17 -20 August 2026

Regulatory & Legislative Update

17 – 20 August 2026

Dear Subscribers,

This edition rounds up the latest legislative and regulatory developments affecting compliance across multiple sectors. Highlights include:

- **Agricultural** – A major win for citrus growers: after nearly a decade of talks, India has agreed to new cold-treatment options that open the door to its 1.5-billion-person market, easing reliance on Europe's stricter phytosanitary rules.
- **Construction** – The Western Cape High Court ordered the City of Cape Town to pay Baseline Civil Contractors R11.5 million and re-run part of the adjudication process, while dismissing World Focus Constructions' bid to keep its water infrastructure contract alive beyond its term.
- **Environmental** – A landmark Constitutional Court ruling has set aside Shell and Impact Africa's Wild Coast oil and gas exploration rights for good, closing out years of litigation over the disputed 2014 award.
- **Financial** – SPAR's share price has more than halved this year amid a wave of executive departures; the Reserve Bank has confirmed a 2028 target for mandatory central clearing of the R150-trillion OTC derivatives market; and SARS has asked the Constitutional Court to overturn a ruling that found the Minister's power to adjust VAT rates unconstitutional.
- **Gambling** – A troubling investigation into the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board's handling of a bookmaker licence application flags serious due-diligence gaps in online gambling regulation.
- **Import & Exports** – Itac has granted a temporary duty rebate on agricultural/forestry tyres not manufactured locally, and opened a sunset review of anti-dumping duties on frozen chicken imports from Germany, the Netherlands and the UK.
- **Procurement** – The Department of Health is defending its R15.5bn HIV drug tender against a Cipla court challenge, while NEASA has raised concerns that draft Public Procurement Regulations could exclude non-100%-black-owned businesses from state contracts under R20 million.
- **Travel** – The new R500 Electronic Travel Authorisation processing fee is now official, gazetted alongside a full refresh of visa fee categories.
- **Transportation** – The long-awaited 10-year driving licence card extension has been gazetted for public comment, with existing 5-year cards remaining valid until replaced.

For full details on any of these developments, please see the complete update below.

Alison and The Legal Team

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AGRICULTURAL

South Africa seals major deal with India after 10 years of negotiations

South Africa’s citrus industry is celebrating a major breakthrough that has been nearly ten years in the making.

India has finally agreed to include additional treatment options for fresh citrus fruit from South Africa, potentially opening up a market of almost 1.5 billion people.

The agreement, announced on Monday, is a significant step forward as the industry aims to expand its markets in countries like India and China, while reducing its reliance on Europe.

Currently, Europe accounts for about 36% of South Africa’s citrus exports, but it imposes what local producers consider unnecessary and unscientific plant health requirements.

These requirements include a zero-tolerance policy for pests such as citrus black spot and false codling moth, mandatory cold treatment, and stringent inspection and interception protocols.

The Citrus Growers’ Association of Southern Africa (CGA) has stated that it will continue to advocate for better tariff conditions, which still put it at a disadvantage in the Indian market.

In a joint statement on Monday, the CGA and the Department of Agriculture announced that, after nearly a decade of negotiations, India has approved the inclusion of additional cold-treatment options for fruit flies.

This change is expected to enhance the quality of the product and increase logistical flexibility.

Agriculture Minister Willie Aucamp praised the development as a testament to how “advanced technology enables our farmers to break barriers, allowing other countries to enjoy our high-quality produce.”

Aucamp said that, with a population of approximately 1.47 billion and as one of the world’s largest and fastest-growing economies, India presents significant potential for South African citrus exports.

However, its share of the country’s exports is currently very small, accounting for about 1.5% in 2024, according to data from the National Agricultural Marketing Council.

This breakthrough follows years of discussions between the Department of Agriculture, the research and technical services organisation Citrus Research International, and Indian authorities.

CGA CEO Boitshoko Ntshabele emphasised the significance of maintaining strong public-private partnerships to enhance the technical conditions for accessing markets.

However, he noted that the focus should now shift towards improving the commercial conditions for South African citrus entering the Indian market.

“Tariffs of about 25%-30% continue to place local fruit at a disadvantage against southern hemisphere competitors benefiting from preferential tariff arrangements,” he said.

The second largest exporter of citrus fruit in the world

South Africa’s citrus industry achieved a record-breaking export season in 2025, shipping over 200 million 15-kilogram cartons worldwide.

This marks the highest volume ever recorded for the country’s leading agricultural export and is a significant milestone.

Former Minister of Agriculture John Steenhuisen commended the industry, calling it an outstanding achievement.

The export figures for 2025 reflect a 22% increase compared to the volumes exported in 2024, greatly surpassing initial estimates and long-term growth projections.

“This achievement by the industry is a testament to the resilience and strategic foresight of our citrus growers, workers, and industry leadership,” Steenhuisen said.

“Hitting over 203 million cartons for the export market is a powerful indicator of the sector’s vital role in our economy, its capacity to create jobs, and its contribution to our country’s foreign earnings.”

South Africa is the world’s second-largest exporter of citrus fruit, following Spain.

About two-thirds of the country’s citrus production is exported as fresh fruit, which accounts for 95% of the industry’s annual revenue.

This export activity creates significant employment opportunities throughout the entire value chain. Citrus is considered South Africa's most valuable export industry within the agriculture sector.

"It continues to reinforce the role of the fruit industry, which remains the cornerstone of the agricultural sector in the country and a national economy stabiliser in times of a national economic crisis, as witnessed during the COVID-19 epidemic," said Steenhuisen.

He also mentioned that the Department of Agriculture will continue to collaborate closely with the industry.

This is to overcome logistical challenges, expand and maintain market access, and create more jobs while earning essential foreign exchange.

Caitlyn Hilliard-Lomas
BusinessTech

CONSTRUCTION

High Court orders R11 million payment in construction contract dispute

The Western Cape Town High Court has ruled that the City of Cape Town must pay R11 million to Baseline Civil Contractors following a contentious construction contract dispute, while also dismissing a separate application from World Focus Constructions regarding contract continuation.

In a judgment delivered last week, Acting Judge Veronique Barthus ordered the City to pay Baseline Civil Contractors and further directed the municipality to participate in cost price adjustment after adjudicator Dennis Ninkonde corrected an adjudication decision made in May 2025.

Baseline Civils had wanted the court to enforce the corrected adjudication decision, the subsequent CPA determination, and payment for materials on site, but the City made a counter-application to have the adjudicator's decision and CPA determination declared invalid and set aside.

