

# Strike: Transnet, Numsa may meet

A strike led by the National Union of Metal Workers of SA (Numsa) at Transnet's Ngqura Container Terminal, near Port Elizabeth, was unresolved last week after 14 days of strike action, the national transport and port utility said.



A strike at Ngqura Container Terminal is underway but Transnet says there has been minimal disruptions to its services. Image: [Engel & Voelkers](#)

The strike, which has seen acts of violence including petrol bombings and stonings, has sparked concern about the Nelson Mandela Bay area's automotive industry, which relies heavily on imports and exports.

The container terminal is within the Port of Ngqura, in the Coega Industrial Development Zone. It is a container trans-shipment hub for global shipping companies, and is also used for the export of key commodities and agro-processing products.

Transnet has agreed to meet Numsa on Monday (12 May) at its Carlton Centre headquarters in Johannesburg, subject to conditions, including that continuing strike action be conducted without violence, and that Numsa not involve workers at Port Elizabeth's main port in the dispute.

"Regarding the meeting requested by Numsa, we are awaiting their response," Siyabulela Mhlaluka, General Manager of Transnet Port Terminals in the Eastern Cape, said.

## Minimal disruptions

Mhlaluka said there had been "minimum disruption" to Transnet's operations and to customers and there had not been any delays in berthing vessels. "No vessels had been diverted to other terminals," he said.

Transnet has locked out all striking workers since Monday (5 May) last week.

"Though the strike is still ongoing, our colleagues affiliated to Transnet's recognised unions, Satawu (the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) and Utatu Sarwhu, who represent around 80% of (the container terminal workers), continue to work," said Mhlaluka.

Numsa's Eastern Cape Regional Secretary, Phumzile Nodongwe, has rejected as a "blatant lie" Transnet's claim that Numsa is a non-recognised minority union at the container terminal. He said Numsa members made up about 500 of the 600 workers employed there.

But Eddie de Klerk, Deputy General Secretary of Utatu Sarwhu, said his union and Satawu were not on strike at the terminal, and made up 491 of the 600 workers.

The strike comes as negotiations in a separate strike by 723 Numsa members at Continental Tyre, in the Nelson Mandela Bay metro area, is under way. The German tyre maker said it could continue limited production.

Source: Business Day via I-Net Bridge

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