noji at [sinovuyon@sanedi.org.za](mailto:sinovuyon@sanedi.org.za), Lesley Ramaila at [lesleyr@sanedi.org.za](mailto:lesleyr@sanedi.org.za) or [epcenquiries@sanedi.org.za](mailto:epcenquiries@sanedi.org.za)

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# Training and mentorship in the grain industry

By GP van Rheede van Oudtshoorn, Coppertop Consulting

**W**hy do some grain businesses remain resilient decade after decade, while others struggle once a strong leader or senior employee steps aside? The answer is seldom technology or capital investment alone. More often, it lies in how effectively knowledge, skills, and judgement are transferred from one generation of employees to the next.

Organisations that endure, treat training and mentorship not as isolated interventions but as continuous practices embedded in everyday operations.

## Sophistication vs human ability

No matter how sophisticated systems become, be it automated intake processes or real-time data dashboards, the grain industry still depends on human capability. Grain handling, storage, quality control, logistics, and safety are ultimately managed by people making decisions under real-world conditions. The industry's success therefore depends on how well experience is shared, practical skills are reinforced, and sound judgement is developed over time.

Training provides the foundation for this transfer of knowledge. It introduces concepts, builds technical understanding, and creates a common language around standards and procedures. Training is too often treated as a compliance requirement: a course is attended, a certificate is issued, and learning is assumed to have taken place. Much of that knowledge never reaches day-to-day operations. Training becomes an event rather than a process, and its impact diminishes once employees return to the pressures of production.

For training to be effective, it must be supported by a culture that encourages learning and improvement. This culture is visible in how mistakes are handled, how teams reflect on challenges, how experience is shared, and how new employees are integrated into operations.

When learning is part of normal work, training stops being theoretical and starts shaping behaviour.

## Training is a planned process

Before any training or mentorship can be effective, organisations must be clear about what skills are needed. A structured skills needs analysis provides this clarity. It examines what employees already know, what gaps exist in current operations, what skills will be required as technology and practices evolve, and where the greatest risks lie, such as safety, efficiency, quality, or compliance.

In a grain handling environment, skills needs are often highly specific. They relate to understanding equipment behaviour, interpreting grain quality indicators, managing intake and dispatch under pressure, and responding appropriately to unexpected situations. Identifying these needs requires more than generic job descriptions. Performance discussions, targeted surveys, facilitated conversations and operational reviews all provide valuable insight. When these inputs are combined, organisations are better positioned to direct training resources where they will have the greatest impact.

Once skills needs are identified, they can be translated into a workplace skills plan that links operational objectives to people development. A well-constructed plan connects business goals to required competencies and identifies appropriate learning interventions. Importantly, it also considers how learning will be reinforced in the workplace. Training without reinforcement rarely changes behaviour. When learning is followed by guided practice, observation and feedback, it becomes embedded.

The quality of training delivery is equally important. Facilitators must understand the realities of the agricultural environment, where learning takes place alongside dust, machinery, time pressure, and variable conditions. Training that balances sound theory with practical

application is far more effective than content that remains abstract. Training that speaks directly to the realities of grain storage and movement is more likely to be retained and applied.

Assessment is another critical element. The grain industry values measurement, whether of yield, moisture, grade, or tonnage. Training should be no different. Assessment helps determine whether learning has occurred, whether skills can be applied safely and effectively, and whether performance has improved as a result. While written assessments have a place, they are insufficient on their own. Observation, practical demonstrations, and on-the-job evaluation provide a more accurate picture of competence.

## Mentorship matters

Mentorship ensures that what is learned formally is understood, contextualised, and applied in practice. It bridges the gap between knowing what should be done and being able to do it well under operational pressure. In the grain industry, where safety risks, quality requirements and time constraints intersect daily, this bridge is essential.

Mentorship strengthens this process by supporting learning over time. Mentorship is a structured relationship in which a more experienced person supports the growth and development of another. It is not limited to formal leadership roles. Experienced operators, technicians and supervisors all play an important role in transferring practical knowledge and judgement. In this sense, mentorship is a shared organisational responsibility rather than the task of a single role.

Mentorship operates on two complementary levels. Developmental mentorship focusses on building confidence, professional judgement and long-term growth, while functional mentorship concentrates on job-specific competence and performance. In the grain industry, both are essential. Employees must master technical tasks,

but they must also learn how to prioritise, communicate and make decisions in complex operational environments.