The matter was sparked by a dispute concerning the valuation of works completed by Baseline upon the termination of a construction contract entered into in November 2019 and terminated in June 2024.

Sinkonde had issued his original adjudication decision, awarding Baseline R5.1m, stating the company did not provide supporting documents for him to determine the valuation of the works.

However, it turned out that Baseline had made a submission in April 2025, but the adjudicator had "missed the email of 8 April 2025".

Sinkonde had then issued a corrected adjudication decision within the stipulated seven-day period awarding Baseline R11 549 644.10 and directed the parties to determine the additional CPA amount.

Although the City paid the amount due under the original decision, it filed a notice of dissatisfaction and did not participate in the CPA process, contending that the adjudicator had performed his function.

Barthus said the adjudicator's corrected decision remained within the scope of the referral, namely valuation of the completed works.

“The adjudicator did not decide on a new dispute nor is there any allegation of fraud, collusion, capriciousness, or manifest injustice, because there is none.” “The City’s refusal to participate does not invalidate the adjudicator’s jurisdiction, but it does mean that the CPA determination was made in circumstances where one party did not advance its position.

“In the interests of fairness, and to ensure that the CPA amount is determined on a proper evidential foundation, I am of the view that the CPA issue should be remitted to adjudication for reconsideration,” she said.

In her judgment, Barthus said the corrected adjudication decision was declared valid and enforceable and ordered the City to participate in the CPA process.

“The adjudicator shall determine the CPA amount after receiving submissions from both parties, or upon expiry of the submission period should either party fail to deliver submissions,” she said as she ordered the City to also pay the costs of Baseline.

In a separate matter, the Cape Town High Court dismissed an application brought against the City by World Focus Constructions.

World Focus had concluded a contract on June 12, 2023 to provide emergency repairs and maintenance of water infrastructure between July 1, 2023 until June 30, 2026.

However, the City advertised a new tender in May this year and World Focus was unsuccessful.

After losing an internal appeal, the City and World Focus concluded an addendum extending the contract on a month-to-month basis until December 31 or until the replacement contract was in place. World Focus was later informed in June that its contract would come to an end in July and the new contract would start on August 1.

It then lodged an application seeking an order that its contract be preserved and also review the City’s decisions to award the new tender to the winning bidders.

Acting Judge Dawn Norton said World Focus asserted a right to the continuation of the contract beyond August 1 on the basis that it was entitled to, but had not been afforded one month’s written notice of the date on which the replacement contract would commence.

“The use of the word ‘replacement contract’ signifies an intention that the City would not find itself bound by two contracts for the same services when the contract with the third to fifth respondents commenced,” she said.

Norton also stated that the addendum did not entitle Focus World to one month's written notice of the date on which the replacement contract would be in place.

"The applicant did not establish a clear right to one month's notice of the commencement of the replacement contract. If it had established such a right, the City's stated intention to implement the replacement contract on 1 August 2026 would have grounded a reasonable apprehension of harm to that right," she said and awarded cost orders against World Focus.

This comes after the court granted a final interdict protecting the MyCiTi Cape Flats route expansion construction projects from extortion, intimidation, and unlawful interference.

Judgment
Judgment

Cape Times
Mayibongwe Maqhina

ENVIRONMENTAL

Landmark win against Wild Coast seismic surveys

Wild Coast communities and environmental groups have won a landmark victory against Shell and Impact Africa, with the Constitutional Court on Friday setting aside the oil and gas exploration rights that were granted unlawfully in 2014, ending years of legal battles over seismic surveys in the area's culturally significant waters.

Wild Coast communities and the groups approached the Constitutional Court to overturn a 2024 SCA decision that gave Shell and Impact Africa a lifeline to pursue controversial seismic surveys off a 250km strip of the Eastern Cape coast.

They were granted exploration rights in 2014, which would have allowed surveys. In September 2022, the Eastern Cape High Court (Makhanda) found that the Minister of Mineral Resources & Energy unlawfully granted these rights in 2014, on three independent grounds: inadequate consultation with affected communities; failure to consider relevant factors, including cultural, spiritual and livelihood impacts, climate change considerations and harm to marine life; and non-compliance with legal prescripts regarding the project's unsubstantiated socio-economic claims.

The SCA suspended its order setting aside the unlawful rights, thereby giving Shell and Impact another chance through a renewal application that has been pending since July 2023. Wild Coast communities and environmental organisations argued that the SCA judgment was not 'just and equitable', which is a constitutional requirement.

On Friday, in a 7-2 majority judgment written by Justice Jody Kollapen, the Constitutional Court set aside the SCA's order. The majority judgment concluded that any other remedy would allow financial investment to outweigh grave constitutional violations and would signal that the rights of affected parties are subordinate to commercial interests, reports News24. The applicants included Sustaining the Wild Coast NPC, Natural Justice and Greenpeace, as well as representatives of the Umgungundlovu Community, Dwesa-Cwebe Community, Wild Coast fishers and Kei Mouth Fisheries.

The judgment has been lauded by the applicants, Wild Coast communities and environmental organisations.

Siyabonga Ndovela, a Wild Coast fisher, said: 'Today's judgment makes me feel very happy and proud that the ocean is not for profit for mining companies. This tells us we are not alone in this fight.' Kimal Harvey, an attorney at the Legal Resources Centre, said the judgment held that the interests of multinational corporations should never trump the rights of the people. EnerGeo Alliance, a global trade alliance for the energy geoscience and exploration industry, said the ruling highlighted the continued legal and regulatory challenges that can delay responsible exploration. It said the ruling also reinforced the need for clear, timely and workable pathways for responsible exploration. EnerGeo said what remained unchanged was the importance of exploration.

Full News24 report
Judgment
Full TimesLIVE report

FINANCIAL

SPAR in hot water

Spar's recent boardroom battles and challenges in its turnaround strategy have led to the retail giant's share price more than halving since the start of the year.

On 2 January 2026, the group's share price was R94.92 and fell to R41.00 by the close of trading on 18 August.

This represents a 56.8% drop in the share price since the start of the year, with the largest decline in February following the announcement of the group CEO's resignation.

Angelo Swartz joined SPAR in 2023, was held in high regard by many of the group's shareholders, and was a key figure in the company's turnaround efforts.

He was responsible for the group ceasing operations in several overseas markets, including Switzerland and Poland, helping reduce debts.

In February, SPAR issued a notice to shareholders stating that Swartz would resign as CEO of the group at the end of the month.

