

# Sisters Working in Film and Television

Follow up Survey Results on Sexual Harassment Exposes Urgent Need for Industry Reform.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**April 29, 2025** – Sisters Working in Film and Television (SWIFT) released the results of a follow up survey on sexual harassment in the audio-visual sector, building on its initial survey conducted in 2017. The aim of the survey was to assess the effectiveness of our efforts to prevent and address sexual harassment and identify areas for further improvement.

**Key findings** highlight ongoing issues related to harassment and awareness:

Comparison of Key Findings: **2017 vs 2025**

Issue Area	2017 Survey Findings	2025 Follow-up Survey Findings	Insights
Knowledge of the Safety Contact Officer (SCO)	Not applicable - the SCO initiative came out of the necessity for protection in work spaces.	73.3% of respondents said they do not know about the SCO	This shows poor dissemination and awareness around this crucial safeguarding role.
Presence of SCO in Workplace	Not applicable - the SCO initiative came out of the necessity for protection in work spaces.	61.7% said their workplace does not appoint an SCO	There's a serious implementation gap despite recommendations.
Reporting harassment without fear of retaliation	Culture of fear and career risk was dominant. Many avoided reporting due to fear of backlash.	40% improvement in likelihood of reporting without fear of retaliation.	Shows positive change in reporting culture, though fear still exists.

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Issue Area	2017 Survey Findings	2025 Follow-up Survey Findings	Insights
Experiencing or Witnessing Verbal Harassment (e.g. jokes, inappropriate comments)	Frequent and normalised. Examples included sexual jokes, name-calling, and objectification.	Over 70% of respondents still reported experiencing or witnessing verbal harassment.	Despite awareness campaigns, the behaviour remains widespread.
Support structures	71% had no one to turn to; only 12.9% felt supported.	[Not specifically updated in 2025 stats, but lack of SCO presence implies support is still weak.]	Support infrastructure continues to be underdeveloped.

## Summary

- Improvements have been made in reporting culture, due to awareness and advocacy.
- Awareness and implementation of safety have advanced since 2017 with the implementation of the Safety Contact Officer initiative.
- Harassment, particularly verbal, continues to be a pervasive issue in the SAFT industry sector.
- These findings strongly justify the need for mandatory adoption of the Code of Good Practice and placement of trained SCOs on all productions. Download the Code of Good Practice and book a Safety Contact Officer [HERE](#).

“While we are encouraged by the progress made over the past few years, we are however deeply concerned and recognise that there is still more work to be done,” said Zanele Mthembu, Acting Programme Manager. “The success of the measures introduced by SWIFT depends on all funders, broadcasters, platforms and other key stakeholders committing to partnering with us to ensure a safe and respectful workplace for all, as a demonstration of their duty of care for all working on their productions. We call on producers, funding bodies, and all industry gatekeepers to prioritise safety with actionable commitments by attaching the Code of Good Practice to every production contract, conduct sexual harassment workshops and book a Safety Contact Officer to assist with incidents of harassment. Workshop.”

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## “We Can No Longer Look Away”

The report highlights the urgent need for policy reform and proactive protection mechanisms, calling on industry stakeholders to:

1. Mandate the adoption of the Code of Good Practice on the Prevention and Elimination of (Sexual) Harassment by all producers as mandated by the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (EEA to ensure the protection of all workers on productions)
2. Mandate the presence of trained Safety Contact Officers on all productions, supported through ring-fenced funding provided by broadcasters and all funding bodies.
3. Introduce mandatory professional conduct training and clear escalation protocols.
4. Establish zero-tolerance policies backed by enforceable accountability measures.
5. Toward a Safer, More Equitable Industry, one that is safe and respectful of people’s dignities, inclusion and just for all within the audio-visual sector.

The complete survey report is available for download [HERE](#).

This movement is powered by GBVF, SAGA, IPO, PMA, IBFC, and we, as SWIFT, thank them for their collaboration spearheading this initiative to instil an etiquette well governed with the mandate to #MakeProuctionSafe.

**END //**

### **Media Contact:**

SWIFT

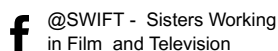
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### **About SWIFT:**

Sisters Working in Film & Television (SWIFT) is a non-profit organisation advocating for gender equality and empowerment of women in South Africa’s historically male-dominated film and television industry. With representation in key cities and ongoing expansion through events and initiatives, SWIFT aims to establish a lasting national and international presence.



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