

Transformation Report 2024/25

20
YEARS

**SA's Largest
Legal Network**



Firms

Founded in 2006 by PH Attorneys and now celebrating its 20th anniversary, the PH Group has grown into South Africa's largest legal network - and the only one dedicated exclusively to empowering local law firms.

The PH Group brings together a nationwide network of independent, like-minded law firms - each collaborating under a shared vision while

retaining their own identity and liability. By entering into association with PH Attorneys, member firms gain access to the full PH Group ecosystem and its collective resources and support structures, tied together by an unwavering commitment to Group Values and Group Standards. Together, we strengthen the legal landscape through unity, quality, and trusted collaboration across South Africa.

The following member firms have contributed information and data to compile this report:

Blake Bester & Jordaan Inc.	Millers Inc.
Breytenbach Mavuso Inc.	Mosdell, Pama & Cox Inc.
CBJ Attorneys	Muller Terblanche & Beyers Attorneys
Cronje, De Waal - Skhosana Inc.	NEA Attorneys Inc.
DBM Attorneys	Neumann van Rooyen Attorneys
DDKK Attorneys Inc.	Oosthuizen, Marais & Pretorius Inc.
De Beer & Claassen Attorneys	PH Attorneys
De Jager & Lordan Inc.	PSN Inc.
Drake Flemmer & Orsmond Inc.	Schulz Attorneys
Du Plessis & Van der Westhuizen Inc.	Seymore du Toit & Basson Inc.
Du Toit, Butler & Olckers Inc.	Tatham Wilkes Inc.
Duvenhage & Van der Merwe Inc.	Terblanche Slabber Pieters Inc.
EVH Inc. Attorneys	Theart Mey Attorneys
Gillan & Veldhuizen Inc.	Tonkin Clacey Inc.
Jan L. Jordaan Inc. Attorneys	Truter, Crous & Wiggill Inc.
Kloppers Inc. – Durban	Van de Wall Inc.
Kloppers Inc. - Richards Bay	Van der Spuy & Partners
Kotzé Low Swanepoel Attorneys	Van Rensburg Schoon Attorneys
Lange Carr & Wessels Inc.	VDT Attorneys Inc.
Langenhoven Pistorius Modihapula Attorneys	Venter & Associates Inc.
Lowndes Dlamini Attorneys	Weich & Kriel Inc.
Maurice Phillips Wisenberg Attorneys	Wiesinger O'Dwyer Inc.
Meyer, Van Sittert & Kropman Attorneys	Wright Rose-Innes Inc
Miller Bosman Le Roux Attorneys	

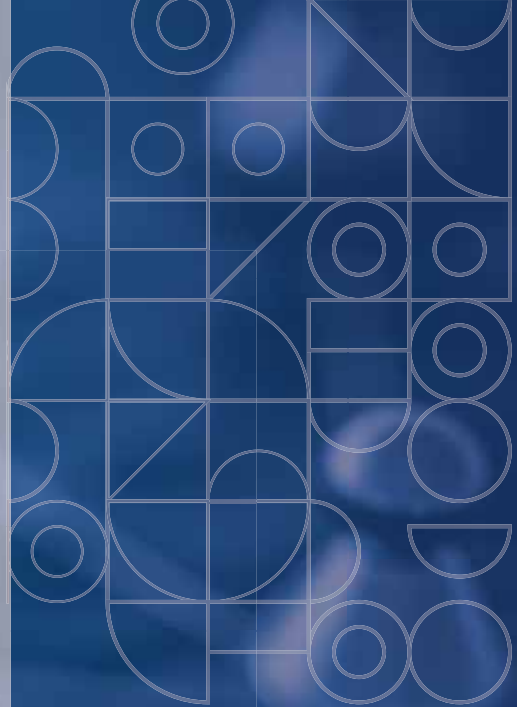
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SA's Largest Legal Network





Lesley Mokgoro

Chair, PH Group

Introduction

It is my privilege to present the PH Group Transformation Report for 2024-2025, a comprehensive account of the progress the Group has made in advancing meaningful and measurable transformation across the PH network.

Over the past two decades, the PH Group has grown into South Africa's largest network of independent law firms - united not by ownership, but by purpose. This report reflects that purpose in action. It demonstrates how each member firm, regardless of size or geography, continues to contribute to the development of a more inclusive, sustainable, and representative legal profession.

Transformation within the PH Group has always been approached as a long-term, values-driven endeavour. The developments highlighted in this report underscore the impact of that approach: from the steady increase in black and female appointments at all professional levels, to our growing investment in skills development, graduate recruitment, and access-to-justice initiatives. These achievements are not the result of isolated efforts, but rather the product of deliberate, coordinated strategies supported by strong internal standards and a shared commitment to excellence.

During this reporting period, member firms continued strengthening the pipeline of future practitioners through focused recruitment and development programmes, including our Virtual Open Weeks, the PH Foundation Bursary Programme, and the Honour Medal Programme. At the same time, firms continued to expand opportunities for black-owned enterprises and legal service providers, contributing significantly to transformation across the wider legal services value chain. The financial investments made during 2024 and 2025 reflect not only compliance, but a deeper belief in the role our network plays in advancing the transformation of the profession and the communities we serve.

They also demonstrate the strength of the PH Group model - firms working independently but aligned by common values, consistent standards, and a collective vision for transformation.

As we celebrate two decades of growth and collaboration, we stand on a solid foundation from which to continue driving meaningful change. I am confident that the progress documented in this report reflects not only what we have achieved together, but also what we are capable of as a network moving forward.

