

FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS (DHA)

13-03-2020

Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Council (DBC)

The DBC meeting for the DHA was convened on 9 March 2020 and the following agenda items were discussed:

Amendments: *Refugee Act*

The PSA reported that the employer changed the job descriptions of both Refugee Reception Officer (RRO) and Refugee Status Determination Officer (RSDO) without any consultation with labour. The PSA demanded that the decision be reversed and that parties engage properly at the DBC. The employer acknowledged the omission and committed to reverse the decision by 16 March 2020. It indicated that it would issue a circular to all employees at Refugee Centers to clarify the decision.

Corona Virus

The PSA reported that the officials at Ports of Entry were exposed to the Corona virus, which created anxiety. The PSA requested the employer to provide safety and protective equipment such as gloves and masks at these points as an interim measure. The PSA also requested the employer to consider extending distance between Immigration Officers and travelers to avoid contact. The employer reported that gloves, masks and sanitizers were procured and distributed to various Ports of Entry. A task team was formed to coordinate and monitor the supply of safety and protective equipment.

Home Affairs Contact Centre: Shift work

The PSA reported that the employer failed to consult labour about the introduction of the shift system at the Contact Centre. The PSA argued that it was unfair for officials at the Centre to continue to work on Saturday whereas Front-Line Offices were not working. The PSA further indicated that officials at the Contact Centre should be covered by the working hours settlement agreement and the employer should withdraw intended disciplinary actions. The employer indicated that it will consider this and revert to labour at the next task team meeting.

The meeting resolved that the matter will be deferred to the Task Team that is currently dealing with the Working Hours Model for the entire DHA. The PSA will keep members updated on developments.

GENERAL MANAGER