

# PHINDILE T. HLELA (MBL, M.Inst.D)

## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

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A seasoned professional with a diverse skill set in statutory regulation, pricing and tariff analysis, and regulatory impact assessment within network industries, corporate governance, and a comprehensive academic background. I hold a Master's in Business Leadership ("MBL") degree, Executive Development Programme ("EDP") certification, Senior Management Development Programme ("SMDP") certification, and a BCom Honours in Economics, and I am a member of the Institute of Directors in South Africa (IoDSA).

Currently, I serve as the Manager for ICT and Postal Retail Services Regulation at ICASA (a Chapter 9-aligned institution where independence, transparency, and public accountability are fundamental), with over 18 years of expertise at both specialist and management levels in strategy, corporate governance, regulatory oversight, policy development, performance monitoring, and public-sector economics, gained within national and provincial government environments. At this level, I am accountable for strategic planning, performance delivery, governance oversight, financial and human resource management, and high-level stakeholder engagement with Parliament, Executive Authorities, Board, and International Bodies. My professional journey highlights a solid track record of project management, strategy formulation and implementation, risk management, provision of executive and board advisory support, and people leadership capabilities.

I am a patriotic South African who has strong ethical leadership, independence of thought, governance discipline, and a deep appreciation of the constitutional values, accountability standards, and human rights ethos central to the work of the SAHRC.

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

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**Nationality:** South African

**Languages:** English, isiZulu, and isiXhosa

## EDUCATION

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<b>2024</b>	Executive Development Programme (EDP)	University of Pretoria (UP)
<b>2018</b>	Senior Management Development Programme (SMDP)	University of Stellenbosch
<b>2016</b>	Master of Business Leadership (MBL)	UNISA
<b>2011</b>	BCom Honours in Economics	UNISA
<b>2009</b>	Postgraduate Certificate Research Skills Course	Regenesys Business School
<b>2009</b>	Advance Management Development Programme (AMDP)	University of Pretoria Graduate Centre
<b>2006</b>	BCom Finance and Economics	University of KwaZulu-Natal
<b>2002</b>	Matric (Passed with Distinction)	Newlands Secondary School (KZN)

## CAREER SUMMARY

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<b>Apr 2017 - Current</b>	Manager: Retail Services Regulations ("RSRU")	ICASA
<b>2015 – 2017</b>	Market Analyst	ICASA
<b>2010 – 2015</b>	Research Analyst	ICASA
<b>2008 – 2010</b>	Fiscal Policy Assistant Research Analyst	Gauteng Provincial Treasury

## CAREER HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

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- **Career highlights include the following:**
  - Leading and managing the Data Prices Benchmark Research Project, I presented the findings to the Select Committee on Public Enterprises and Communications in the South African Parliament.
  - 100% performance and success rate for all RSRU projects and strategic outputs since leading the Unit (over the past 7 years); and
  - Being selected as the only Market Analyst to be part of the Inquiry into the State of Competition in the ICT Sector (the panel comprised of the Executive Leadership and Council Members at ICASA). This inquiry investigated various ICT matters, such as market concentration levels, and spectrum assignment, and subsequently certain projects were initiated, e.g., Priority Markets Study and Spectrum auction and allocation.

- **Academic highlights include:**
  - Distinction in the MBL Research Report: *“The Effectiveness of the Employment Tax Incentive Scheme towards Encouraging Youth Employment in South Africa: A Study based on the Retail Sector;”*
  - Distinctions in Executive Project Management (MBL); Strategic Financial Management (MBL); Corporate Governance (MBL) and Business Research (MBL);
  - Director’s Award for Best Student for SMDP (University of Stellenbosch Business School) and distinction pass for the Programme; and
  - A distinction pass for the Executive Development Programme (EDP).

## DETAILED WORK EXPERIENCE

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2017 - Current

Manager: Retail Services Regulations Unit

ICASA

The RSRU focuses on establishing a coordinated and valid market structure, network access, and competition regulatory framework within the ICT and Postal sector, particularly in retail services. This involves conducting comprehensive **quantitative and qualitative research, economic and financial analysis, including cost-benefit analysis, benchmarking, and impact studies**. In this role, I am responsible for leading a strategic regulatory unit with national impact. This is a proactive role in policy development, strategic foresight, and making recommendations on ICT and Postal Retail regulations issues to the executives, board, and Parliament.