Thank you to every member firm for your contributions, your commitment, and your belief in the collective power of our Group Values. We look forward to building on this momentum as we continue working toward a transformed and thriving legal sector.

Lesley Mokgoro

Chair, PH Group
30 March 2026

New Breed Law Firms

Member firms aspire to be New Breed Law Firms™, distinguishing themselves within the legal sector through their commitment to excellence, innovation, and transformation. Embracing the New Breed Law Firm™ philosophy reflects a firm's alignment with the PH Group's core values and affirms its identity as a truly South African practice - one that is equipped to meet the evolving needs of its clients while reflecting the diversity and character of the country it serves.

The PH Group maintains a set of well-established Group Standards to which all member firms are expected to align, continuously striving to enhance their level of adherence. To assess progress and ensure consistent application of these standards, the PH Group conducts a comprehensive certification process every two years. This evidence-based review evaluates each member firm's compliance with the Group Standards, and top-performing firms are formally recognised through the allocation of Group Awards.

The PH Group Standards are built around the professional 'service triangle' and encompass key areas including client service, staff satisfaction, firm management, transformation, and participation in PH Group activities. These standards are supported by our Group Values and collectively guide member firms in their aspiration to be recognised as New Breed Law Firms™.

Only member firms of the PH Group may be designated as New Breed Law Firms™. This designation reflects the Group's core objective: to ensure that each member firm is not only a leading practice within its area of exclusivity, but also operates as a well-managed, compliant, ethical, and diversified South African law firm.

Top-performing member firms are recognised through the New Breed Law Firm Awards. These awards acknowledge the progress made by firms toward attaining New Breed Law Firm™ status and reflect their commitment to excellence within the Group. Award allocations take place following the completion of the biennial certification process, during which firms are assessed against established performance and compliance criteria.

The awards provide member firms with an opportunity to demonstrate their achievements to clients and staff, thereby reinforcing their dedication to quality and continuous improvement. Each award remains valid for a period of two years from the date of issue.

Award categories:



Platinum Award

For firms that obtained above 90% compliance with the Group Standards. Twenty member firms received Platinum Awards in 2025.



Gold Award

For firms that obtained above 80% compliance with the Group Standards. Eleven member firms received Gold Awards in 2025.

Group BEE Standards

A fundamental requirement for attaining New Breed Law Firm™ status is a demonstrated commitment to the Group Value of Diversity. To formalise and give measurable structure to this commitment, the Group adopted its BEE Standards in 2014 as part of the broader suite of Group Standards. These standards function as an internal compliance framework for member firms and address the gap created by the absence of a sector-specific legal BEE charter (prior to 20 September 2024*).

While the Group BEE Standards set out the minimum transformation requirements expected of all member firms, compliance with these baseline measures alone is insufficient. Member firms are expected to embrace a broader and more comprehensive approach to transformation that extends beyond minimum thresholds. The Group acknowledges that only a holistic and sustained commitment to transformation will enable firms to meet the full intent of the Group BEE Standards and ultimately demonstrate meaningful, measurable change over time.

In accordance with the Group BEE Standards, member firms are required to:

- Achieve at least a level 4 BEE certificate.
- Annually submit a workplace skills plan.
- Have a current employment equity plan in place to transform its organisational environment.
- Designated employer firms must submit an employment equity report to the Department of Labour.
- Have an annual target of 50% black candidate legal practitioner appointments of all appointments made in the year.
- Have an annual target of 50% legal practitioner appointments of all legal practitioners appointed in the year.
- Have an annual target of 50% of black director appointments of all directors appointed in the year.
- Firms must outsource 30% of all legal services to black law firms (at least 25.1% black-owned) and/or black advocates or other legal service providers (at least 25.1% black-owned).
- Firms must have a functioning pro bono programme meeting the requirements for pro bono work of the relevant Legal Practice Council.

The legal sector continues to experience uncertainty after the publication of the new Legal Sector B-BBEE Code (“LSC”), particularly given the absence of key institutional structures not yet established - such as the Legal Charter Council and the Legal Sector Transformation Fund - as well as continuing legal challenges against the LSC by a number of law firms.

As a result, the Legal Sector Steering Committee clarified on 4 February 2025 that firms whose financial years had already started before 20 September 2024 could continue to be measured under the Generic Codes for one more cycle. This provided temporary relief for firms still preparing to transition into the new LSC. As of date of publication of this report (March 2026), the LSC is fully in effect.

**The new Legal Sector B-BBEE Code was formally gazetted on 20 September 2024, marking its official commencement as the first sector specific empowerment framework for the legal profession.*