Following the resignation, Reeza Isaacs took the helm as CEO, continuing the company's turnaround efforts.

Swartz is not the only high-profile resignation the company has seen in recent years, as issues at the highest level have plagued the retail giant.

The group has seen a revolving door of executives since 2022, when its non-executive chairman, Graham O'Connor, resigned.

His resignation came amidst accusations of financial misconduct and governance concerns, and he was replaced by Mike Bosman.

Bosman would also serve as the executive chairman of the group for a short period in 2023, following the retirement of Brett Botten, SPAR's former CEO.

Later in 2023, the group attempted to implement new SAP supply chain management software in its distribution centre in KwaZulu-Natal.

The implementation was disastrous and led to the resignation of SPAR's Chief Information Officer, Mark Huxtable.

The most recent resignations occurred on 17 August 2026, when Bosman and deputy chair Shirley Zinn announced their retirements.

These recent resignations caused another drop in share prices, with the price declining by approximately 9% from the opening on 17 August to the close on 18 August.

SPAR currently has a market cap of approximately R8 billion, down significantly from the company's value at the start of the year.

Silver lining for retailers

Despite the hit to share prices, Mike Bosman's resignation might be seen as a welcome sight by many of SPAR's retailers.

The group has a unique operating style when compared to other popular retailers, with stores operating independently.

While other retailers require store owners to stock specific products and adhere to predetermined management principles, SPAR owners have much more freedom.

These owners are a part of the SPAR guild, which called for Bosman's resignation in May over concerns about management failures.

The guild said that there had been a serious loss of confidence in Bosman and that his tenure as chairman could not continue.

Protea Capital Management CEO Jean Pierre Verster spoke on BusinessDay TV's stock watch about the relationship between SPAR and its retailers.

"Their retail partners, who they should support, have been very unhappy with what they've done with their position in the chain," he said.

"A lot of the guild members and retailers will not be too displeased with the chairman and deputy chairman stepping down."

SPAR's retailers have been under pressure in recent years, with many stores struggling to stay profitable amidst supply challenges.

The group is currently facing litigation over the failed implementation of the SAP system in its KZN distribution centre.

This implementation was a considerable challenge for the group's retailers, who struggled to receive goods for their stores.

News that SPAR was facing legal action came around the same time as the announcement of Swartz's resignation, with investors not taking kindly to either.

At the start of February, the group was trading at a share price of R88.80, which dropped to R69.80 on the final day of that month.

This represents a 21.4% reduction in the share price over one month, with the price reaching its lowest point that month at R66.97.

MP9 Chief Investment Officer Aheesh Singh also spoke to BusinessDayTV, and said that, "clearly, SPAR needs to do something to stabilise the ship."

"Hopefully, they find the right people who can point them in the right direction strategically".

Jonathan Hoyle
BusinessTech

South Africa to finalise rules for R150tr OTC derivatives market by 2028

South Africa's financial regulators plan to finalise new rules requiring over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives to be centrally cleared in the next two years to improve transparency and reduce risk.

"It is envisaged that the final rules will come into effect by 2028," the South African Reserve Bank said in an emailed response to Bloomberg questions. "However, the ability of market participants to comply with the OTC central clearing rules will be subject to the licensing and operationalisation of an appropriate central counterparty."

Comments closed June 5 on a discussion document issued by the Prudential Authority and Financial Sector Conduct Authority seeking public input on proposed eligibility criteria for the central clearing of OTC derivatives, in line with Group of Twenty commitments.

The document proposed that rand-denominated interest-rate swaps and forward-rate agreements be the first OTC instruments subject to mandatory central clearing, with additional derivatives to be identified through a phased and structured approach informed by industry feedback and market-data analysis.

South African rand-linked OTC derivatives traded onshore and offshore exceed 150-trillion in value, according the the central bank.

Ahead of the final rules being published, the PA and FSCA plan to issue a joint standard for consultation between April 2027 and March 2028, together with a draft joint determination containing the products to be considered for mandatory OTC central clearing, the bank said. The standard will also set out the OTC derivative eligibility criteria for central clearing, it said.

Regulators globally have been undertaking financial market reviews to reduce the risk of a damaging counterparty failure. South Africa adopted a phased road map in 2022 to implement a mandatory central clearing framework for OTC derivatives.

In the discussion document, the PA and FSCA said centralizing and standardizing the clearing of certain OTC derivative transactions would make the system more transparent and resilient to shocks, contributing to the stability of the financial system.

To date, South Africa has licensed one central counterparty for listed derivatives transactions on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange — JSE Clear.

Polity

SARS challenges VAT ruling

Denying the National Treasury limited powers to 'swiftly' adjust the VAT rate to respond to pressing fiscal pressures, as it attempted to do last year, will see the government taking up more debt to plug holes in the budget.

This is the position adopted by SARS in court papers before the Constitutional Court in a high-stakes legal battle that could determine whether the executive can adjust the VAT rate.

At the heart of SARS's argument is that the executive has limited powers to make short-term adjustments to VAT to adapt to changing circumstances more rapidly than Parliament can.

According to TimesLIVE, SARS says while it accepts only the legislature may impose taxes, once this is done it may delegate to the Minister a limited power to make temporary adjustments to the tax rate. It says such a delegation by Parliament gives effect to its constitutional power of taxation and does not fall foul of it.

A proposed 0.5% VAT increase scheduled for May 2025 was suspended and later abandoned following legal and political pressure.

SARS and the Treasury are asking the Constitutional Court to set aside the ruling by the Western Cape High Court that ruled that section 7(4) of the VAT Act is unconstitutional and invalid. The essence of the High Court's decision is that granting the Minister stand-alone power to alter the VAT rate (effective immediately, subject to a 12-month delayed parliamentary review) constitutes an unlawful delegation of legislative authority. The apex court will hear the matter in the last week of this month.

Full TimesLIVE report

GAMBLING

Online gambling: Look who's knocking at the door

In February this year a regulator, the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board (WCGRB), announced the planned sale of a bookmaker license to a newly formed company called Bet777.

Six months down the line, the regulator told us that this transaction is "still under investigation" – despite the applicant (Bet777), as we will show, raising countless red flags around possible fraud and money laundering that should have made for an obvious rejection.

If nothing else, what follows shows us that South Africa's burgeoning online gambling industry can very likely be a honeypot for bad actors.

The regulator has been dishing out licenses despite mounting concerns about the social and economic impact of the country's snowballing gambling epidemic.