### Depth of mentoring

The difference between training and mentorship lies in depth. Training transfers information. Mentorship develops understanding and behaviour. It allows less experienced employees to see how experienced colleagues think, respond, and adapt. This transfer of judgement is particularly valuable in areas such as safety and quality management, as well as equipment operation where formal rules cannot cover every possible scenario.

In grain handling, mentorship is also a powerful risk management and continuity tool. Safety practices are reinforced through example, not instruction alone. Quality awareness develops through exposure and discussion, as experienced eyes and ears help others recognise early warning signs. Employees who are supported through mentorship are more likely to feel valued and engaged, improving retention in a sector where skills and experience are hard to replace. A structured mentorship programme adds

consistency and accountability to this process. It formalises expectations and clarifies learning goals. Mentorship works best when relationships are intentional rather than accidental, when goals are agreed upfront, and when progress is reviewed regularly. Simple structures are often more effective than complex systems, especially when they align with daily work routines.

Much of the most effective mentorship happens informally, during real work. Observing decisions, discussing outcomes, and reflecting on challenges provide rich learning opportunities. Techniques such as guided questioning and shared problem-solving help turn experience into transferable knowledge. When organisations encourage these practices, learning becomes continuous rather than episodic.

Feedback is central to mentorship. Timely and constructive feedback reinforces good practice and corrects mistakes before they become habits. Moreover, recognition of improvement, whether formally or informally, reinforces a culture of learning and signals that development is valued.

### The value trumps the cost

There will always be challenges. Time pressure, competing priorities, and varying levels of confidence can affect mentorship efforts. These challenges are best addressed by integrating mentorship into daily operations rather than treating it as an additional task. Even short, focussed interactions can have significant impact when they are consistent and intentional.

The long-term strength of the grain industry depends on more than infrastructure and technology. It depends on people who are capable, confident and supported in their development. Training provides the foundation, but mentorship ensures that learning is applied and sustained. Organisations that invest in both create resilience and adaptability. By embedding training and mentorship into everyday practice, the grain industry can ensure that critical knowledge and skills are carried forward, strengthening the sector for generations to come. <sup>a</sup>

For more information, send an email to GP van Rheede van Oudtshoorn at [gp@coppertopconsulting.co.za](mailto:gp@coppertopconsulting.co.za)





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# Trade unions and employers: The start of the relationship

By Meyer Louw and Xander Levendal, legal advisors, LWO Employers Organisation

For many employers, their first contact with a trade union comes unexpectedly – often by way of a formal letter or email. In terms of section 21 of the *Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act 66 of 1995) (LRA)*, such communication typically states that:

- Employees have joined the trade union.
- The union intends to exercise specific organisational rights in the workplace, as provided for in the *LRA*.
- The union requests a meeting to discuss its recognition in the workplace.

Section 21 of the *LRA* provides that a representative trade union in a particular workplace may request recognition in writing. The rights a union may claim depend on its level of representation: some rights require only a lower percentage of membership, while others demand a higher percentage.

Once such a request is received, the employer has 30 days to meet with the trade union in a bid to conclude a collective agreement.

## Step 1: Verify the information

Review the information provided by the trade union to ensure that its notice and request comply with the requirements of the *LRA*, including any mandatory information and appendices that must be sent to the employer.

Confirm that the employees listed are currently employed and that the union's workplace representation meets the required legal threshold. If there is uncertainty, the employer may request additional proof, such as copies of membership forms.

## Step 2: Hold a meeting

The next step is to convene a meeting, typically attended by union representatives, the employer and its representative, and sometimes employee representatives. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the union's request

and clarify which rights the union will exercise if recognition is granted. It also provides the employer with an opportunity to ask questions regarding how the union will operate in the workplace, such as the scheduling of meetings, the appointment of workplace representatives (shop stewards), and methods of communication with members.

## Step 3: The recognition agreement

If the parties reach consensus, they must conclude a recognition agreement which formally establishes their relationship. This agreement sets out the organisational rights the trade union may exercise in the workplace.

Depending on its level of representation, these rights can include:

- The deduction of union members' fees.
- Access to the workplace to meet with members.
- Appointment of shop stewards.
- Leave for union activities.
- Disclosure of relevant information.

If no agreement is reached, the union may refer the matter to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation, and Arbitration (CCMA) for conciliation. Should this process fail, the union may either initiate a strike or refer the dispute to arbitration, where the CCMA can issue an order granting recognition of specific rights.

## The union-employer relationship

The way an employer responds to a union's initial approach often sets the tone for the relationship going forward. Handling the process professionally, openly, and with an awareness of the legal requirements can help prevent unnecessary conflict. Employers should always seek legal advice before signing a recognition agreement, as such agreements carry long-term implications for workplace management.

