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HR QUARTERLY

IMPACTFUL REWARD & TALENT INSIGHTS

APRIL 2026

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THE A-Z OF PAY TRANSPARENCY

Pay decisions are under increasing scrutiny – here's how to respond

Catch the highlights of our latest Salary and Wage Survey

How to manage the move from Basic Plus to cost-to-company (CTC)

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Navigating transparency:

it's coming, ready or not

BY LINDIWE SEBESHO, MANAGING DIRECTOR: REMCHANNEL

As we approach the end of the second quarter, I reflect with gratitude and cautious optimism for the rest of the year. The world around us remains dynamic, with shifting trade relations, an evolving talent and skills market, and a growing global focus on pay equity, transparency and workplace fairness. In South Africa, the legislative landscape signals that the rules of remuneration governance are being actively re-written. These developments are not distant; they are at the door of every business leader, HR and reward professional, and oversight committee member reading this edition.

> A major focus for our clients is transparency. The question is no longer whether it is coming, but how prepared you are for when it is here.

This edition brings together insights from some of our most accomplished consultants. I encourage you to read each piece not only for the perspectives shared, but for the passion of the people behind them, each ready to partner with you on your people and business growth journey.

A major focus for our clients is transparency. The question is no longer whether it is coming, but how prepared you are for when it is here. With the European Union (EU) Pay Transparency Directive's June 2026 deadline approaching and South Africa's Fair Pay Bill making its way through Parliament, Loshen Naidu's article on page 4 unpacks what global developments mean for local employers. From the structural work required to build defensible pay bands to the reputational risks of lagging behind global norms, this piece is essential reading for any organisation navigating the pay transparency conversation. I continue the transparency theme on page 8, with more focus on the practicalities of this conversation.

Effective implementation is also a presiding theme of Matthew Melville's compelling business case for total cost-to-company (CTC) structures on page 14. As cost pressures rise and pay governance evolves, more South African employers are moving from Basic Plus to CTC structures. Matthew examines the benefits and risks, showing that design is only half the work; proper execution is everything.

Accountability is another golden thread. From page 16, we explore the rarely asked question: who is truly accountable for pay and benefits package decisions? Drawing on research from Remchannel's April 2026 Salary & Wage Movement Survey, this is a must-read for HR leaders, Remco members, and anyone seeking to strengthen the integrity of their remuneration governance processes.

Further exploring Remchannel research, this edition also highlights top trends in salary movements (page 12) and benefits (page 18). Employee benefits are evolving, with fewer guaranteed bonuses and more inclusive health offerings, yet only 39% of employees feel their financial wellbeing is adequately supported.

The Remchannel team remains committed to guiding clients through the dynamic business environment with expertise, integrity and an open mind. Thank you for reading. Your continued partnership enables us to help shape a better future for South Africa. ///

LOSHEN NAIDU, SENIOR CONSULTANT AT REMCHANNEL

With pay transparency approaching, what can global jurisdictions teach us – and what should we do now?

It pays to be transparent

June 2026 represents a key milestone for global pay equity. It's the deadline by which all 27 European Union (EU) member states must adopt the EU Pay Transparency Directive (Directive (EU) 2023/970) into their national laws.

While South Africa is not directly affected by this, the local conversation around pay equity has accelerated considerably in recent years. In June 2025, South Africa introduced the Fair Pay Bill into Parliament, a proposed law aimed at eliminating unjustified pay disparities and embedding greater transparency into workplace pay structures.

The Bill sparked important debate and signalled that the trajectory is firmly toward greater openness around remuneration, especially on the back of the recent Companies Amendment Act 16 of 2024 changes. For HR professionals, reward practitioners, and business leaders operating in South Africa, particularly those in multinational groups, the needle has moved from "whether transparency is coming" to "how prepared are you when it does?"

SOUTH AFRICA IS ALREADY TAKING STEPS TOWARDS PAY EQUITY

South Africa already has a strong base for advancing pay equity governance.

The Employment Equity Act of 1998 prohibits pay discrimination and requires designated employers to submit annual, publicly available reports on workforce composition and pay gaps across demographic groups.