Candidate Legal Practitioners

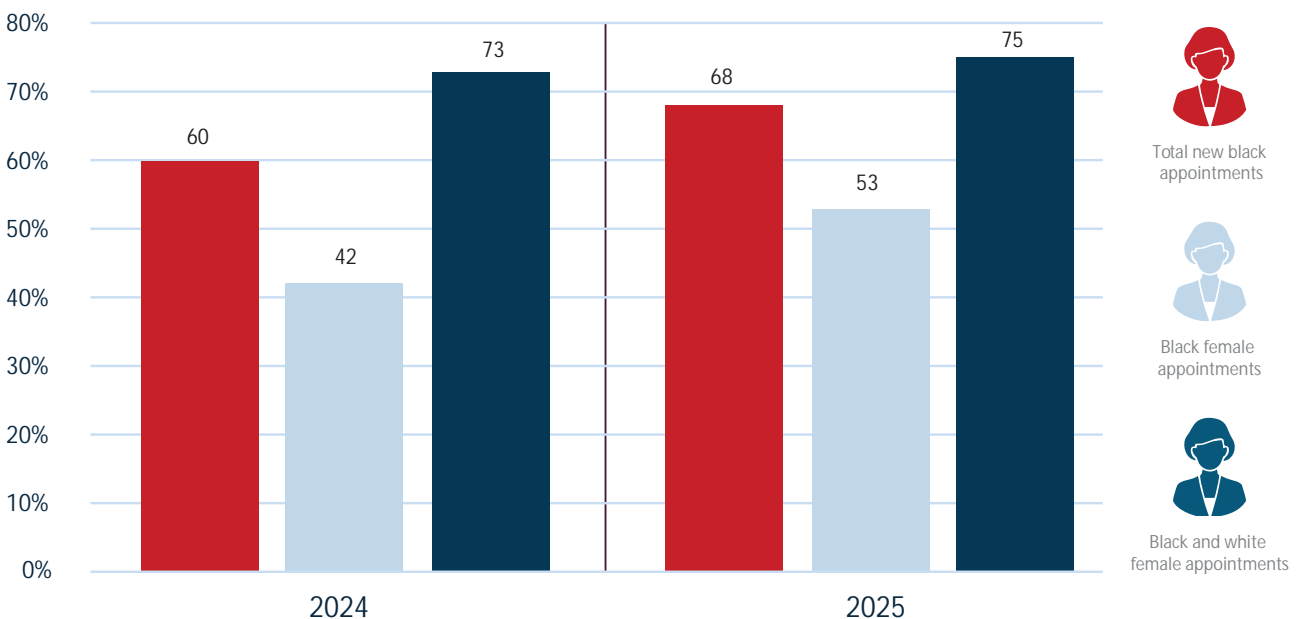
Experience within the PH Group shows that the development of legal practitioners, and ultimately the progression to director level within small and medium-sized law firms, typically begins with young professionals who start their careers at the firm as candidate legal practitioners. Ensuring consistency in the appointment of black and female candidate legal practitioners is therefore essential, as it directly influences the pipeline of future black and female legal practitioners and, ultimately, leadership within member firms. This approach supports the Group’s broader objective of fostering meaningful transformation through sustained and deliberate talent development.

In 2024, 60% of all new candidate legal practitioner appointments in the PH Group were black, which is a decrease from the 70% black appointments in 2023. Of all appointments, 42% were black females, slightly down from 50% in 2023, with the overall tally for female appointments having increased to 73% from 70% in 2023.

In 2025, black candidate legal practitioner appointments in the PH Group increased to 68% of all appointments, with black female appointments moving to nearly 53% of all appointments made and black and white female appointments accounting for nearly 75% of all appointments in 2025.

These results continue to exceed the PH Group’s minimum standards for candidate legal practitioner appointments and demonstrate the effectiveness of the Group’s targeted graduate recruitment initiatives. The strong gender representation further highlights a sustained shift away from historically male-dominated appointment patterns. Over time, this trajectory is expected to support broader gender transformation within the professional ranks of member firms and, ultimately, across the legal profession as a whole.

Member firms collectively spent nearly R26.5 million on the remuneration of black candidate legal practitioners in 2024 and 2025 who served articles at member firms, with remuneration trends also reflecting a consistent upward trajectory as member firms continue to increase remuneration levels to attract quality legal graduates to their firms.





