

For immediate release

June 2017

CONSUMER GOODS AND SERVICES OMBUD (CGSO)

Magauta Mphahlele appointed Acting Ombudsman

The Consumer Goods and Services Ombud (CGSO) today announced the appointment of Ms Magauta Mphahlele as the Acting Ombudsman subsequent to the resignation of Advocate Neville Melville.

“This appointment is to ensure continuity and certainty for the organisation, stakeholders and more importantly consumers who depend on the CGSO for quick and effective redress.” says the Chairperson of the Human Resource and Nominations Committee of the CGSO Mr Cliff Johnston.

“ Ms Mphahlele has served as the Chairperson of the CGSO for more than two years and is well placed to ensure a smooth transition as well as steer the organisation through the transitional period until a new Ombudsman is appointed.” Confirmed Mr Cliff Johnston. The Board will in the meantime appoint an interim Chairperson.

Mphahlele has extensive experience in complaints handling, mediation and adjudication, having served as a member of the National Consumer Tribunal, the Gauteng Rental Tribunal and Gauteng Consumer Court over a combined period of ten years. She also played a leading role in steering the Consumer Protection Act and the National Credit Act through Parliament when she was the Project Manager for Law Reform at the Department of Trade and Industry.

“It gives me great pleasure to accept this appointment which will enable me to continue the good work that Advocate Melville has been doing for the past four years” says Mphahlele. Since its inception in 2012 and up to May 2017, the CGSO has handled more than 51 652 enquiries and 24 691 complaints, thus making the CGSO an important dispute resolution scheme as envisaged in the Consumer Protection Act.

About Magauta M phahlele

Magauta holds an Honors Degree in Applied Linguistics and a Postgraduate Diploma in English Education from Wits University. She is an Accredited Court Annexed Mediator and a respected speaker and commentator on all issues related to credit, consumer protection and rental housing.

She started her career as a Junior Lecturer in the Department of Applied Linguistics at Wits University before moving to the Department of Trade and Industry where she managed various capacity building projects and monitored and evaluated the performance of eight regulatory institutions. She was instrumental in driving the development and enactment of the National Credit Act and Consumer Protection Act.

She is currently the CEO of Ithuseng Credit Solutions which is registered with the National Credit Regulator as an Alternative Dispute Resolution Agent responsible for resolving credit disputes through Mediation, Conciliation or Arbitration.

Her passion is to ensure a healthy and fair credit and consumer protection market in South Africa through influencing policy and legislation, as well as empowering consumers with information about their rights, obligations and options when they are experiencing financial difficulties or feel that their rights have been transgressed.

She currently holds the following Non-Executive positions:

- Non-Executive Director of the South African Fraud Prevention Service;*
- Member of the Financial Services Board Legislative Committee.*

Previous Non-Executive Positions include:

- Board Member of the Credit Ombudsman;*
- Mediator at the Gauteng Rental Housing Tribunal;*
- Adjudicator at the Gauteng Consumer Court;*
- Adjudicator at the National Consumer Tribunal;*
- Member of the Unfair Practices Committee of the Department of Trade and Industry; and*
- Board Member of the National Home Builders Registration Council, and Estate Agency Affairs Boards.*

Ends

About the CGSO

The Consumer Goods and Services Industry Code of Conduct and the Office of the Consumer Goods and Services Ombud (CGSO) are set up in accordance with and accredited in terms of section 82(6) of the Consumer Protection Act, (Act No. 68 of 2008.)

The Code and the CGSO were established to guide industry as to what is considered the minimum standards for conduct expected when engaging with consumers and to assist in resolving disputes that arise between consumers and industry in terms of the Consumer Protection Act.

In light of the Code having been promulgated by the Minister of Trade and Industry, the Code is enforceable against suppliers, manufactures and distributors in the Consumer Goods and Services Industry. A failure to comply with the Code amounts to a contravention of section 82(8) of the Consumer Protection Act.

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Additional information about the Code and the CGSO can be obtained from www.cgso.org.za

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