It is hard to gauge the full extent of this because that regulator refuses to even tell us who it has given licenses to.

But with this application authorities risk doing more than paving the way for yet another gaudy online casino exploiting people's hopes and desperation.

This time the applicant appears to have links to an alleged international syndicate of scamsters who would need one thing in particular: cover for a constant torrent of small payments that may otherwise raise all sorts of flags.

Which is to say, just the kind of thing an online casino is good for.

We know this because the owner of Bet777 is listed as Israeli-South African Maor Yehudai, a man whose 2022 legal battle with banking group Firstrand seemingly inadvertently exposed how he was a cog in an international cryptocurrency trading scam.

In this role, two of his other companies secretly provided a payment system for the crypto and forex "trading" that victims believed they were doing.

But this is just the first layer of the onion.

As it turns out, the Yehudai company secretly supporting the crypto scheme is also part of a multinational network allegedly doing a similar thing.

In other words, it was part of a network of companies seemingly offering "legitimate" online services that were also allegedly involved in providing infrastructure and payment-processing services to fraudulent investment operations.

(In fact, the system strongly resembles another, also Israel-based, syndicate which amaBhungane, alongside a number of peers around the world, exposed last year and dubbed Scam Empire.)

And although details are scant, Yehudai's has other odd connections that raise further questions and red flags.

Earlier this year Yehudai emerged as a "consultant" to the attorneys of Joseph Willah Mudolo, an alleged accomplice to the infamous self-proclaimed prophet Sheperd Bushiri.

Bushiri has fled the country but Mudolo remains in South Africa while fighting a running battle for a relaxation of his bail conditions that would allow him to travel to his native Zambia, despite the obvious flight risk.

Mudolo has tried to get the judge presiding over his case to recuse himself. It was in these proceedings that Yehudai emerged as an advisor whose expertise served an unknown function.

The law firm in question, Matojane Malungana Inc, told us it could not divulge any details but confirmed that one of Mudolo's "erstwhile" attorneys at the firm consulted with Yehudai.

Various attempts to reach Yehudai to put all these allegations to him were unsuccessful.

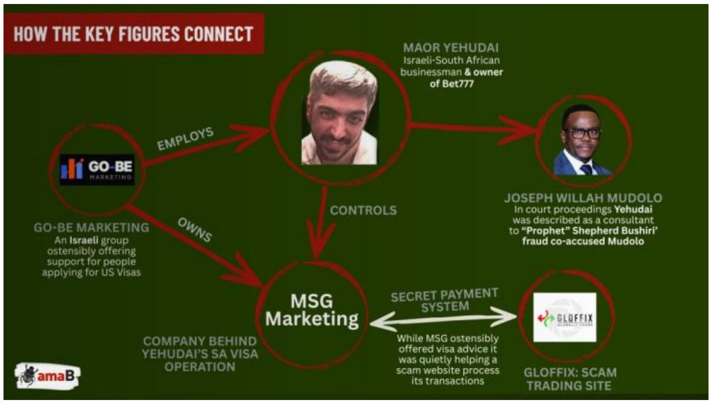
To understand why Yeduhai running an online casino is a worrying prospect that one would have wanted regulators to block straightaway, we have to start with the way, back in 2022, his banking legal battle revealed his connection to a fraudulent crypto scheme.

The chargebacks

Yehudai used to run at least two South African emigration support websites – GoodAdvise.co.za and express-canada.co.za – that, via a call centre, in the main promised to help people get North American visas.

In court papers Yehudai described the operation as a subsidiary of an unnamed group in Israel which set up in South Africa due to high demand for emigration to the US.

The part about an Israeli parent company was at least true.



As we will see, his websites were part of a conglomerate of similar visa schemes soliciting money from aspirant emigrants to the US all over the world.

This conglomerate has recently come under scrutiny by investigative journalists at Swedish digital rights organization, Qurium, as well as the Australian ABC Story Lab.

Let's shelve that for now.

The underlying company providing the visa service in South Africa was called MSG Marketing – and it and a sister company both banked with First National Bank (FNB).

In early 2021 FNB raised concerns about "excessive chargebacks" on the local companies' accounts. A chargeback is when someone who paid money into a recipient account via their own bank requests a refund. This can be for all sorts of reasons, from accidentally paying the wrong person through to suspected fraud.

At Yehudai's operation these came thick and fast with 117 chargebacks worth R3.8-million racked up in less than a year.

But the real clincher was a single client in Hong Kong called Yos Sae Ma who seemingly made gratuitous use of Yehudai's company and then followed through with multiple chargeback requests via her Chinese bank.

In May 2021 FNB received an email from transaction processor, Paygate, flagging this client's worrying use of MSG Marketings "immigration services" – R1.5-million in less than two months using one card and R285 900 using another.

The next day FNB froze Yuhudai's company's account and set in motion a court case that would only reach finality last year. The case revolved around the technicalities of when and for what reason a bank can suspend an account based on excessive chargebacks.

Far more interesting is the evidence FNB ended up putting in the court record showing how Yehudai's business was not what it seemed at all.

The mysterious "evidence"

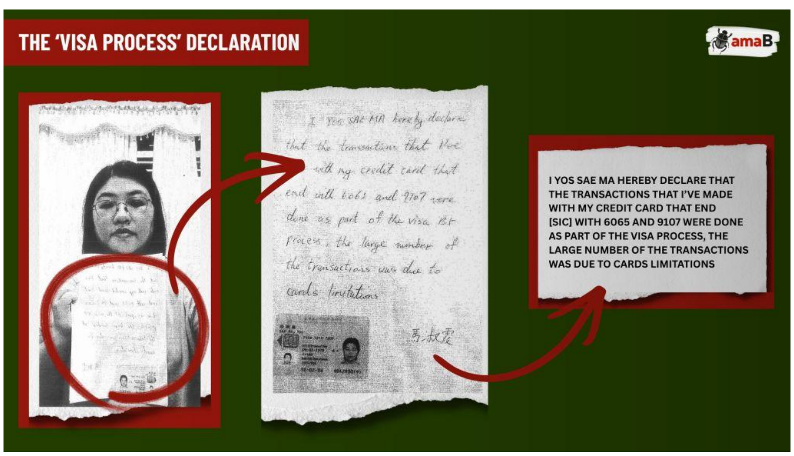
First off, before the case got off the ground, Yehudai tried to justify Yos's massive payments and subsequent chargeback requests.

He managed to come up with "proof" that her payments were both legitimate and were in fact for immigration-related services.

