

Sanef condemns Western Cape Government's *Cape Times* decision

Sanef has strongly condemned a Western Cape provincial government directive to provincial departments concerning their subscriptions to the *Cape Times*...

CAPE TIMES



The Management Committee of the South African National Editors' Forum (Sanef) at its fortnightly meeting yesterday strongly condemned the directive by the Director-General of the Western Cape, advocate Brent Gerber, to provincial departments to not renew their subscriptions of the *Cape Times* newspaper. The Management Committee is to send a letter of protest to the WC government about this, calling for the decision to be rescinded.

According to Sanef, Gerber wrote to all heads of department on 9 March, informing them not to renew their subscriptions and to initiate further subscriptions to the newspaper.

'Fruitless expenditure'

"Cabinet has discussed with concern the ongoing decline in the quality of reporting in the *Cape Times*. As we get newspaper cuttings every day, Cabinet considers it to be fruitless expenditure to renew *Cape Times* subscriptions," Gerber is reported to have written in his letter.

Sanef says it finds it appalling that the executive committee of the Western Cape government, led by a former journalist, Helen Zille, interferes at this level in the affairs of provincial department heads, who should have the freedom to choose what news mediums they find useful or not.

'If the Western Cape government has an issue with the quality of content in the *Cape Times*, they should address it with the editor of that newspaper or through complaints to the office of the Press Ombudsman, and not by effectively calling for a government boycott of the *Cape Times*.'

For more:

Independent Newspapers in its turn, has responded...

- BizNews: [Indy responds to W Cape gov'ts cutting of *Cape Times* subscriptions...](#)
- EWN: [Zille: it's not a boycott, the *Cape Times* doesn't add value...](#) Western Cape Premier Helen Zille speaks to Talk Radio 702's John Robbie about her government's decision not to renew its subscription of the *Cape Times* in future. She rubbishes talk of a boycott and says the quality of *Cape Times* reporting is poor and doesn't add value, and asked: "We don't have to subscribe... what makes newspapers a special product?"

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