The Companies Amendment Act will introduce additional remuneration disclosures, though these are not yet in force.

Meanwhile, the proposed Fair Pay Bill – still in the various stages of its passage through Parliament – seeks to strengthen transparency further. It would require salary ranges to be disclosed upfront in job advertisements, ban questions about pay history during recruitment, and allow employees to share and compare pay openly, effectively invalidating confidentiality clauses that restrict such discussions.

This is a meaningful shift for South Africa, where the term "market-related" has long served as an acceptable piece of sometimes vague information in job advertisements, and where pay secrecy (at least outside boardrooms) remains a feature of corporate culture.

THE EU: OUR CAUTIONARY TALE

The EU's approach offers South Africa both a blueprint and a cautionary tale. The EU Pay Transparency Directive requires employers to disclose salary ranges in job postings, provide employees with access to information on pay levels for comparable roles, and mandates that employers with 100 or more employees report on their gender pay gap. Where disparities exceed 5% without justification, corrective action is required.

The directive is comprehensive in its scope. The EU's definition of pay is intentionally

For HR professionals, reward practitioners, and business leaders, the needle has moved from "whether transparency is coming" to "how prepared are you when it does?"

broad, encompassing base pay, variable pay, bonuses, benefits, allowances, severance, and in-kind compensation. This forces employers to consider total rewards holistically when evaluating equity.

This matters for South African reward practitioners who operate with complex reward packages made up of significant guaranteed and variable components, all of which would fall within the reporting perimeter if defined under a similar framework to the EU.

Yet the EU experience also illustrates the gap that can emerge between regulation and organisational readiness. In Mercer's 2026 Global Pay Transparency Report, European employers identified the following as their top challenges in implementing pay transparency:

- Aligning or educating leaders (53%)
- Maintaining an understanding of global legislation (45%)
- A lack of employee understanding of compensation programmes (38%)

These same challenges will be familiar to anyone navigating reward governance in a South African context, where remuneration committee engagement and management buy-in are familiar pain points.

WHAT SOME OF THE MOST RECENT STATISTICS SHOW

7 out of 27 EU countries had not yet taken any action toward implementing the directive, according to Addleshaw Goddard's implementation tracker.

9% of Europe-based employers had a full transparency strategy in place as reported in Mercer's 2026 Global Pay Transparency Report, while 46% were still in the process of developing theirs.

This is not simply an administrative lag; it reflects the deep organisational work required to build defensible, documented, and equitable pay structures.

THE STRUCTURAL WORK THAT SITS BEHIND TRANSPARENCY

Pay transparency is not a communications exercise – it's structural. Publishing salary ranges in a job advertisement requires robust job architecture, evaluation, benchmarking, and defensible pay bands. Without this, transparency risks amplifying inconsistencies rather than demonstrating equity.

The Fair Pay Bill's requirement for employers to determine and document pay structures and ranges for each position is intended to make it easier to justify pay decisions, identify inequities, and ensure compliance with the Employment Equity Act. For many South African employers, this will require a meaningful audit of current practices before any public-facing commitments can be made credibly.

The EU experience shows variable pay is especially sensitive. When bonuses, long-term incentive awards, and commission structures are factored into total remuneration comparisons, gender and race gaps could widen considerably over time, depending on workforce demographics.

South African employers with performance-based pay programmes should be asking themselves whether their incentive frameworks are equitably designed, and whether variable pay policies can withstand apparent demographic skews across comparable roles. In this context, the importance of advanced workforce analytical capabilities for such scrutiny becomes even more pronounced.

EVEN MORE TO CONSIDER FOR MULTINATIONAL EMPLOYERS

For multinational companies operating in South Africa, the complexity compounds. Even non-EU headquartered companies are impacted if they employ workers within the EU, creating different reporting requirements across member states, variations in job classifications and pay structures, and increased employee expectations for transparency worldwide. This creates a two-sided challenge for multinationals in South Africa:

THIS IS A MEANINGFUL SHIFT FOR SOUTH AFRICA, WHERE PAY SECRECY REMAINS A FEATURE OF CORPORATE CULTURE.