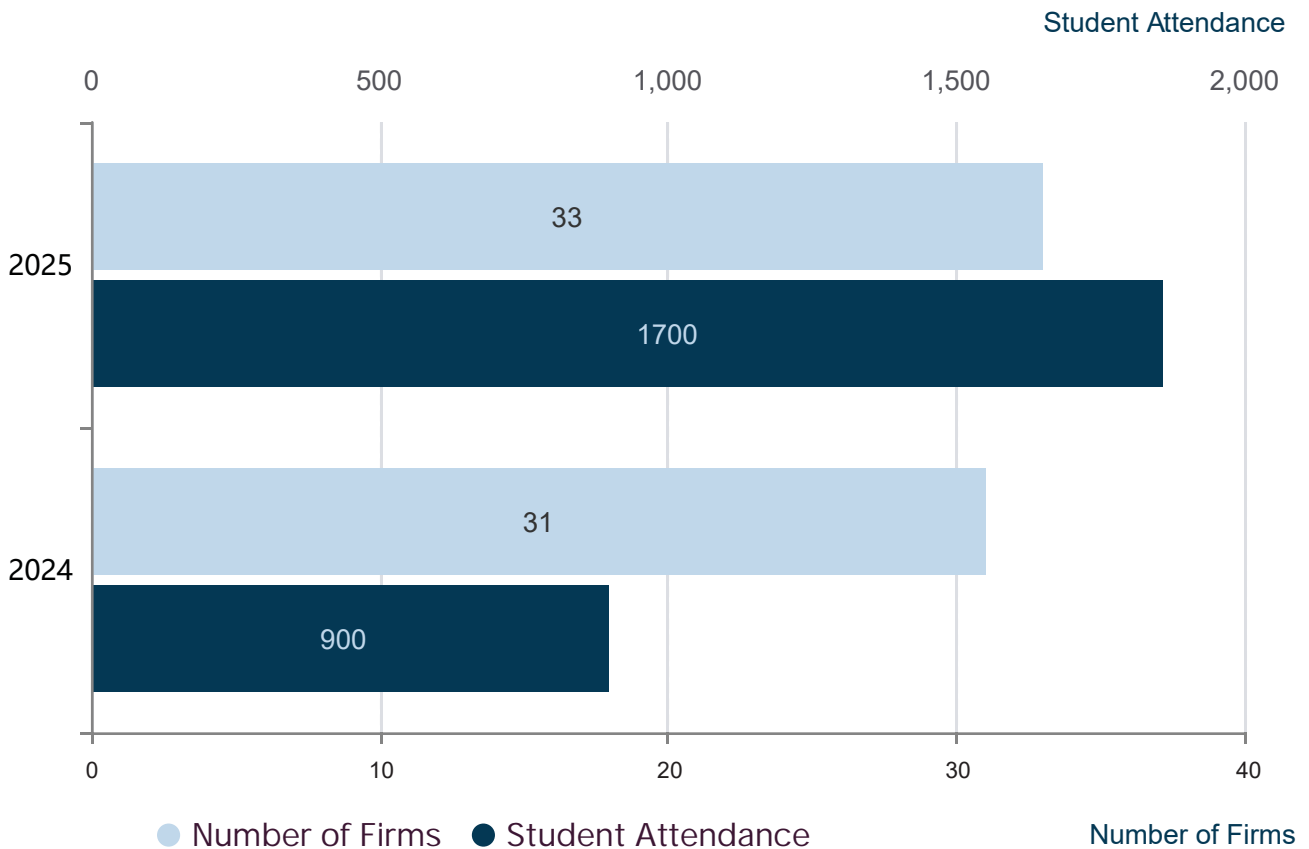
Virtual Open Weeks

In 2025, the PH Group successfully hosted its fifth consecutive virtual Open Week, a unique national recruitment initiative designed for law students across South Africa. The programme aims to create awareness of employment opportunities within PH Group member firms and to showcase the benefits available to candidate legal practitioners, including specialised research support from the Knowledge Centre, training webinars, membership of the Young Lawyers Group, and access to the Members Portal.

With nearly 14,000 combined online applications for articles for 2024 and 2025, the initiative clearly achieved its objective of reaching a

wide and diverse pool of students. The virtual format continues to ensure accessibility for all participants, requiring only an internet connection. Participation in the programme grew significantly, with 31 member firms and just over 900 students attending in 2024, increasing to 33 firms and more than 1,700 students in 2025 - a substantial 78% rise in student engagement.

The PH Group remains committed to advancing this initiative, which provides member firms with access to diverse graduates, promotes the PH Group brand, and, most importantly, connects students with potential employers across the country.





 VIRTUAL
OPEN WEEK **ph**
GROUP



13,000

Applications for articles at
member firms



Bursary Programme

During 2024 and 2025, the PH Foundation Bursary Programme awarded R520,000 in bursaries to 26 black candidate legal practitioners completing their articles at member firms. This brings the total programme investment since 2014 to R3 million, supporting 110 black candidate legal practitioners across the Group. Over the years, the programme has played a significant role in helping member firms attract top black graduates - both male and female - to begin their careers within the PH Group.

While we are proud of the impact achieved to date, we recognise that needs continue to evolve. Accordingly, the programme structure will be revised to focus on providing financial support to deserving undergraduate and postgraduate law students across South Africa. We look forward to reporting on the outcomes and impact of this expanded approach in the next reporting period.

Honour Medal Programme

To strengthen awareness of the PH Group and enhance its positioning as an attractive career destination for top law graduates, the PH Group Honour Medal Programme was established in 2010. The programme recognises outstanding academic achievement by awarding Honour Medals to graduates who complete their LL.B degrees *Cum Laude*, and at qualifying universities, *Summa Cum Laude*. Through this initiative, the Group not only promotes excellence but also supports its long-term goal of attracting high-performing graduates into the PH Group's talent pipeline.

PH Group Honour Medals are awarded annually to top qualifying law graduates across South Africa during formal prize-giving ceremonies at ten of the country's leading Law Faculties. In 2024 and 2025, a total of 242 Honour Medals were presented to deserving graduates, bringing the cumulative number of medals awarded since the programme's inception 14 years ago to 1 677. This sustained level of recognition underscores the Group's long-standing commitment to academic excellence and its strategic focus on identifying and attracting high-performing talent into the legal profession.