Said proof: a photo of a woman holding up a handwritten letter reading:

"I Yos Sae Ma hereby declare that the transactions that I've made with card that end [Sic] with 6065 and 9107 were done as part of the Visa process, the large number of the transactions was due to cards limitations"

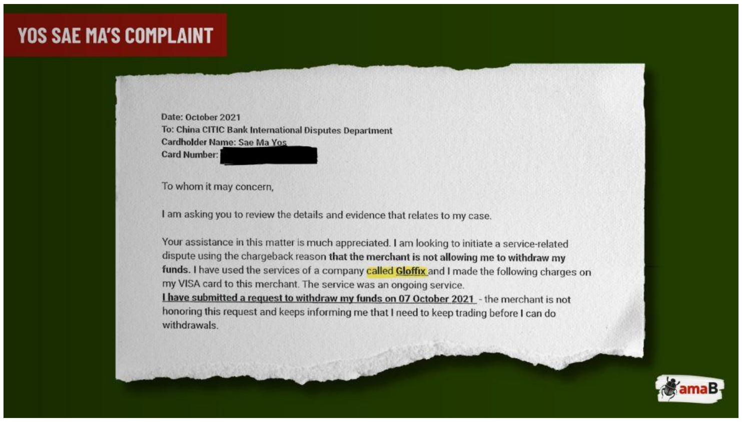
The letter included an ID card and Yos's signature.



Later on this "proof" however suffered a severe blow.

FNB was clearly not convinced. A few months later, with a dispute in full swing, it came up with an actual complaint from Yos requesting chargebacks through her bank, China CITIC Bank. Spoiler alert: it did not involve Visa applications.

Instead, Yos said that her chargeback requests were related to her use of a cryptocurrency trading platform called Gloffix which, she said, wouldn't let her withdraw the funds she had deposited unless she would "keep trading".



Date: October 2021
To: China CITIC Bank International Disputes Department
Cardholder Name: Sae Ma Yos
Card Number: [redacted]

To whom it may concern,

I am asking you to review the details and evidence that relates to my case.

Your assistance in this matter is much appreciated. I am looking to initiate a service-related dispute using the chargeback reason **that the merchant is not allowing me to withdraw my funds.** I have used the services of a company called **Gloffix** and I made the following charges on my VISA card to this merchant. The service was an ongoing service.
I have submitted a request to withdraw my funds on 07 October 2021 - the merchant is not honoring this request and keeps informing me that I need to keep trading before I can do withdrawals.

This already bears an unmistakable resemblance to schemes we uncovered last year in our Scam Empire reporting.

The information coming to FNB from Hong Kong was very detailed, including transaction records, written statements from Yos as well as an "expert opinion" she seemingly commissioned.

When presented with some of Yos's information in court Yehudai pivoted somewhat.

"While acknowledging that GLOFFIX is a Turkish company which is associated with [MSG and its associate] and trades in cryptocurrency … [MSG and its associate] confirm that they have never traded in cryptocurrency. However, [MSG and its associate] did assist GLOFFIX to facilitate payments from their clients by the use of [MSG and its associate's] facilities".

This would in itself be enough to land Yehudai in serious trouble since MSG Marketing had never applied for a transactional account for the purposes of trading financial products – not a trivial requirement considering the extensive surveillance requirements in the banking industry.

In the court case FNB invoked the rules imposed by bank card behemoth Visa around the declaration of the purpose of accounts.

For the purposes of the FNB case Yehudai conceded that he has been "advised that the applicants ought not have permitted their nominated banking accounts to assist GLOFFIX, but in any event, [reiterated], as stated above, this issue is irrelevant to the issue to be determined in this application".

That argument turned around the narrow issue of whether FNB was entitled to hold onto his money until the chargeback disputes were settled.

Suffice to say the original case and a subsequent appeal went against Yehudai.

But back to revelations from Hong Kong.

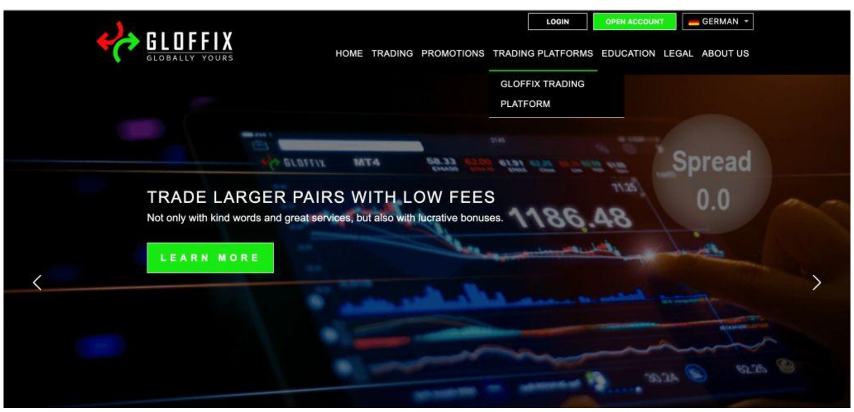
Gloffix

As mentioned, Yos in Hong Kong was in fact not paying for visa services. She was paying money into a cryptocurrency scheme called Gloffix about which little was said at this point except that it was, according to Yehudai, a Turkish company.

Even that wasn't entirely true, as we'll see.

Yos's experience however mirrored the plethora of desperate complaints of victims of the Scam Empire scheme we covered elsewhere.

Apparently she had clicked on a Facebook ad and before long was called up by an operator guiding her into opening a Gloffix account to ostensibly trade financial products. Like many before (and after) her she ended up paying large amounts of money into what seemed like a legitimate trading platform.



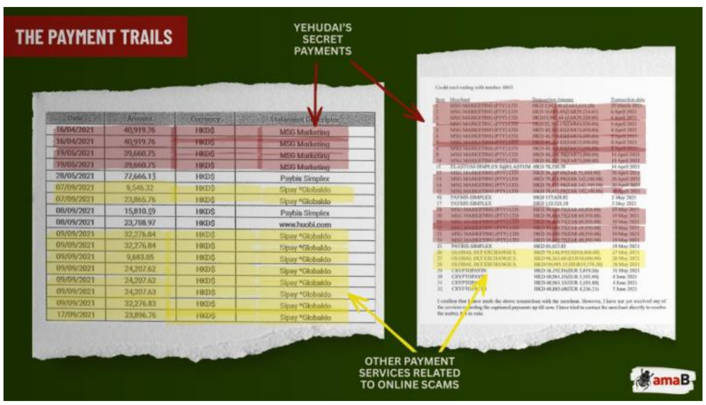
She ultimately claimed that the whole thing was a fraud with the interface being essentially a game with no actual trading taking place. Whatever the case, the main issue was that she was not allowed to withdraw her "deposits" hence her attempts to do so via chargebacks instead.

