

MEDIA STATEMENT

ECSA Calls for Professional Oversight where Engineering Work Is Being Conducted

14 July 2026

With the growing number of building collapses being reported, the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) urges employers, clients, procuring authorities, and the public to appoint persons who have proven qualifications, competence, necessary skills to perform engineering work and are registered with ECSA.

The call comes as the country received the sad news of the retaining wall collapse at a compound Church in Inanda, north of Durban, which left several people critically injured and requiring emergency medical care.

The incident occurred on Monday, 13 July 2026. According to reports from ALS Paramedics Medical Services, congregants were constructing a retaining wall when it collapsed, trapping those involved in the project.

While ECSA will undertake investigations, as prescribed by the Engineering Profession Act (Act 46 of 2000), to determine whether any registered persons were involved, the Council urges unregistered engineering practitioners to refrain from undertaking engineering work that is reserved for registered engineering practitioners, as this is in contravention of the Identification of Engineering Work (IDoEW) Rules.

When engineering practitioners undertake engineering work without the necessary skills, competence, qualifications, professional oversight and without being registered, they place the public at significant risk. To strengthen the Council's regulatory framework and reinforce its responsibility to protect the public through effective oversight of the engineering profession, ECSA recently gazetted the IDoEW Rules and the Rules for the Management of Enforcement Matters.

The IDoEW Rules provide a structured framework for:

- Identified engineering work demarcated for registered engineering practitioners.
- Defining the types of work that constitute identified engineering work.
- Identifying the engineering disciplines and categories of registration responsible for performing such work.
- Specifying the competencies expected of registered persons undertaking engineering work.

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- Establishing the circumstances under which engineering work may be performed across disciplines or registration categories, including transitional arrangements and special consent provisions.

The Rules for the Management of Enforcement Matters establish how ECSA will:

- Monitor compliance with the Engineering Profession Act and the IDoEW Rules.
- Investigate alleged contraventions.
- Manage enforcement matters consistently, transparently, and fairly.
- Collaborate with other regulators and law enforcement agencies where necessary.
- Take appropriate regulatory action when engineering work is undertaken unlawfully or outside the applicable registration category.

ECSA urges employers, clients, procuring authorities, and members of the public to request ECSA Digital Certificates, powered by PrivySeal, as proof of current registration status, and the type of work the registered person may undertake according to their category of registration.

ECSA extends its sincere sympathies to those who sustained injuries during the incident and to the families anxiously awaiting news of their loved ones. Our thoughts are also with fellow workers on site, the emergency response teams who worked tirelessly during the rescue operation, and the broader community affected by this devastating event.

-ENDS-

Issued by The Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA)

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About ECSA:

The Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) is the statutory body established in terms of the Engineering Profession Act, 2000 (Act No. 46 of 2000). It is mandated to regulate the engineering profession in South Africa by setting and maintaining internationally benchmarked standards of education, training, and professional practice.

ECSA is responsible for the registration of engineering professionals, accreditation of engineering programmes, prescription and enforcement of a Code of Conduct, and the disciplining of unprofessional conduct. Through these functions, ECSA safeguards the public, enhances the integrity of the profession, and contributes to the development of competent and ethical engineering practitioners who are vital to the country's infrastructure and socioeconomic development.

For more information, visit our website: www.ecsa.co.za