Key Responsibilities include the following:

- **Strategic Leadership:** Lead and guide a team of Market Analysts and ensure annual strategic planning and alignment with organisational priorities and national policy directives to the Retail Unit’s deliverables.
- **Financial Expertise:** Utilise financial analysis skills for cost-benefit analysis, benchmarking, and impact studies, contributing to evidence-based decision-making within the organisation.
- **Regulatory Framework Development:** Directly involved in formulating a coordinated and valid market structure, network access, and competition regulatory environment, contributing to the sector's robust regulatory framework.
- **Policy Formulation:** Play a key role in policy development by actively contributing to the drafting of regulations related to consumer issues, prices, and standard terms and conditions for licensees in the ICT sector.
- **Statistical Analysis for Stakeholders:** Analyse, review, and provide analytical direction of statistical data and pricing information for stakeholders, including Government departments and international entities such as ITU and CRASA.
- **Monitoring:** Monitor and advise on non-compliance issues regarding pricing and tariffs, and resolve related queries and regulatory aspects. Further monitoring of retail ICT services competition economics trends, risks, and market dynamics, and advice/present recommendations based on findings to EXCO and the Board.
- **Risk Management:** Actively engage in risk management, analysing retail ICT services' economic trends, risks, and market dynamics, providing recommendations to top leadership. Through this, I ensure sound governance, compliance, and risk management in line with PFMA principles and regulatory frameworks.
- **Operational Oversight:** Provide operational management oversight, covering Financial, Human Resources, IT, and Administration responsibilities related to the Manager function within ICASA policies.
- **Project Management Excellence:** Effectively manage and lead cross-functional project teams, demonstrating strong project management skills, including planning, resource allocation, and budget management.
- **Corporate governance, Public Engagement and Parliament and Executive Advisory:** Prepare presentations and speaking notes for conferences, parliamentary sessions for EXCO/CEO, Board, and the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies Ministry (“DCDT”), addressing various topical issues within the ICT Sector, such as cost-to-communicate and data prices. In this function, I provide strategic advice and recommendations through these presentations, speaking notes for conferences, and parliamentary sessions.
- **Quality Assurance in Reporting:** Conduct quality checks and produce internal and external research papers, PowerPoint presentations, and recommendation reports for EXCO and Board approval.

2015 – 2017

Market Analyst

ICASA

- **Market Inquiries:** Supplied research input, conducted analysis, interpreted economic data, and offered regulatory support, with a particular focus on Chapter 10 market inquiries and review processes from the perspective of wholesale markets.
- **Policy Contributions:** Contributed input and recommendations for briefing notes, proposed directives, and policy matters within the DCDT Ministry, including substantial contributions to policy documents like the Integrated National ICT Policy White Paper and related reports.

- **Economic & Regulatory Guidance:** Offered guidance, assistance, and recommendations regarding the potential economic and regulatory impacts of proposed Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A) within the ICT sector to the executive committee and the board.
- **Key Projects:** Actively participated in and took a leadership role in council (board) committees for both Divisional and Organisational regulatory projects, including projects like Call Termination, End-User Subscriber Service Charter, Equity Ownership HDG, and Application of the ICT Sector Code in the ICT Sector and Priority Markets Study.

**2010-2015      Research Analyst: Markets and Competition      ICASA**

- **Market Trends Analysis:** Conducted qualitative and quantitative research and analysis, delivering insightful reports on trends in the ICT sector and associated markets.
- **Economic Research and Analytical Support:** Provided crucial economic research, analytical support, and recommendations on matters related to economic regulation to executives and the board.
- **Market Reviews:** Led market reviews and conducted studies to define markets, offering valuable insights and advice on enhancing competition effectiveness.
- **Reporting:** Played a key role in developing discussion documents and contributed to the drafting of regulations, ensuring clarity and compliance.
- **Analysis of the ICT Sector:** Conducted a thorough analysis of the ICT sector, utilising statistical and financial data to provide a comprehensive understanding of its status.

**2008- 2010      Fiscal Policy Assistant Research Analyst      Gauteng Provincial Treasury**

- **Strategic Contribution to Fiscal Policy:** Played a pivotal role by gathering information, conducting research, and analyzing social and economic issues. Provided insights to inform and advise on fiscal policy development and the annual budget process.
- **Monitoring Revenue Projections and Forecasting Models:** Played a pivotal role by gathering information, conducting research, and analysing social and economic issues. Provided insights to inform and advise on fiscal policy development and the annual budget process.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration for Credible Revenue Budgeting:** Fostered effective collaboration with stakeholders to ensure credible revenue budgeting. Played a key role in communicating budget policies to relevant departments.

**OTHER EXPERIENCE AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

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**2020 – 2023**      Board Member and Treasurer: TLC Children’s Home  
**Current**      Member of the Institute of Directors South Africa (IoDSA)

**TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS**

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**TECHNICAL**

- Project Management
- Quantitative and Qualitative Research
- Cost-Benefit Analysis
- Risk Management
- Market Analysis
- Financial Analysis
- Corporate governance
- Competition Assessment
- Economic Regulation and Tariff Analysis
- Strategy Leadership and Management

**PERSONAL**

- Coherent with organisational skills
- People Management and communication skills
- Stakeholder Relationship Management
- Analytical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Collaboration and Teamwork
- Ability to deal with complexity and detail
- Leadership acumen
- Clear and effective Communication skills
- Adaptability and flexibility
- Driven and goal-oriented

**References:** Available on request