

Dear Valued Hotel Partners, PCO Alliance Members and Industry Friends,

As we close another remarkable year of recovery and growth in the meetings and events sector, I want to personally thank each of you for the collaboration, trust and shared ambition that made 2025 possible.

In South Africa, where our vibrant events landscape - from Cape Town's international conferences to Johannesburg's corporate gatherings - continues to thrive amid economic resilience, your partnerships have been instrumental in driving sustainable success.

## 2025 Commission Payment Survey – The Results Are In

As the South African meetings and events sector continues its strong post-pandemic recovery, a new survey by the PCO Alliance Network NPC highlights persistent challenges with hotel commission payments that are impacting Professional Conference Organisers (PCOs) and potentially influencing future venue selections.

The annual Commission Benchmarking Survey, conducted among the network's member firms, found that 37% of commission payments now exceed 30 days.

This delay is raising cash flow concerns for PCOs, many of whom are small to medium-sized enterprises navigating SARS compliance, B-BBEE requirements, and operational costs in a competitive market.

Key findings include:

- 58% of members reported that the percentage of commission offered significantly influences their recommendations of venues to clients.
- 81% stated that prolonged payment cycles negatively affect repeat bookings and the placement of future business with those properties.

Timely commission payments are the cornerstone of trust in our partnerships with hotels. PCOs invest substantial time and resources in delivering high-value group business. When payments are delayed, it forces members to prioritise venues with reliable financial practices, ultimately affecting hotel occupancy and revenue. The survey underscores the importance of ethical financial practices in an industry still building resilience amid economic pressures.

Hotels adhering to a short payment standard are seeing stronger loyalty from PCOs, with members more likely to shortlist and convert RFPs for these properties.

## A Simple Request as We Enter 2026

To every hotel partner reading this: please treat commission payments with the same urgency you apply to your own accounts receivable, especially in a market where delayed payments can exacerbate economic pressures. Under the National Credit Act a 30 day standard is not a favour, it is the foundation of a sustainable partnership that supports job creation and skills transfer in our communities.

If your property is currently outside that benchmark, now is the perfect moment to implement a system that eases long commission payment cycles.

## Addressing a Challenging Issue

Earlier this autumn, one of our members, Silver Touch Events and Travel, resigned from the network after several years of association.

Subsequently, we became aware of media reports and third-party allegations concerning difficulties experienced by certain clients and suppliers of the former member.

These matters are understood to be the subject of ongoing investigation by the relevant authorities.

We wish to express our sincere concern for all impacted parties who have been affected.

This situation highlights the importance of ongoing due diligence and vigilance within the travel industry, and we remain committed to upholding the highest professional and ethical standards within our network.

## Our Renewed Commitment to Ethics and Fair Practice

In light of these challenges and drawing from South Africa's ongoing fight against corruption as highlighted by the Zondo Commission, the PCO Alliance Network NPC remains steadfast in our core principles of ethical and fair practice amongst our members.



## Looking Ahead

2026 promises to be our industry's strongest year yet with South Africa poised to host more AIMS-accredited events and leverage our G20 presidency momentum. Associations are extending multi-year contracts, corporations are increasing event budgets and incentive travel is roaring back to destinations like the Garden Route. PCO Alliance Network NPC members are eager to fill your calendars, provided the commercial trust remains intact.

On behalf of every PCO who invests months (sometimes years) crafting the perfect programme for your property, thank you for choosing partnership over short-term accounting convenience. Let us continue building an ethical, resilient sector that benefits all South Africans.

The festive season is here! May you and your loved ones enjoy a joyful holiday cheer filled with rest, laughter, and cherished moments with family and friends. For those celebrating other traditions during this holiday period, we extend our heartfelt best wishes for peace and happiness.

Here's to a prosperous and healthy 2026, a year of renewed opportunities, stronger partnerships and continued growth for our beautiful industry and country.

With gratitude, determination and festive cheer,



**Chief Executive Director**  
PCO Alliance Network NPC



## End of Year Celebrations at Kiewits Kroon Estate

The PCO Alliance Network NPC members ended the year off in style as we celebrated our Christmas party at the iconic Kievits Kroon Estate, north east of Tshwane.

It was a night of fun, fabulous food and friends in our beloved industry, enjoying a Wild West hoedown. Starting our evening with a magical wine tasting in the Vineyard, set the tone for what Kievits Kroon had on offer for us.



*The PCO Alliance Network NPC members at the Kievits Kroon Estate.*

The beautiful estate has so much to offer and more. Our poolside venue was ideal for line dancing and outlaw shenanigans.

After a night of revelry it was pure bliss returning to our luxury accommodation.

A very big THANK YOU to Yvette Archer, Francois Stremmelaar and the entire Kievits Kroon team for an unforgettable sojourn. And a special shout out to Mumsy who took us through a very interesting and enjoyable wine tasting.

