

Press Council appoints Professor Franz Krüger as a Deputy Press Ombud



Franz Krüger, Adjunct professor in the University of the Witwatersrand Centre for Journalism, has been appointed as a Deputy Press Ombud of the Press Council of South Africa (PCSA) from 1 November.

He joins Press Ombud Herman Scholtz and Deputy Press Ombud Tyrone August to make up the triumvirate of Press Ombuds who adjudicate complaints by the public against the PCSA's more than 400 members, representing major print and online media in South Africa.

Professor Krüger's appointment completes the PCSA complement dealing with complaints, from mediation, the role of PCSA Public Advocate Fanie Groenewald; adjudication, handled by the Press Ombud and his two deputies; and the Appeals Panel, headed by retired Judge Bernard Ngoepe. They are supported by Case Officer Khanyi Mndaweni and reinforce the PCSA system of voluntary independent co-regulation of the media, allowing the Ombuds and the Appeals Panel to draw on experienced members of the Panel of Adjudicators when hearings are held by the Ombuds or on appeal.

Professor Krüger is a vastly experienced media professional and academic. He is the author of two books and many book chapters and articles in peer-reviewed journals and publications. He is an experienced teacher and researcher with significant international journalism and consultancy experience. From 2016 to 2021 he was head of the Journalism Department at Wits and previously served as a member of the SA Press Appeals Panel for ten years.

He was the founding director of the Wits Radio Academy, where he initiated Radio Days Africa, which has taken place annually since 2009 and has become the biggest gathering of radio practitioners on the continent. Prior to that he was Ombud for the Mail & Guardian newspaper and has worked for a large range of international and local media. While he was national editor of radio news at the SABC from 1994 to 1999, he oversaw major editorial projects such as elections and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings.

PCSA Executive Director, Latiefa Mobara, is delighted at Prof Krüger's appointment. "As is evident, Franz, who has been a long-time supporter and partner to the Press Council, has a vast range of relevant experience. He will add to and broaden our adjudication capacity. We have a very strong team, who keep media reporting fair and who robustly implement the Press Code of South Africa as the 'rules of the game'," she said, adding: "We are pleased and proud that he has joined our team."

Professor Krüger said: "I am looking forward to joining the team at the Press Council, which plays a critical role in ensuring public accountability by the media."

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