2024 - 2025

242

Graduates awarded
PH Group Honour Medals



Since 2010

1677

Graduates awarded
PH Group Honour Medals

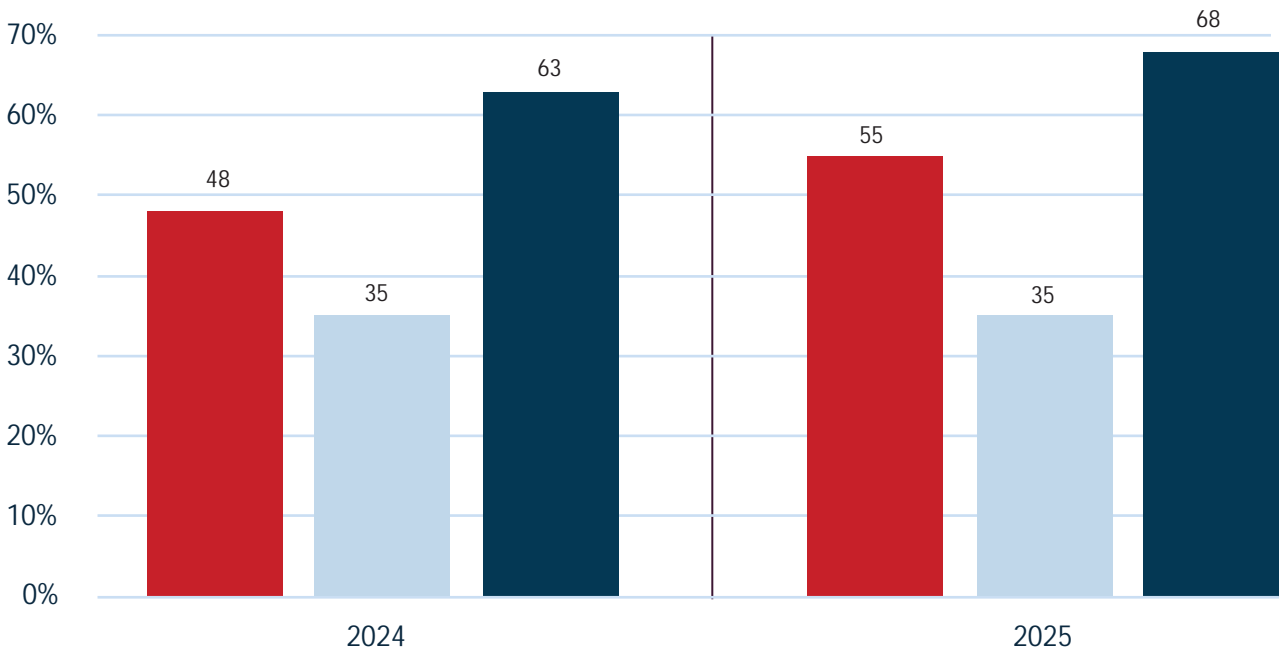
Developing Legal Practitioners

As young professionals complete their articles at member firms, the expectation is that they will secure a professional appointment within the firm, followed by progression toward eventual directorship. However, opportunities for such appointments are significantly more limited than opportunities available at the candidate legal practitioner level. This makes the transformation and development of young professionals into future directors challenging. Accordingly, the proportion of professional and director appointments at member firms becomes a critical metric for assessing the true impact of transformation efforts, as it reflects the extent to which the talent pipeline is successful in advancing into senior leadership roles.

From 2023 to 2024, black legal practitioner appointments grew slightly to 48%, and of all the appointments in 2024, 35% were black female with the number of black and white female appointments increasing from 62% in 2023, to just over 63% in 2024.

At the end of 2025, the overall percentage of black appointments reached 55%, surpassing the PH Group requirement of 50%. Black female appointments remained steady at 35%, and black and white female appointments climbed even more to 68%.

A particularly encouraging trend is the sustained upward trajectory of black and female appointments over time. Notably, female appointments continue to mirror the strong patterns observed at the candidate legal practitioner level, signalling meaningful progress and offering a positive outlook for advancing gender transformation within the profession.



