

Office of the Tax Ombud celebrates 10 years of excellence

Having stood the test of time as a capable organisation with a proven track record in helping to resolve taxpayers' complaints against the South African Revenue Service (SARS), the Office of the Tax Ombud (OTO) is celebrating its 10th anniversary.



Source: [Pexels](#)

"We are encouraged by the average 98% implementation by Sars of our non-binding recommendations. Also worth noting is that, on average, 80% of complaints received by the OTO in the past decade were resolved in favour of taxpayers, and only 20% were in favour of Sars," tax ombud Yanga Mputa said on Sunday, 1 October.

She attributed the success of the OTO to its dedicated employees, the support of stakeholders, including finance ministers, the National Treasury and Sars, and recognised controlling bodies in the tax sphere.

Established on 1 October 2013, the OTO has been credited with improving the country's tax administration system and promoting and championing taxpayer rights.

"We have made a significant contribution towards promoting a healthy balance between taxpayer rights and obligations on the one hand, and Sars powers and duties on the other. We champion the promotion and protection of taxpayer rights through our ongoing 'Making Taxpayers' Rights Matter' educational campaign, which takes our services to the doorsteps of communities nationwide.

"We reiterate the call for taxpayers to utilise the free and impartial services provided by the OTO to those with complaints against Sars," Mputa said.

The OTO has published the country's first-ever Compilation of Taxpayers' Rights, Entitlements and Obligations to promote its mandate. This document's main aim is to highlight taxpayers' rights and obligations, as contained in various laws, including the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and the Tax Administration Act, 2011, and be used as a reference tool to guide taxpayers towards the information needed.

"One of our priorities in the next decade is to promote awareness about the OTO and take our services to the four corners of our country. We will continue to benchmark ourselves and, wherever we can, to share our expertise with other government institutions – in South Africa and beyond," Mputa said.

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