1 They may already be required to meet EU transparency obligations for their European operations, making global consistency a growing imperative.

2 Their South African operations will increasingly face employee expectations shaped by global standards, particularly among professional and executive-level staff who are aware of international norms and whose roles may include a broader geographic scope.

Multinationals should be working now toward an aligned, potentially singular, global job architecture that can accommodate country-level pay bands, consistent job evaluation methodology, and centrally governed pay equity analytics. The risk of running parallel, disconnected reward frameworks across different jurisdictions is not merely regulatory but could be reputational.

There is also a talent dimension. Data from hiring platform Indeed shows that in the UK, 70% of job postings already include salary information, while in France the figure stands at 51%.

As pay transparency becomes the global norm, South African arms of international firms that lag risk appearing less attractive, especially to younger professionals who see openness as a marker of integrity.

THE OPPORTUNITY, NOT JUST THE REGULATORY OBLIGATION

It would be a mistake to frame pay transparency initiatives like the Fair Pay Bill as mere compliance. Evidence from more mature markets shows that organisations that proactively embrace transparency build stronger employee trust and attract talent more effectively.

By banning salary history questions and requiring upfront salary ranges, legislation like the Fair Pay Bill pushes organisations to build fully owned, structured, and accountable recruitment processes, marking a move from voluntary transparency to mandatory accountability. For South African companies with established job grading and remuneration benchmarking practices, this is validation rather than disruption.

In a country shaped by deep wage inequality, persistent gender pay gaps, and one of the world's highest Gini coefficients, the moral case for transparency is particularly strong. The Fair Pay Bill should be seen as a clear signal to action.

IF YOU FAIL TO PLAN AHEAD, YOU PLAN TO FAIL

The prudent course of action for South African employers, regardless of the Fair Pay Bill's timeline, is to start planning now, immediately and deliberately. This means taking practical steps such as:

- Auditing existing pay structures for defensibility and consistency
- Reviewing recruitment practices around salary history
- Assessing whether job advertisements can accommodate pay range disclosure
- Engaging Remco and senior leadership on the governance implications of a more transparent reward environment

For organisations in multinational groups, the additional step is to engage global reward teams to understand how South African pay practices align with the transparency standards already being implemented in EU and other jurisdictions, and to consider building global reward frameworks with local flexibility, ensuring no isolation from either global or local developments.

The global move toward increased openness in pay is relentless – even if two steps behind, South Africa is moving with it. ///

Transparency built on foundations of fairness

True transparency is not just about making pay visible; it is about creating systems that actively challenge historical inequities and foster fairness.

LINDIWE SEBESHO,
MANAGING DIRECTOR
OF REMCHANNEL

As organisations worldwide navigate a profound transformation in how pay is determined and communicated, South Africa finds itself at a crucial crossroads. Here, the legacy of inequality makes the stakes high, demanding urgent and deliberate action.

Systemic structural challenges and slow economic growth have continued to embed deep gulfs within the country, which has a Gini coefficient of about 0.63 (a rating of economic inequality from 0 to 100). In terms of equal economic participation and opportunity, South Africa ranks 98th out of 148 economies in the 2025 World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report – and 111th for wage equality for similar work. True transparency is not just about making pay visible; it is about creating systems that actively challenge historical inequities and foster fairness.

THE REAL QUESTION IS WHETHER PAY SYSTEMS ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO WITHSTAND THE SCRUTINY THAT TRANSPARENCY BRINGS.

TRANSPARENCY IS NOT A PUBLISHING EXERCISE

The real question is whether pay systems – and the job architecture beneath them – are strong enough to withstand the scrutiny that transparency brings. There is a common misconception that pay transparency means making salaries visible; in other words: openly share the grading structure and the associated pay bands, let everyone see where they sit, and problem solved. But it is not that simple, and in many cases, this approach creates more dysfunction than it resolves and falls short of its intended objectives.

Effective pay transparency is the capacity to explain, with confidence and consistency, why someone is paid what they are paid. It is the ability for a line manager to sit across from an employee and give a coherent, defensible account of how their pay was determined. Rather than just citing a policy, they should demonstrate that the process was fair, the criteria was applied consistently, and the outcome aligns with the organisation's stated employee value proposition.