A closer look at her bank statements however revealed that the payments were being processed by a number of obscure merchants – MSG Marketing among them – that had no obvious connection to Gloffix.

After FNB shut down MSG's accounts in South Africa, Gloffix switched to a handful of alternative payment facilitators.

Notably, Yehudai's company MSG here already finds itself in august company.

One alternative facilitator Yos's payment got directed through was the Slovakian Global DLT Exchange which has been identified many times as the payment processor for more than one of the world's mushrooming "online trading" scams.



Back to Gloffix.

The trading platform had no license to operate in any jurisdiction and has been subject to regulatory alerts in the UK and Spain. The internet is full of review sites where "traders" give accounts of their losses more or less identical to Yos's.

The platform's site has now been scrubbed off the internet. The Internet Archive's Wayback machine however captured the site when it still existed and it provides a crucial clue about who we are dealing with.

Gloffix was, according to its abandoned website, operated by a company in the Marshall Islands called Advantiq.

On the money trail: MSG –> Gloffix –> Advantiq

To sum up, Advantiq was the mystery operator of the alleged scam website Yehudai's South African "immigration service" was secretly providing transaction services to.

Advantiq may very well be registered in the Marshall Islands but its address was listed in London.

And at that address, an apartment in a desirable part of the city, public records show 25 different companies registered – including some very interesting ones.

For instance, one of them is Sipay Ltd (not to be confused with the Turkish payments company of the same name). This is one of the other merchants used by Gloffix to accept payments alongside MSG Marketing.

Other roommates in the London apartment include a list of unsavoury global operations.

First there is Gloffix itself – or rather the actual underlying company called Gloffix Global Ltd (which has been renamed Neosava International Ltd.)

There are also a number of other online scams that have been flagged and shut down including ones called BalFX, CIO Markets, Hadef Capital, International Fidelity, Kuveyt (Kuwait)Trader, Money Trade FX, Omnia Markets, Optimum Global Markets, Omnia Markets and Skyline Ecommerce LTD, which was flagged in Austria as a fraudulent "debt collector".

This collection of companies seems to represent the tip of the iceberg for a whole different scam syndicate with a strong Turkish slant.

So while the corporate entity Gloffix was not registered in Türkiye, Yehudai seems to have been truthful insofar as he was providing back-end transactional support for a network of companies targeting that country.

That's not very unusual. Our experience with the Scam Empire investigation is that service providers, like payment processors and the providers of telephonic services to the "boiler room" call centres that contact victims, often have more than one master.

Which brings us to the second layer in the onion in which Yehudai operates – or at the very least has operated in.

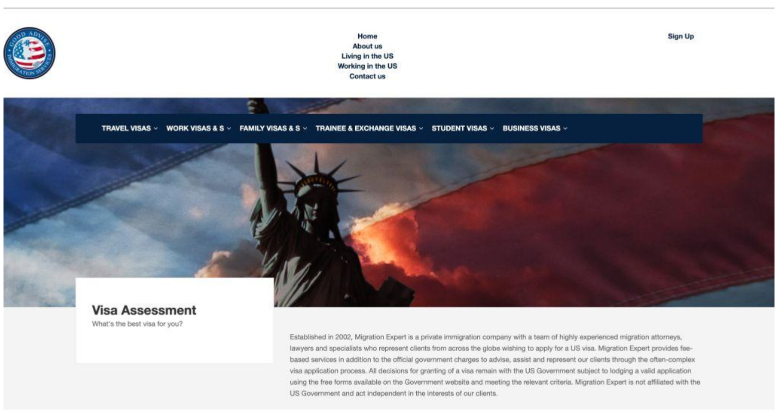
Welcome to America!

As mentioned, the payment services secretly provided to the crypto scam Gloffix were ostensibly for a visa consulting service consisting of at least two websites targeting South Africans.

Included in the court papers is a letter from Yehudai's lawyers to FNB in which they claim that the near R4-million in chargebacks FNB had flagged "equate to a fraction of the revenue generated" the immigration service.

Yehudai also makes mention of the "sheer number" of transactions the now-defunct business processed.

It does not look great that his website Goodadvise has been heavily lambasted as a scam in online consumer review forums and subsequently taken down.



But who was Yehudai ultimately working for?

In the court papers he says that MSG had a parent company in Israel, which he did not name, but which provides the same kind of visa services internationally.

Also in the court file is correspondence where Yehudai uses an email address indicating that this Israeli company is in fact Go-Be Marketing, a company co-founded by an Israeli, Shefi Goldberg.

Among Goldberg's previous ventures was a proposed "immigration" cryptocurrency called Immi-coin. The business plan for this is still available on the internet and gives a sense of the group's larger footprint.

According to the business plan the Go-Be group has 100 people manning call centres in not only South Africa but also Israel, the Philippines, Cyprus and Spain with access to "a database of over 1 million potential immigration clients".

Investigative journalists in Sweden and Australia have been on the Israeli company's trail for a while and enlisted amaBhungane's help with the South African leg of the larger drama.

In Australia, ABC found the initial indication that Goldberg has a wider involvement in the payment system for online scams. A victim of a fraudulent platform saw their sign-up payment running through a company called Trigo XO.

When ABC's journalist pursued the putative owner of this company they ended up on a video call where Goldberg joined and said all questions should come to him.

Goldberg later told ABC, "I have no knowledge whatsoever of who this group is or who its clients are."

On the central allegation that the Goldberg network was involved in processing fraudulent payments for a major scam network, Goldberg said he was "never involved in processing any of such payments" and denied any unlawful conduct.

In a way the kind of business Yehudai allegedly legitimately ran, a call centre giving visa advice, is a great cover for this kind of trading scam because it involves essentially the same back-end infrastructure.

Alternatively, the two "services" overlap and co-exist.

Either way, this brings us back to where we started: Maor Yehudai's entry into the regulated South African gambling industry via a brand-new licence applicant called Bet777.

Hiding in plain sight

The resemblance between online gambling and, for instance, something like MSG is obvious.

A legitimate business constantly processing a torrent of small payments would arguably be the perfect hiding place for something like the fraudulent trading platform Gloffix, which had transactions hidden in MSG's bank accounts.