A constructive relationship with a trade union is not inherently negative. In fact, when clear rules and boundaries are in place, unions can provide a structured

channel for managing labour relations. The key is to understand the process, respond appropriately from the first communication, and ensure that any agreement balances the interests of both the business and its employees.

One of the important things to understand, is the rights a trade union may enjoy in terms of the *LRA*. As described earlier in this article, these rights must be contained in the recognition agreement. Once included and recognised, these rights entail:

## Access to the workplace

Any official or office bearer of such a recognised trade union is allowed to enter the employer's premises in order to recruit new members, serve their members' interests and hold meetings, or to conduct any ballot in terms of their constitution. It is important to note that trade unions are limited to meeting with their members outside normal working hours unless agreed otherwise.

Employers should take care to conclude a collective agreement with the relevant trade union to give timeous notice of their intention to exercise this right (i.e. 48 hours' notice before conducting a ballot).

## Deduction of subscriptions/levies

This right entitles the employer to deduct trade union subscriptions or levies from the remuneration of members and to remit such amounts to the trade union. The exercise of this right is subject to the employee's prior authorisation, which may be withdrawn by the employee upon giving the required notice.

When remitting the deducted amounts to the trade union, the employer must provide the following information:

- A list of the names of all members from whose remuneration deductions have been made and included in the remittance.
- Details of the amounts deducted and remitted, together with the period to which the deductions relate.

- Copies of any notices of revocation received, where applicable.

**Trade union representatives**

The members of a registered trade union, or two or more registered trade unions acting jointly, that represent the majority of employees in a workplace are entitled to elect a trade union representative (shop steward).

The representative is responsible for representing employees in disciplinary and grievance proceedings, as well as monitoring the employer’s compliance with labour legislation and any applicable collective agreements. The representative is also entitled to reasonable time off to perform these duties and to receive training relevant to his or her functions.

**Leave for trade union activities**

An employee who is an office-bearer of a representative trade union is entitled to

take reasonable leave in order to perform or fulfil the duties and responsibilities of that office. The employer and the trade union may agree on the number of leave days available, whether such leave will be paid or unpaid, and any conditions applicable to the granting of such leave.

**Disclosure of information**

By acquiring this right, the trade union may require the employer to disclose all relevant information necessary to enable the trade union to effectively perform its functions or to engage in collective bargaining. It should be noted, however, that certain limitations apply to such disclosure. In particular, information that is legally privileged, or the disclosure of which would contravene any law or court order, is excluded.

**Rights of trade unions**

The rights listed here are not automatically conferred. Trade unions must first seek

recognition of these rights from the employer. Should recognition be refused, the matter may be referred to the CCMA, and may result in strike action.

It is important to note that trade unions with sufficient representation in the workplace (approximately 25% of employees) are generally limited to rights of access to the workplace and the deduction of union subscriptions. In contrast, majority trade unions (representing 50% plus one) may qualify for all the aforementioned rights.

Employers are advised to obtain appropriate legal advice when approached by a trade union seeking to exercise these rights. Doing so will assist in ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and in managing potential operational or labour-related risks in the workplace. [a](#)

The LWO Employers Organisation assists employers to comply with labour law, and to use it to their advantage to protect their business. As a registered employers’ organisation with the Department of Employment and Labour, the LWO has the right to represent members at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). Take note that this article is not legal advice – consult one of our legal advisors about any specific legal problem or matter. For more information, send an email to [info@lwo.co.za](mailto:info@lwo.co.za) or visit [www.lwo.co.za](http://www.lwo.co.za)

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2466	103	1109		1131	2637	1166	78	2512	324						

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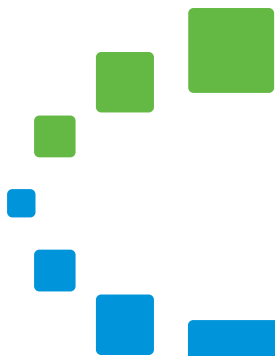
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# Points to ponder

By Jannie de Villiers



## Practicing empathy in 2026

**D**uring my usual end-of-the-year/beginning-of-the-year routine, key areas of focus for the year ahead became clear. I was reminded of my attendance of the Global Leadership Summit in October last year and started researching global key leadership trends for 2026. In the quietness that year-end provides, I tried to connect the dots and wrote down a few items in the back of my journal that I believe I need to focus on in 2026. Some of these are very practical, while others are deeply personal. This is an exercise I have done for many years; it works for me and may be valuable for readers.