THE FOUNDATION MOST COMPANIES ARE MISSING

When Remchannel engages with clients on pay equity or transparency readiness, we rarely find that the primary problem is a lack of data as South Africa's remuneration benchmarking landscape is well-developed. The real issue is fragile infrastructure beneath pay decisions, with three recurring gaps:

1 Outdated job architecture. Many South African companies are still working with job grading frameworks designed for a different era. They are hierarchical, rigid, and often reflect pre-democratic era occupational structures more than today and tomorrow's roles and value. When the foundation is compromised, everything built on it comes into question. Market benchmarking on top of a flawed job architecture does not produce equitable outcomes; it entrenches inequitable ones.

2 Pay ranges exist but aren't managed. A salary band is only useful if it is maintained, reviewed, and applied consistently. Too often, ranges become reference documents rather than governance tools. Incumbents drift outside them without a documented rationale. Exceptions proliferate and become the norm. Over time, the range loses its effectiveness – and with it, the organisation's ability to explain pay decisions coherently.

3 Governance without accountability. Many organisations have remuneration committees and broad policies on the books, but the day-to-day application of those policies happens without meaningful oversight. Line managers make pay decisions with limited understanding of the pay principles – and the cumulative effect of those individual decisions over time is a pay distribution riddled with anomalies.

These are structural, widespread, and, importantly, fixable challenges.

MARKET BENCHMARKING ON TOP OF A FLAWED ARCHITECTURE DOESN'T CREATE EQUITY; IT ENTRENCHES INEQUITIES.

WHY WEAK ARCHITECTURE AMPLIFIES PAY GAPS

Pay transparency, applied to a broken system, does not close pay gaps – it exposes and entrenches them.

Consider the mechanics. If an organisation publishes its salary bands and employees can now see where they fall, what happens when an employee in a senior technical role discovers she is positioned in the lower quartile of her band while a peer with equivalent tenure and performance is in the upper quartile? While transparency has revealed the gap, it can easily result in a trust crisis if the organisation cannot explain the reason for the gap – especially when criteria for progression within the band were never clearly defined, never consistently applied, or influenced by unconscious bias.

The gender and race pay gaps that persist in our labour market are not primarily the result of malicious intent. They are the accumulated consequence of systems that were never designed with equity in mind, applied by decision-makers who were never required to justify their choices against a consistent standard. Transparency shines a light on the outcome – but it's the underlying architecture that determines what that light reveals.

WHAT BUILDING FOR STRATEGIC FAIRNESS ENTAILS

The path from market benchmarking to genuine pay equity runs through pay architecture maturity. It is a journey, not a destination, and it involves four interconnected elements:

Clean job architecture: This means robust job evaluation, logical grade structures on the back of clear role profiles that accurately reflect the work being done and how it is done in the organisation today. It means going back to basics and asking tough questions about whether the framework you inherited still serves the workforce you have and need.

Defensible pay ranges: Ranges that are built on credible market data, regularly reviewed, and applied with clear, documented criteria for placement and progression. Not ranges that exist to satisfy an audit but ranges that govern effective attraction, motivation, and retention of strategy-aligned skills requirements.

Governed decision-making: Formal accountability structures for pay decisions, with escalation paths for exceptions and regular analysis of pay distributions across demographic groups. This is not about bureaucracy but about ensuring pay integrity.

Meaningful communication: The capacity to have honest conversations with employees about their pay, the factors that influence it, and the path to progression. This is where HR and line managers need support – not just policies, but skills and tools for navigating these conversations with clarity and care.

For local employers, pay transparency is not just a governance best practice. It is a social contract. Employees are asking, and increasingly investors and regulators are requiring, that organisations account for how pay decisions are made and what outcomes they produce.