Total new black appointments



Black female appointments



Black and white female appointments

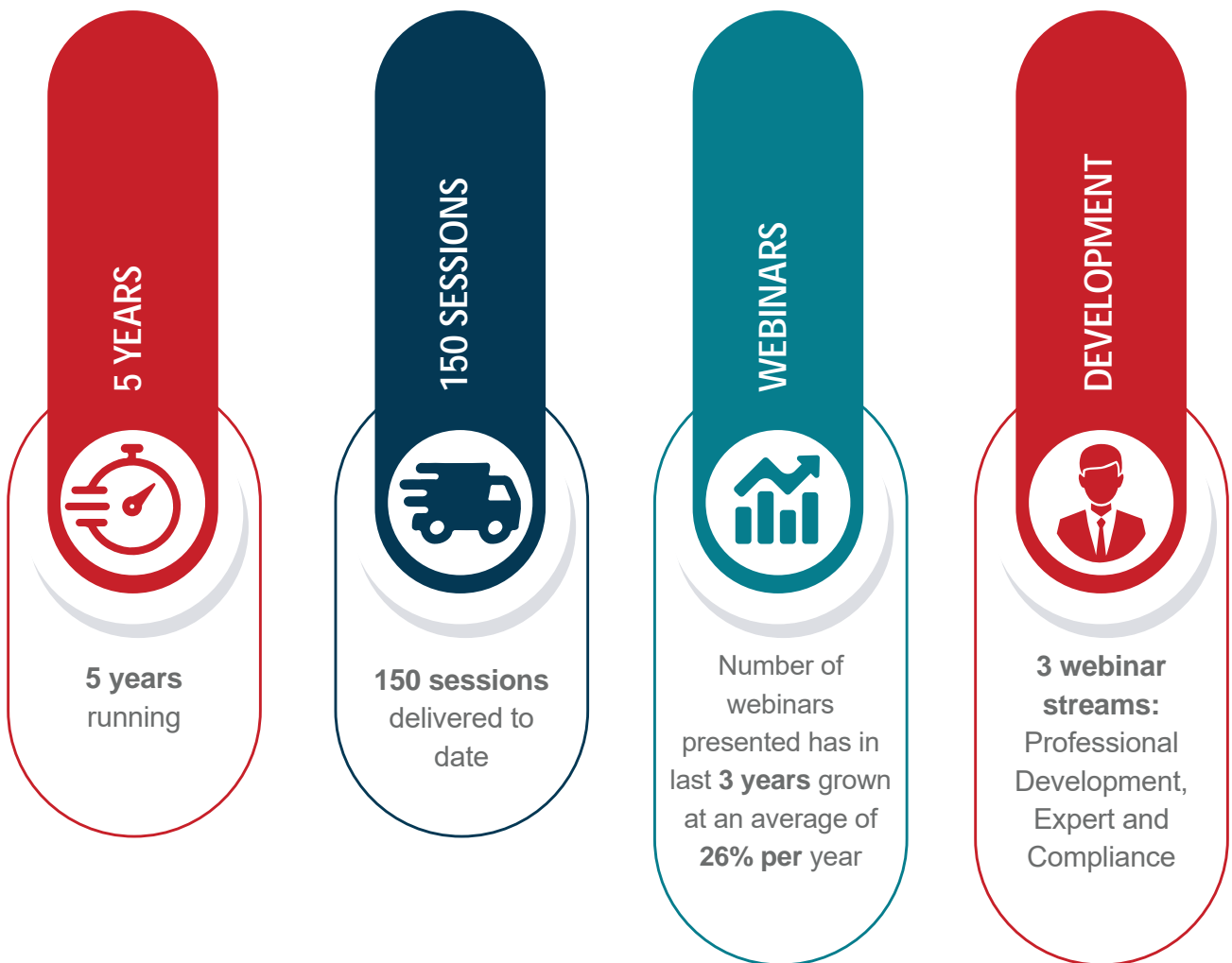


Professional Development

Since its launch in October 2020, the PH Group's training programme has expanded significantly in both quality and scale, with nearly 150 sessions delivered to date. In 2024, two new webinar streams were added to the existing Professional Development offering: Expert Webinars and Compliance Webinars.

The Expert Webinars feature specialists from within the PH Group and external practitioners presenting on key areas such as family law, trusts, tax, corporate structuring, mergers and acquisitions and estate planning. The Compliance Webinars focus on essential regulatory topics, including POPIA and FICA, ensuring that member firms remain up to date and compliant with current legal requirements.

Together, these training streams serve a dual purpose - enhancing professional development through high-quality learning while also providing valuable exposure and marketing opportunities for presenters.

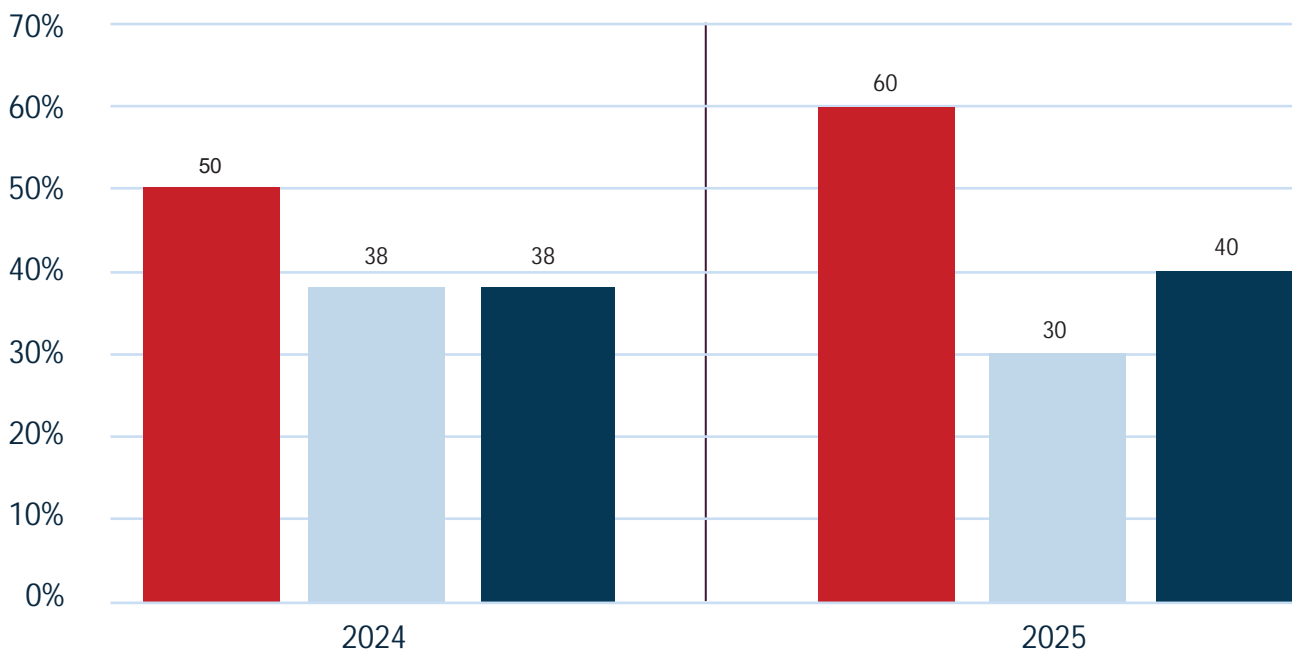


Developing Directors

Becoming a director is the final step in the evolution of a professional and the culmination of many years of investment from a candidate legal practitioner level. This final step, however, is high, as opportunities for director appointments in smaller firms are often reliant on director retirements or economic growth which can support new director appointments.

This translates to a smaller turnover in directors than at other levels in firms and an attendant smaller number of new director appointments. However, with the continuous growth in both black and female candidate legal practitioner and legal practitioner appointments across the PH Group, it is a certainty that in time director appointments at member firms will follow suit.