### Human-centric skills in an AI world

One of the important trends that caught my attention was the blending of human-centric skills (such as empathy and psychological safety) with artificial intelligence (AI). This trend acknowledges the continued need for the human side of leadership and management in an environment increasingly invaded by AI.

AI simply cannot produce empathy, despite sometimes generating nice-sounding words. I tried to deepen my understanding of empathy by reading about it again. Empathy is feeling **with** someone – sensing their emotions as if they were your own – while compassion is feeling **for** someone, recognising their suffering and being motivated to help alleviate it.

Agriculture is a very unforgiving environment. Just think about the consequences of drought, disease in your fields, or illness in a herd of cattle.

My take is that one has to dig deep to find empathy in abundance for our sector. How would you score if your employees or family had to evaluate your level of empathy?

### Listening as the core of empathy

Empathy is a skill demonstrated by listening well; in other words, listening deeply with the intention to understand not only the factual data, but the tone and emotion behind it. It means stepping into another person's shoes.

Creating a safe space for team members or family to share concerns and ideas without interruption demonstrates empathy. I am not a good listener. Halfway through a conversation I tend to make assumptions (mostly wrong ones) and then start fixing what I think is wrong. This is not empathy. My argument was always that I wanted to save time, but in the long run I lost important connections. You cannot build a bridge from only one side.

I learned this lesson dearly when my married daughter came to our house one afternoon and poured out her frustration about a work matter. The tears were flowing. Halfway through, I was my usual self and started proposing solutions. Then she stopped me: "*Pappa*, I came here for empathy, not solutions." Ouch!

You cannot heal what you have not heard. Benjamin Franklin once said: "Those things that hurt, instruct." Today, I hope I am a better listener because of it.

### Digital empathy

Something I learned from Erica Dhawan late last year was how to show empathy

through digital communication. She said that reading messages carefully is the new listening, and writing clear messages is the new empathy. Are you also one of those who read text messages while driving or walking and respond with just an emoji? (She is an expert on digital body language, a relatively new field to me.)

Some of your hard skills can be replaced by AI, but empathy towards your team and family cannot. If you fear becoming obsolete, invest in the softer skills that AI cannot replace. AI cannot replace human connection.

**Hint:** Create spaces to know others and spaces where you can be known. Showing empathy towards colleagues will expand your influence, irrespective of your authority over them. Your presence and genuine care for the people around you cannot be replaced by AI.

### The power of in-person encounters

Ultimately, nothing replaces a face-to-face encounter. God said this about His friend Moses (Numbers 12:8): speaking face to face. John echoed this when writing to the congregation in Jerusalem (II John, verse 12), saying he could write more letters but preferred to meet in person.