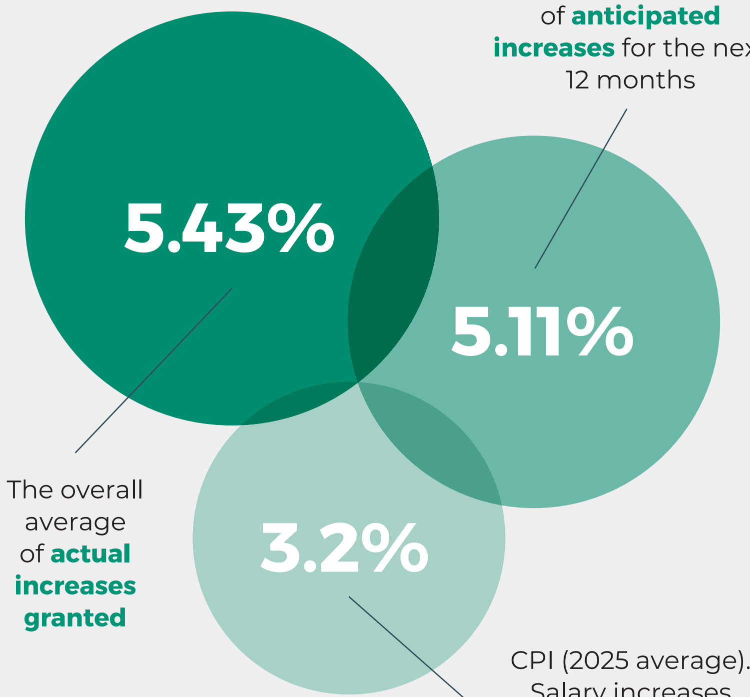
Remchannel's role is to provide the market intelligence, job profiling, evaluation tools, and advice that inform those decisions. The organisations that will navigate this moment well are those willing to interrogate their systems, invest in strong foundations, and communicate with transparency built on substance. ///

GENDER AND RACE PAY GAPS ARE THE CUMULATIVE OUTCOME OF SYSTEMS NEVER DESIGNED FOR EQUITY, APPLIED WITHOUT CONSISTENT STANDARDS.

Top trends

From the Remchannel April 2026 Salary & Wage Movement Survey Report.

Salary movement patterns



The overall average of **anticipated increases** for the next 12 months

The overall average of **actual increases granted**

CPI (2025 average). Salary increases running about **200 basis points above inflation**

Minimum rates of pay

R10 673 p/m

The **current average lowest basic salary for unionised workers across industries** (vs R11 030 in Oct 2025)

Graduate starting salary

R26 568

The **current average total package per month**

→ **ACTION:** Audit your starting rates against this survey's benchmarks.

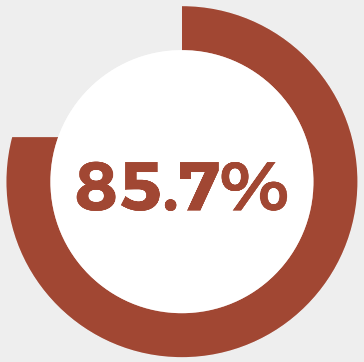
Top performer differentiator

64.3%

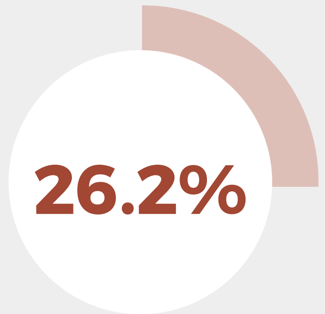
of companies differentiate **increases for top talent**

→ **ACTION:** Build a differentiation framework. Define the percentage range between a standard and top performer increase.

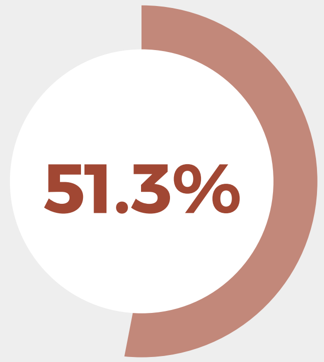
Pay transparency



of companies **conduct annual fair pay analysis** (up from 80% – Oct 2025)



have a **formal written pay transparency policy** (up from 20% – Oct 2025)



of employees **only know their own salary** with no visibility of pay bands

→ **ACTION:** Update your policy ahead of new regulations.