Since the last report, black director appointments nearly doubled from 36% in 2023 to 60% in 2025. Of all the appointments in 2024, 38% were black females which dropped slightly to 30% in 2025. Over the past four years, female director appointments have consistently averaged around 40%, suggesting that despite annual fluctuations, the representation of women at director level has remained relatively steady.



Total new black appointments



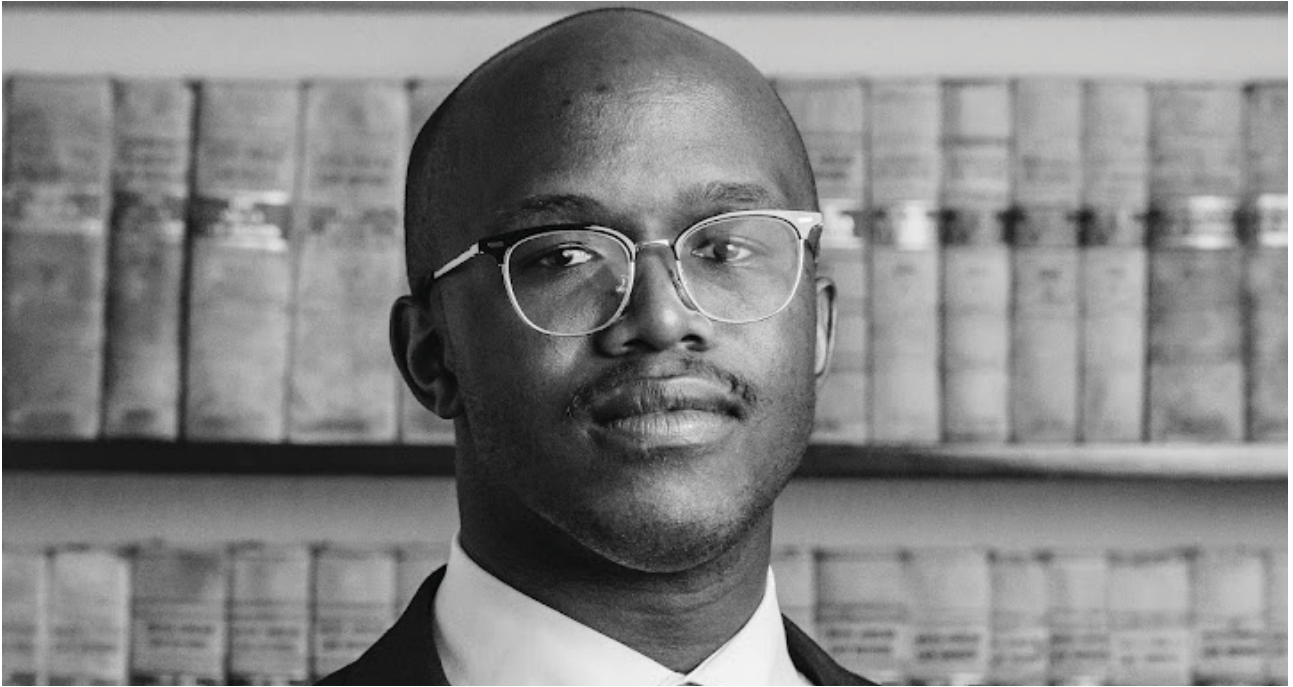
Black female appointments



Black and white female appointments

Total new Black appointments nearly doubled from 2023 to 2025

Female director appointments remain steady at **40%**



Socio-Economic Development

Member firms invested R1.7 million in 2024 and a further R1.8 million in 2025 toward socio-economic development initiatives, all of which were required to benefit organisations comprising more than 80% black beneficiaries.

Institutions supported included Sasolburg High School Golf Day, Mandela Day at St Mary's Hospital, Welkom Preparatory School, and Morning Star Children's Centre.



Caring For Our Communities

Member firms continued to demonstrate their commitment to the Group Value of Caring during 2024 and 2025 through a range of community-focused projects and initiatives. Over this two-year period, member firms collectively invested just over R2.1 million in corporate social responsibility activities within their communities. These initiatives extended beyond beneficiaries

who were exclusively black persons, reflecting a broader commitment to social upliftment and community support across diverse groups.

Institutions supported included SPCA, Algoa FM Big Walk for Cancer, SANBS, Blessings Animal Shelter and CHOC.



Skills Development

Skills development expenditure is a key differentiator among top-performing firms. Reflecting this trend, member firms invested R17 million in 2024 and a further R19 million in 2025 in skills development initiatives. This sustained increase underscores a growing commitment to building professional capability and strengthening the long-term talent pipeline across the Group.



Enterprise Development

Member firms contributed R14 million in 2024 and a further R13 million in 2025 toward the development and support of black-owned suppliers and service providers. This support includes administrative assistance, loans, donations, financial contributions, and discounted legal services provided to black individuals and black-owned businesses. These investments underscore the Group's commitment to strengthening black-owned enterprises and advancing meaningful economic participation within the broader legal services value chain.

Pro Bono Work

In 2024, member firms provided pro bono legal services valued at just under R4 million to individuals and communities in need. This commitment increased in 2025, with the value of pro bono services rising to R4.7 million. These contributions reflect the Group's ongoing dedication to social responsibility and its role in promoting equitable access to legal services.

