

### **PRESS RELEASE : IMMEDIATE**

There has been a dramatic shift in trade union balance of power in the leather industry. The Southern African Clothing & Textile Workers Union (SACTWU) continues to register consistent membership growth in the leather industry. The National Union of Leather & Allied Workers (NULAW) has dramatically lost its majority in the industry, from a high of 65% a few years ago to only 37% this year.

This was confirmed at a Council meeting of the National Bargaining Council for the Leather Industry, held in Durban today.

For the footwear sector, the representivity statistics adopted by the meeting shows that SACTWU's representivity in the footwear sector has grown impressively from 17% in 2004 to 27% as at March this year, while that of NULAW has declined dramatically from 64% to 44% over the same period. This means that NULAW on its own is no longer able to reach wage or other agreements with footwear employers and would need to work much closer with SACTWU. In fact, no agreements can now be reached in the footwear sector without SACTWU's consent.

The footwear sector is the dominant sector in the leather bargaining council, representing 62% of the total number of employees registered with the leather bargaining council. The leather bargaining council representivity statistics adopted today further shows that SACTWU is now the majority union in the tanning sector (54%) and holds a joint majority with NULAW in the General Goods & Handbags section of the industry.

SACTWU is pleased with this development since it has always advocated that the interests of leather workers is best represented by stronger unity between the unions in the industry.

Issued by

Andre Kriel

SACTWU

Deputy General Secretary