



NUMSA Press Statement

22 June 2026

NUMSA MEMBERS STRIKE ACTION AT BAIC CONTINUES

Today, 22 June 2026, marks the eighth day of the strike at BAIC (Beijing Automotive International Company) by NUMSA members. NUMSA has been locked in negotiations with BAIC over the critical, bread-and-butter issues affecting metalworkers in the company's employ. Since its arrival in South Africa, this Chinese company has engaged in brutal and super-exploitative practices against its workforce.

Originally, BAIC employed workers at Skill Level 1 of the National Bargaining Forum (NBF)—the recognised platform where NUMSA and automotive assembly plants in South Africa negotiate sector terms and conditions—which dictated a rate of R121 per hour. However, in June 2025, BAIC laid off workers under the pretext of refurbishing the plant. When these workers were recalled in August 2025, BAIC slashed their hourly rate to R48, representing a significantly unacceptable reduction from their original terms and conditions of employment.

Since then, NUMSA has made exhaustive efforts to rectify this injustice, only to be met with absolute intransigency from BAIC management. While NUMSA's overarching demand remains that BAIC must fully comply with the standard terms and conditions applicable to all other OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers), our immediate focus is on correcting the rates of pay per hour. The second phase of our struggle will address the alignment of other benefits standard across the broader automotive sector as a whole.

NUMSA demands the following from BAIC Management:

- **Skill Level 1 wages:** BAIC currently pays Skill Level 1 workers between R40 and R48 per hour. These workers must immediately be paid the correct rate of R121 per hour.
- **Specialised rates and allowances:** Spray Painters are currently being paid R84 an hour, and CO2 Welders a mere R48 an hour. Their pay must be corrected to the entry rate of R163.24 per hour, with the qualified Skill Level 4 rate set at R180.53 per hour. Furthermore, these workers must be paid an allowance equivalent to 10% of Skill Level 4.
- **Acting Team Leaders:** Workers who have been acting as Team Leaders for in excess of 6 months must be permanently appointed to these positions. Additionally, they must receive backdated acting allowances in line with established auto industry rates, rather than continuing to earn the current R48 per hour.
- **Change of payday:** Due to ongoing challenges where workers cannot access their wages over public holidays and long weekends, NUMSA demands that the weekly payday be shifted from Fridays to Wednesdays.
- **Permanency for Contract Workers:** All Fixed-Term Contract workers who have been employed for more than 3 months must be made permanent.
- **Uncontracted workers:** All employees who have been working for BAIC without written contracts must be officially confirmed as permanent workers.
- **YES Learnerships:** Workers employed under the Youth Employment Service (YES) learnership program must be absorbed into permanent employment immediately upon the conclusion of their 12-month learnership period.

NUMSA remains, as always indicated, available to meet with BAIC senior management in a genuine effort to resolve the current impasse.

Issued by:

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