Contact us via email at Louna.Robbertse@remchannel.com to get the full report*.

*Terms and conditions apply.

42 companies surveyed, collectively employing **414 244 people** across South Africa.

Source: *Remchannel's Salary & Wage Movement Survey Report – April 2026*

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Five factors to support a cost-to-company transition

As more employers move to a cost-to-company (CTC) model, execution becomes just as critical as design.

BY MATTHEW MELVILLE, SENIOR CONSULTANT: REMCONSULTING

To ensure your CTC transition is tailored, effective, and delivers lasting value for your business and people, contact Gizelle Erwee, Head: REMconsulting at Gizelle.Erwee@remchannel.com.

The trend of South African employers transitioning their remuneration structures from Basic Plus to total cost-to-company (CTC) is continuing – and may strengthen as cost pressures on employers rise and pay governance evolves. At its core, the shift is about how pay is determined:

Basic Plus; a bottom-up structure: a base salary with benefits added on. Total reward is the sum of these parts.

CTC; a top-down structure: a single total remuneration value is determined upfront and allocated across salary, benefits, and allowances.

While both models have merit, the most successful transitions create real value for both employer and employee.

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR CTC IS PARTICULARLY STRONG

A CTC structure can improve cost management and autonomy, enhance compliance and reward governance, and strengthen an organisation's broader value proposition. Here are four ways that CTC may “win” over Basic Plus:

Cost autonomy and management
Basic Plus structures can expose employers to unpredictable costs like medical aid inflation or increasing number of dependants. A CTC model gives employers more control over total reward spend and how increases are allocated. Additionally, separating remuneration from in-house benefits also allows employers to focus more clearly on core business priorities.

Governance and compliance
Equal pay requirements demand consistency. Structures where pay is influenced by benefit choices can create differences between employees in the same role, which are difficult to justify.

Competitiveness and the EVP
As CTC becomes the norm, the relative inflexibility of Basic Plus structures may require employers to offer higher salaries to stay competitive.

The benefit to employees
CTC allows employees to shape their pay in ways that provide the greatest personal value. Employers, in turn, spend less effort determining what employees truly need or value.

Unlike traditional benefit-linked structures, CTC is “benefit-agnostic”, allowing employees to choose options like medical cover and retirement savings without affecting total remuneration. This flexibility extends to how value is allocated – between risk cover, travel allowances, 13th cheque timing, third-party payroll payments, and even leave entitlements.

HOWEVER, CTC CAN COME AT A COST

CTC’s inherent risks are where its strengths become weaknesses. Greater autonomy over pay increases can lead to employers implementing across-the-board CTC adjustments that overlook employees’ real costs, effectively passing inflation-related expenses, like rising medical aid, onto staff.

Balancing cost management with preserving a compelling reward offering is critical to retaining talent.

Old Mutual Employee Benefits' research shows that only around 6% of South Africans can retire comfortably. Thus, providing flexibility in retirement savings, particularly for more vulnerable employees with short-term net pay pressures, can exacerbate this broad South African challenge.

THE FIVE BUILDING BLOCKS OF A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION

Our experience shows that successful implementation is typically driven by a few core practices:

1 **Detailed upfront planning.** Model the new structure, transition principles and impacted pay elements extensively upfront, right down to individual impacts and any decisions required for anomalies.

2 **Leadership sponsorship.** The CEO and board must actively sponsor the transition, and it must be implemented at speed.

3 **An iterative and agile approach.** Change and communication planning should respond to the "in-flight" tracking of the rollout and adapt quickly.

4 **Recognition of multiple journeys.** The project plan and change management should account for several interconnected journeys, including those of line managers, payroll specialists, HR and business unit executives.

5 **A clear endpoint.** CTC is not one-size-fits-all. It should be applied thoughtfully, based on where it best aligns with organisational needs and employee realities.

Thus, while the benefits of a CTC structure can extend to all, employers seeking to implement it must ensure that the once-off opportunity to land their new pay structure is meticulously planned, managed, and measured. ///

The most successful transitions create real value for both employer and employee.

Who owns reward decisions?