As South Africa mulls new ways to curb the runaway growth of the online gambling industry the question arises: how are people with Yehudai's history even getting a foot in the door?

What kind of due diligence actually gets done?

The relevant regulator is the Western Cape Gambling and Racing Board – the single most prolific issuer of licenses in South Africa's system of provincial gambling regulation.

As mentioned at the outset, the Board has refused to provide amaBhungane with information about who even has been given licenses, indicating a severe lack of transparency.

The WCGRB also told us that Yehudai had in fact declared his court case against FNB although this has clearly not led to his Bet777 being outright denied a license.

The Western Cape Gambling and Racing Act prescribes a "fit and proper person" hurdle which requires that the Board determine that a licensee's "character, integrity, honesty, prior conduct, regard for the law, reputation, habits and associations do not pose a threat to the health, safety, morals, good order and general welfare of the inhabitants of the Province".

The Board also says that it has in the past rejected applications but did not say how many or for what specific reasons.

Given the internationally acknowledged association between gambling and financial crime a severe level of interrogation is arguably imperative before someone is allowed to wield a gambling license.

Dewald van Rensburg
amaBhungane

IMPORT AND EXPORTS

Itac grants tyre import duty reprieve

Importers of pneumatic tyres that have a rim size of less than 91cm and are used on agricultural and forestry vehicles and machines will get rebates in a move that the government hopes will lower costs for farmers and ultimately consumers.

The International Trade Administration Commission of SA (Itac) yesterday said its investigation into the products that are not produced locally determined that a temporary rebate is the best course of action to provide relief to importers and farmers.

According to Business Day the commission said it found that there are no local manufacturers of these tyres in the Southern African Customs Union region. Since the tyres are mainly used on tractors and harvesters, the duty raises the cost of importing the tyres and has a negative impact on the agricultural and forestry sectors, it said.

The rebate provision can only be accessed subject to an Itac permit, it said. As part of the conditions of the permit, all applicants must show how accessing the rebate will result in price reductions and all applicants will be subject to regular verifications to ensure that the rebate does not undermine the tyre manufacturing sector. It said the rebate provision allows importers to waive ordinary customs duties on imported products.

This does not cater for anti-dumping, safeguard and countervailing duties. One of the factors the commission considered was that savings on duties will be passed down to the end-consumer in the form of price reductions. The application was made by Cape Town-based Tubestone, which imports tyres for passenger cars and medium and heavy vehicles.

Full Business Day report

SA reviews poultry anti-dumping duties

SA has launched a sunset review of anti-dumping duties on frozen bone-in chicken imports from Germany, the Netherlands and the UK, just days before the existing duties are due to expire, with the domestic industry pushing for them to remain in place.

According to Business Day, SA in 2015 imposed anti-dumping duties of 3.86%-73.33% on frozen bone-in chicken portions originating in or imported from a number of firms in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK.

The tariffs were extended in 2021 and are set to expire on Friday. However, the SA Poultry Association (Sapa), which represents the likes of Astral, Grain Field Chickens and Rainbow, has asked for the duties to be extended by another five years. Itac has arrived at a preliminary view that the anti-dumping duties must remain in place due to the information provided to it by Sapa, subject to it its investigation.

Full Business Day report

PROCUREMENT

DOH argues drug tender process was fair

The Department of Health has pushed back against pharmaceutical manufacturer Cipla's legal bid to scrap its R15.5bn Aids drug tender, arguing in court papers that officials ran a fair and rational process to determine which companies should be allocated a share of the lucrative contracts. Business Day reports that the row centres on the core contracts to supply the government with the daily pill taken by most HIV patients, which took effect on 1 December 2025.

Despite having previously supplied the state and invested in local production capacity, Cipla was excluded from the awards to supply monthly and three-monthly packs of pills combining tenofovir, lamivudine and doluteravir (TLD).

The R7.25bn TLD contract for monthly packs was split between eight companies, while the R5.38bn TLD contract for three-month packs was split between seven firms. Cipla launched an application in the Gauteng High Court (Pretoria) in February seeking to overturn the tender, arguing that officials failed to give due consideration to local manufacturing, allowed the participation of firms that should have been disqualified, and made mistakes in the way they split the contract between winning bidders. Its application has been opposed by the Department of Health and almost all the firms that won a share of the TLD contracts**.** Now in the final stages of exchanging papers, the parties are expected to argue the matter in court in September.

The Department of Health emphasises the financial impact of its decisions, disclosing the details of competing bids, and pointing out that Cipla's prices were higher than those of the winners.

According to Business Day, Cipla had been afforded the opportunity to reduce its prices during negotiations but had not improved enough to make the final cut, the health department's chief director for sector-wide procurement, Khadija Jamaloodien, says in papers. A supporting affidavit filed by MacLeods Pharmaceuticals estimates that if Cipla had been awarded a share of the two TLD contracts at its bid prices**,** it would have cost the government R75m more than it agreed to pay Aspen Pharmacare, which was not the cheapest supplier**.**

Cipla's argument that the tender should be declared invalid on the grounds of allegedly collusive tendering, bidding by related entities and an irrational division of the award only affected Barrs and Innovata and not other successful companies, says Jamaloodien. Barrs and Innovata, which were placed in business rescue in December, together won 25% of the TLD contracts.

Jamaloodien rebuts Cipla's argument that Barrs and Innovata should have automatically been disqualified for failing to indicate their related party status, saying they had disclosed they were subsidiaries of Avacare.

Full Business Day report

No white businesses welcome for state contracts below R20 million

The National Treasury's draft Public Procurement Regulations required businesses which get contracts below R20 million to be 100% black owned.

This is the warning from Gerhard Papenfus, the chief executive of the National Employers' Association of South Africa (NEASA).

The National Treasury published the draft General Public Procurement Regulations, 2026, on 16 April 2026.

On the same day, it published the draft Public Procurement Tribunal Regulations, 2026, for public comment.

"These regulations are necessary to bring into effect the Public Procurement Act, 2024, which was assented to by the President on 18 July 2024," the National Treasury said.

They outline mechanisms, financial thresholds, and conditions for preferential procurement for government contracts.

The draft regulations also include set-asides, pre-qualification requirements, and mandatory subcontracting, particularly targeting SMMEs.

Papenfus said that the regulations set aside state contracts below R20 million for companies that are 100% owned by previously disadvantaged persons.

"White male-owned businesses, even partly white male-owned businesses, are completely excluded," said Papenfus.