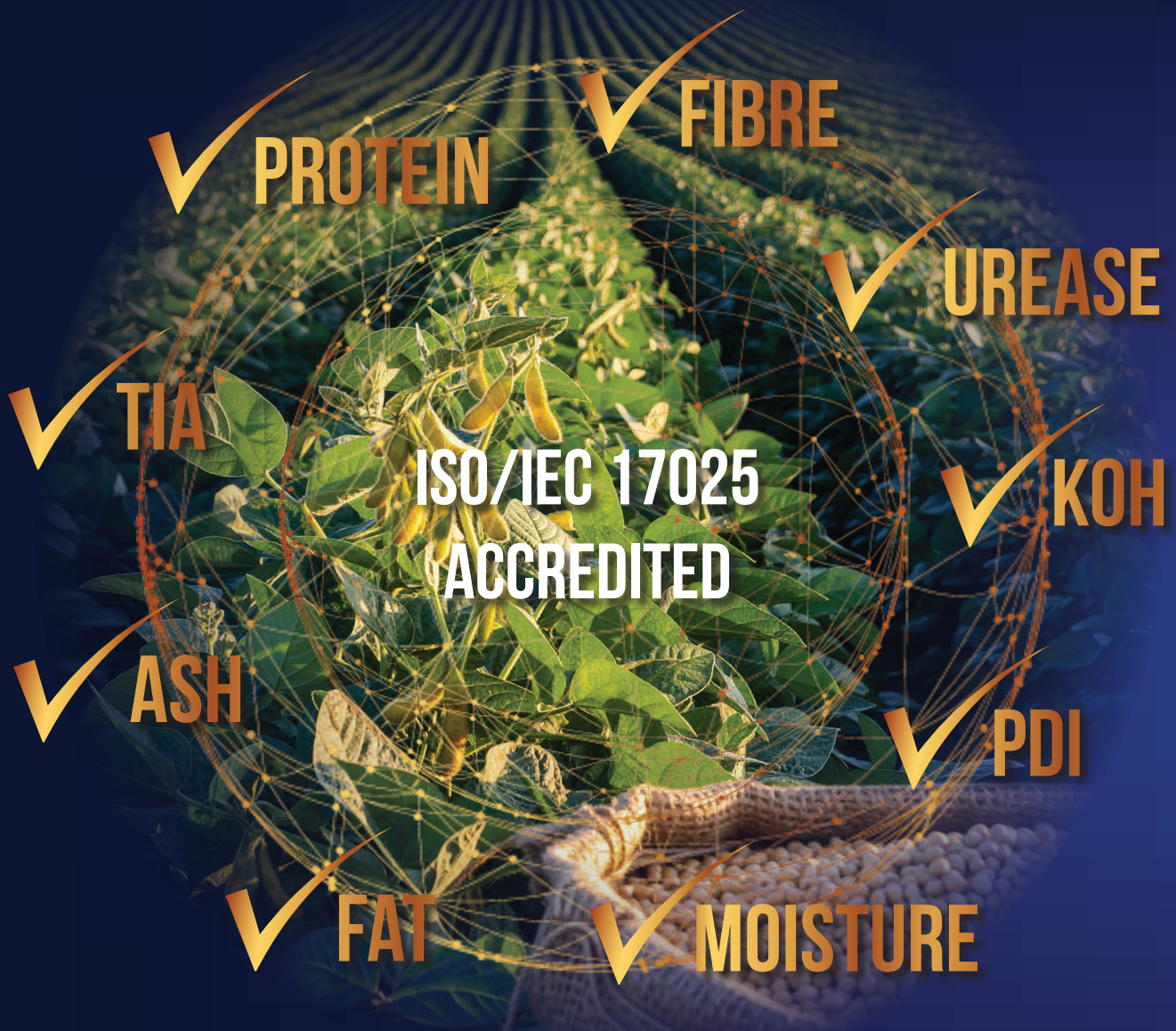
The evidence is there, so let's step up in 2026 by expanding our capacity to listen with empathy and by not neglecting in-person encounters. [a](#)

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# INSECTICIDE Imigo®

## Protect Your Crop, Secure Your Harvest with IMIGO®

### What is IMIGO®?

IMIGO® is a **systemic insecticide seed treatment** designed to protect maize, wheat, and barley from destructive insect pests. With its active ingredient Imidacloprid (600 g/ℓ), IMIGO® works from the inside out, safeguarding young seedlings right from germination.

### Why Farmers Trust IMIGO®

- **Early Protection** – Guards crops from the most damaging pests during the critical establishment phase.
- **Higher Yields** – Healthier plants mean stronger root systems and better grain production.
- **Cost-Effective** – Long-lasting control reduces the need for multiple sprays.
- **Versatile Use** – Proven effectiveness on maize, wheat, and barley against a wide range of pests.
- **Extended Storage Protection** – Treated maize seed can be stored for up to 12 months without losing germination strength or insect control.




### Target Pests Controlled

- **Maize** – *Astylus* larvae, Black maize beetle, Root worms, False wire worms, Ground weevils, Leafhoppers (streak disease vector).
- **Wheat & Barley** – Russian wheat aphid (*Diuraphis noxia*).

### Why Choose IMIGO®?

With IMIGO®, you're not just protecting seed—you're investing in crop security, higher productivity, and peace of mind. By starting strong, your harvest finishes strong.

### Application

WHEAT & BARLEY	MAIZE	STORAGE PROTECTION
230 ml IMIGO® per 100 kg seed (8–10 weeks control of Russian aphid).	290 ml IMIGO® per 100 kg seed (broad spectrum protection).	12 months against grain borers, weevils, moths, and beetles.
		

### Important to Know

- Use only on certified, high-quality seed.
- Do not use on sweetcorn or experimental hybrids.
- Ensure proper planting depth (□ 50 mm) for best emergence.
- Treated seed must be planted properly and covered with soil to avoid bird poisoning.
- Keep out of reach of children and animals.

#### ALWAYS READ THE LABEL BEFORE USE

Imigo®: Imidacloprid (*chloro-nicotinyl*) 600 g/l | SIGNALWORD: WARNING | HAZARD STATEMENTS: Harmful if swallowed. May be harmful in contact with skin or if inhaled. Causes mild skin irritation. Very toxic to aquatic life with long lasting effects. | Reg. No.: L 11320 Act No. 36 of 1947 | IRAC INSECTICIDE GROUP CODE

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