LINDIWE SEBESHO,
MANAGING DIRECTOR
OF REMCHANNEL

Pay decisions are under increasing scrutiny – exposing how clearly (or not) organisations govern and account for them.

Here is the question that rarely gets asked out loud: who is accountable for reward decisions, and are they equipped to make them? Beyond policy, the answer in most organisations is uncomfortably vague.

Right now, according to Remchannel's Salary & Wage Movement Survey (April 2026):

- **85.7%** of organisations conduct annual fair pay analysis
- **47.6%** believe employees are "probably not satisfied" with pay transparency
- **51.3%** of employees only know their own salary with no visibility of pay bands

THE FRAGMENTED REALITY

Reward accountability is seldom clearly assigned to a single function:

- **HR** defines the people strategy, reward policy, and implementation framework
- **Finance** allocates and manages the budget
- **Line managers** recommend individual increases
- **HR business partners** review for alignment
- **Senior leaders** approve, with decisions often calibrated as they move through the hierarchy

At each step, the integrity of the reward decision – its fairness, consistency, and alignment to strategy – can quietly erode. This fragmentation is not new, but the stakes are rising. As pay transparency gains momentum globally, employees are more informed and willing to challenge outcomes they perceive as unfair. When they do, organisations often find that no one can fully explain how a decision was reached – because no one truly owns it.

THE BOARD HAS A VIEW – BUT DO EMPLOYEES FEEL IT?

Above senior leadership sits Remco, a board subcommittee that defines the reward philosophy, sets parameters for executive pay, and sanctions annual salary review mandates. But Remco governs intent, not execution.

That gap between board intent and operational execution is where governance either holds or fractures. A Remco may approve a salary increase pool with clear guidance for performance-based differentiation. Yet as that mandate moves through HR and finance to line managers, it is interpreted, diluted, or disconnected from its original principles. By the time it reaches employees, it can be reduced to a conversation about affordability.

THE GOVERNANCE GAP

The distance between board-level intent and manager-level practice shows up in telling ways:

- Pay equity commitments are approved, yet equity gaps persist
- Performance differentiation is endorsed, yet increases are distributed in uniform bands
- Critical skills frameworks exist, yet application is influenced more by who advocates loudest than data and strategy

THE HIDDEN COST OF DISCRETION

Managerial discretion in reward decisions is valid in theory as managers understand performance nuances. In practice, without a consistent framework, it leads to bias and inconsistency. Most managers receive little training on remuneration, yet are expected to navigate salary bands, budgets, and performance differentiation under pressure.

Organisations often find that no one can fully explain how a decision was reached – because no one truly owns it.

As a result, many default to "safe" choices – spreading increases evenly, favouring familiarity, or deferring to HR – none of which serve the organisation or its people.

Gallup's 2025 State of the Global Workplace report found just 21% of employees worldwide strongly agree they are managed in a way that motivates them to do outstanding work. Perceived remuneration and reward unfairness is a consistently cited and significant driver of active disengagement.

WHAT GOOD GOVERNANCE LOOKS LIKE

At its best, effective reward governance is a connected accountability model – from boardroom to employee conversation.

- **Remco** sets the philosophy and mandate
- **HR** translates it into policy and equity guardrails
- **Finance** ensures budget discipline and models the impact
- **Line managers** drive performance narratives and recommendations within a calibrated process that reveals inconsistencies early

Critically, HR and reward teams should be stewards of governance integrity – ensuring that Remco intent translates into practice. Calibration sessions between all players are critical here. Done well, these are not a formality but a mechanism to challenge bias, explain outliers, and uphold principles across the organisation.

THE QUESTION WORTH ASKING

As you enter your next remuneration cycle, ask: could you clearly trace the path from Remco mandate to individual pay decision – and defend it? If not, the issue may not be the decisions themselves, but the strength of the governance connecting them.

Organisations that get this right build trust. In a world where trust is hard to earn and easy to lose, reward governance is no longer a back-office concern; it is a strategic imperative shared by all. ///

Top trends

From the Remchannel 2025 South African Employee Benefits Guide.