"A company that is 90% black-owned does not qualify. A firm that has followed every BEE code for two decades does not qualify."

Papenfus argued that this was not redress. Instead, he described it as the economic exclusion of businesses with white males as owners.

He said these proposed regulations will harm all sectors of South African society and drive up prices.

"It shrinks the supplier base, drives up prices, and hollows out service delivery. The taxpayer pays for all of it," he said.

"Our courts have already ruled that the government cannot disqualify a tender purely on race. These regulations do exactly that."

Newsday

TRAVEL

New R500 visa fee officially introduced in South Africa

The Department of Home Affairs has officially introduced a new R500 fee for processing the new Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA).

The fee was introduced with visa fee amendments gazetted on Monday (17 August), following the proposal to introduce the fee in July.

The fee follows **the system's official launch last week**.

The ETA platform pilot launched in October 2025 and has been available to nationals of participating countries. It forms part of the DHA's digital transformation programme.

The system allows travellers to apply for visas and have these processed seamlessly within 24 hours.

President Cyril Ramaphosa launched the ETA with the DHA at OR Tambo International Airport on 12 August, and now plans to expand it.

Ramaphosa said the government will expand the system to additional countries, and, over time, digital processing will extend to include work visas, study visas and other immigration services.

DHA minister Leon Schreiber said that, when the first phase of the ETA was implemented, visa fees for onboarding countries were temporarily waived because the platform did not yet have an integrated online payment capability.

However, with the system now launched and online payment capability in place, the once fully subsidised programme can now start charging the necessary fees.

A processing fee of R500 will apply to each ETA application.

Schreiber previously noted that, in the next phase, the ETA will become compulsory for travellers from non-visa-exempt countries included on the platform. This may become the case for all travellers.

Initially, it will be optional for travellers from visa-exempt countries, Schreiber said.

“However, notwithstanding the optional nature of the platform for visa-exempt travellers, the Department anticipates fast uptake of this new system from visa-exempt travellers, given the significant improvements in efficiency and security it delivers,” he said.

Schreiber noted that the new fee would result in an overall saving for travellers, with the ETA processing being an in-sourced feature.

Using outsourcing services would accrue a fee of R1,550, which, when combined with the visa fee of R425, would result in a total payment of R1,975.

Using the streamlined ETA services, this would be reduced to R925, being R500 for ETA processing and the R425 visa fee, he said.

New visa fees

Application	**Section of the Act**	**Amount (R)**
Electronic processing fee (applicable to the ETA)	7(1)(i)	R500.00
Certificate to enter or depart from the Republic at a place other than a port of entry	9(3)(b)	R425.00
Port of entry visa*	10A	R425.00
Transit visa*	10B	R425.00
Visitor’s visa*	11	R425.00
Study visa*	13	R425.00
Treaty visa*	14	R425.00
Business visa*	15	R1,520.00
Medical treatment visa*	17	R425.00
Relatives visa*	18	R425.00
Work visa*	19	R1,520.00
Retired person visa*	20	R425.00
Corporate visa*	21	R1,520.00
Exchange visa*	22	R425.00
Permanent residence permit (excluding applications by a foreigner contemplated in sections 26(b), 26(c) and 27(d) of the Act)	25	R1,520.00
Proof of permanent residency	7(1)(i)	R100.00

The tables below outline the differences between the outsourced and the new in-sourced ETA fee structure.

Outsourced Fee Structure

Category	Outsourced Service Provider Fee	Requirement	Existing Visa Fee	Total Cost to Traveller
Non-visa-exempt	R1,550	Compulsory	R425	R1,975
Non-visa-exempt but visa-fee exempt	R1,550	Compulsory	R0.00	R1,550
Visa-exempt	R0.00	N/A	R0.00	R0.00

New Fee Structure

Category	ETA Insourcing Fee	Requirement	Existing Visa Fee	Total Cost to Traveller
Non-visa-exempt	R500	Compulsory	R425	R925
Non-visa-exempt but visa-fee exempt	R500	Compulsory	R0.00	R500
Visa-exempt	R500	Voluntary	R0.00	R500

The full gazette can be read below:

Immigration Act: First Amendment of the Regulations on Fees G 55209 RG 12036 GoN 7834	17 August 2026	Notices

BusinessTech

TRANSPORTATION

10-year driving licence extension officially gazetted – with details on what happens to existing cards

The Department of Transport has gazetted the proposed extension to driving licence cards for public comment, bringing the long-awaited change a major step forward.

In terms of the gazette, the validity of a driving licence card for code A, A1, B, or EB driving licences will be set to 10 years from the date on which it is ordered from the Card Production Facility.

The validity of a driving licence card for a code C1, C, EC1, or EC driving licence will be set to five years from the date on which it is ordered from the Card Production Facility.

Notably, the gazette also confirms what will happen with current cards being issued.

The **existing driving licence card for code Al, A, B, or EB driving licences issued for a period of five years shall remain valid until the new driving licence card has been issued.**

These cards will no longer be valid three months after expiry.

The gazetting for public comment represents a significant step forward for the official extension, with the comment window set for 30 days from the date of publication of the notice.

It is important to note that the changes are not yet in effect and still require legislative amendments. The official gazetting for comment is part of the process.

Following the public comment window, the department can move quickly to implement the necessary legislative changes.

The gazette follows **confirmation from Minister in the Presidency Khumbudzo Ntshavheni at the end of July** that Cabinet had approved the extension.

Importantly, the pace at which the process is progressing is beating all targets set by the Transport department earlier this year.

The 10-year extension is also larger than the 8-year extension initially sought.

The extension was officially included in the department's short- and medium-term goals in April 2026, with the plan to secure the cabinet's approval by the end of 2026/27 (March 2027).

This target was hit in July—eight months ahead of schedule.

The initial plan was to change the licence validity by 2028, but it now looks like this will happen much sooner.

According to Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA) CEO, Wayne Duvenage, **the ten-year licence validity could be in place within months**, depending on the Presidency's plans.
"If the minister and the Presidency really wanted to, it could be fast-tracked into the next couple of months," he said.

"This may require some degree of public consultation," he added, which is now taking place. Duvenage warned that the road ahead is not without potential pitfalls and obstacles, but given the rapid move to public consultation, it appears the department is accelerating, rather than hitting the brakes.

The gazette can be read below:

National Road Traffic Act: National Road Traffic Regulations: Amendment: Comments invited G 55205 P 336 - Comment by 19 Sep 2026	17 August 2026	Notices

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