In 2024, PH OpenLaw was launched as a new initiative to provide meaningful legal support to communities where access to justice is limited or out of reach. Through PH OpenLaw a first Justice Centre was opened in Kathu at the end of 2024

as a virtual legal community support initiative. In partnership with Training Portal and its existing Community Campus in Kathu, PH OpenLaw provides free legal advice to the local communities, delivered virtually through a dedicated Justice Booth at the campus.

A second Justice Centre has been opened in Vereeniging in early 2026, with a third scheduled for Stellenbosch during 2026. In this manner PH OpenLaw is marking the beginning of our response to the need for greater access to justice and our solution to addressing this need.



Preferential Procurement

Preferential Procurement remains a priority for all enterprises, particularly where formal BEE verification is needed. Law firms are similarly pressed to focus on their procurement and ensure that the procurement from verified black suppliers and service providers is maximised. This approach not only supports compliance with BEE requirements but also contributes to strengthening black-owned enterprises within the broader legal services supply chain.

The Group's centralised procurement company, GroupServe (Pty) Ltd, has also facilitated support to black suppliers and service providers, with recognised procurement expenditure in 2024 amounting to R188 million, escalating to R195 million in 2025.



Black Legal Service Providers

As a legal network, member firms make extensive use of other legal service providers. As part of the Group BEE Standards, member firms prioritise, wherever possible, the procurement of services from black-owned legal service providers - such as sheriffs, tracing agents, and law firms.

This commitment has resulted in expenditure of R88 million on black-owned legal service providers in 2024, increasing significantly to R130 million in 2025. These figures demonstrate the Group's sustained focus on strengthening transformation within the legal services value chain and expanding opportunities for black-owned enterprises.

Briefing Black Advocates

Given that many rural firms have limited opportunities to brief counsel directly and often rely on correspondent firms based in urban centres, their ability to influence the briefing patterns of advocates is not always fully within their control. This structural constraint affects the extent to which these firms can directly advance transformation objectives in advocacy briefing practices.

Despite these structural constraints, member firms have continued to prioritise the briefing of black male and female advocates in alignment with the Group BEE Standards. This commitment has resulted in a substantial increase in briefing patterns, with total briefs to black advocates rising from R20.5 million in 2022 and 2023 to R25 million during 2024 and 2025.

Similarly, briefing of black female advocates has grown markedly, increasing from R3.5 million in 2022 and 2023 to R12.5 million over the 2024 and 2025 period. These improvements reflect the Group's ongoing efforts to advance equitable briefing practices and strengthen transformation within the advocacy sector.

Conclusion

The 2024 - 2025 reporting period shows that the PH Group continues to strengthen its position as a leader in meaningful transformation within the legal sector. Member firms have demonstrated a strong commitment to developing people, expanding opportunities, and investing in the long-term sustainability of a more inclusive profession. The progress highlighted in this report reflects both measurable gains and the dedication of firms to advancing equity, representation, and excellence.

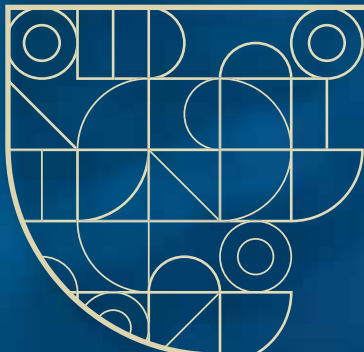
Although challenges remain, the achievements of the past two years reinforce the effectiveness of our shared approach - one driven by intentional leadership, coordinated investment, and collective action. Looking ahead, the PH Group will continue to strengthen its standards, support member firms, and prioritise transformation as a driver of excellence, competitiveness, and broader participation in South Africa's legal landscape.

Together, we are building stronger firms and contributing to a more just, diverse, and resilient legal profession for future generations.

Transformation Expenditure

Transformation expenditure by Group and member firms during 2024/25*	2024	2025	TOTAL
Annual Verification Cost of Firms	R 700 000,00	R 680 000,00	R 1 380 000,00
Annual Verification Support provided to Firms	R 950 000,00	R 990 000,00	R 1 940 000,00
Annual Employment Equity and Skills Development Support to Firms	R 400 000,00	R 450 000,00	R 850 000,00
Group Graduate Recruitment	R 57 000,00	R 15 000,00	R 72 000,00
Remuneration of Black Candidate Legal Practitioners	R 12 500 000,00	R 14 000 000,00	R 26 500 000,00
PH Foundation Bursary Programme	R 300 000,00	R 220 000,00	R 520 000,00
Skills Development Expenditure	R 17 500 000,00	R 19 200 000,00	R 36 700 000,00
Socio-economic Development Expenditure	R 1 700 000,00	R 1 800 000,00	R 3 500 000,00
Community Support Expenditure	R 1 100 000,00	R 1 060 000,00	R 2 160 000,00
Enterprise Development Expenditure	R 14 300 000,00	R 13 200 000,00	R 27 500 000,00
Pro Bono Support	R 3 900 000,00	R 4 700 000,00	R 8 600 000,00
Support of Black Legal Service Providers	R 88 000 000,00	R 130 000 000,00	R 218 000 000,00
Support to Black Advocates	R 11 000 000,00	R 14 000 000,00	R 25 000 000,00
BEE Procurement Expenditure	R 188 000 000,00	R 195 000 000,00	R 383 000 000,00
TOTAL	R 340 400 000,00	R 395 300 000,00	R 735 700 000,00

*Costs have been rounded off for ease of use. Most costs have been drawn from formal BEE verification results of firms during 2024 and 2025.



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