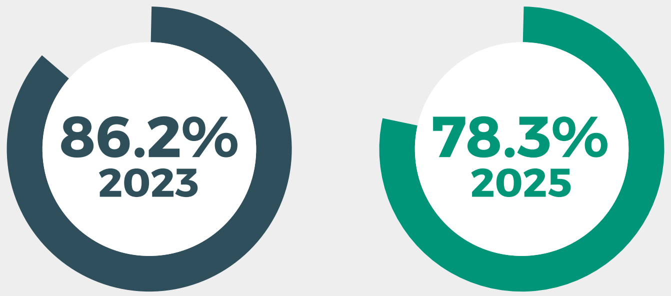
Overall benefit landscape

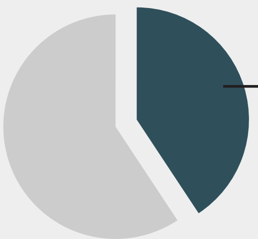
2023: Post-pandemic **experimentation**

2025: More **structured, compliance-driven** environment

Hybrid working model

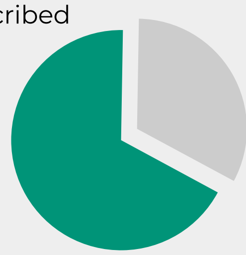
Decrease in companies with formal hybrid model





In **2023**,
40.7%
of companies prescribed **in-office days**

In **2025**,
67.4%
require **three days in-office**



Parental leave

Decrease in four-month fully paid maternity leave

58.5%
(2023)

41.7%
(2025)

Cutting costs

Just **28.3%** of participants indicated that they **paid a sign-on bonus**, compared to **52.1% in 2023**

52.1% (2023) | 28.3% (2025)

Decrease in guaranteed 13th cheques/ bonuses

62.8% (2023) | 53.3% (2025)

Health

New, niche programmes and benefits

Cancer screening

Fertility programmes

Perimenopause and menopause support

Financial wellness

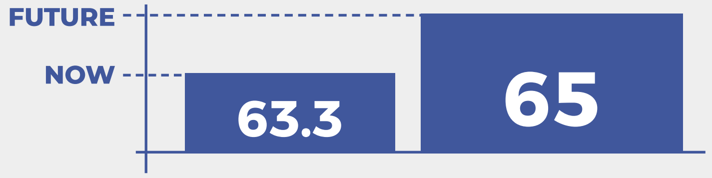
Only
39%
of participants feel pay and benefits support their financial wellbeing.

Drivers of the gap:

- **44%** cite **increased living expenses**
- **37%** cite **small salary increases**

Retirement age

Slight shift from **62.9** to **63.2,** with more organisations planning to **move to 65.**



Support for retiring employees

25% of organisations offer **no medical aid planning**

13%: no pension planning
15%: no financial planning
17%: no pre-retirement counselling

Inclusivity

Shift toward **inclusive benefits**, including:

Medical aid options for same-sex relationships

Special leave for gender-transitioning surgery

60 companies surveyed, collectively employing **404 423 people** across South Africa.

Source: *Remchannel's South African Employee Benefits Guide – 2025*

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The latest updates, insights and events from Remchannel.

News & views

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

In today's evolving world of work, curiosity and continuous learning set people apart. Invest in your growth – and the skills your organisation needs to compete.

1 Pay structuring two-day workshop for remuneration practitioners

Ideal for newer practitioners or those requiring a refresher on the principles and practice of incentive design. Learn how to pay enough without paying too much.

WHEN?	**9 and 10 June 2026**
WHERE?	**Online**

2 The Reward Academy two-day workshop

Great for line managers and HR generalists looking to learn about best-practice reward management principles and current trends. Hands-on and practical.

WHEN?	**26 and 27 May 2026**
WHERE?	**Online**

3 Excel two-day workshop for remuneration practitioners

Ideal for anyone wanting to improve their Excel skills to dramatically increase productivity levels when working with remuneration data.

WHEN?	**12 and 13 May 2026**
WHERE?	**Online**

For more information about the workshops: Please email Louna Robbertse at Louna.Robbertse@remchannel.com

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