

Transnet takes *Sunday Times* to press ombudsman

Transnet last night, Thursday, 4 September 2008, lodged a formal complaint with the press ombudsman against the *Sunday Times*, following the failure by the paper to retract its “false, misleading, malicious and defamatory lead” under the headline “Transnet Sold our Sea to Foreigners”, the complaint announced in a press statement today, Friday 5 September.

Stated Transnet spokesman John Dlodlu, “After the piece's publication, we issued a detailed rebuttal - in the form of a media briefing (Monday, August 25 2008 in Cape Town and Johannesburg), interviews (August 25-26 2008) and presentations to Parliament (August 26-27 2008) - of all the falsehoods published by the paper and, through our lawyers, we asked that the paper publish a retraction and an unreserved apology in its edition of August 31 2008 (the next publishing date after the offending article).

“In addition to these open forums, we made available the two relevant agreements - one signed in 2001 and the sale and purchase agreement entered into in 2006 - to MPs who are members of the Portfolio Committees on Public Enterprises and Environmental Affairs and Tourism.”

According to Transnet, the retraction and apology has not been forthcoming.

Continued Dlodlu, “Given the scale of the damage caused to Transnet's good name by both the article and, subsequently, the continued delay by the paper in entertaining our demand, we have decided to lay a formal complaint with the Ombudsman over the paper's conduct because it is an effective and expeditious mechanism for the relief sought by Transnet: namely, to restore its good name and reputation, not monetary compensation in the form of a damages award that a Court of Law would make possibly two years from now.

“Transnet is committed to the highest standards of corporate ethics and good governance. It is this commitment and our track record in upholding the highest standards that was assailed by the *Sunday Times*.

“To enable this process to proceed, we will not make further comment whilst this is underway,” he concluded.

Meanwhile, according to IOL, The Star and Statistics SA (StatsSA) recently settled their differences in the offices of the ombudsman, right before they advanced to court action.

For more:

- IOL: [StatsSA and The Star kiss and make up](#)
- [Press Council Stats SA vs The Star](#)

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