

MEDIA RELEASE Dangerous and unsafe Limpopo schools: PSA ready to approach Human Rights Commission to protect learners and employees

DATE 18 March 2020

EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

The PSA was shocked upon visit of Mahumani Secondary School, in Mopani East District at Nkomo B Village in Limpopo and Sehlagane Primary School in Capricorn District at Moletjie, Ga Matamanyane which are exposing learners and employees to severe threats to their health and safety.

Both Schools' toilet blocks are dilapidated, and the 694 and 530 learners respectively do not have access to a single working toilet. These Schools do not comply with the *National Norms and Standards relating to Environmental Health* that prescribe that "one toilet and one hand wash basin must be provided for every twelve staff members on the premises (1:12) and that separate toilet and wash-up facilities must be provided for male and female staff members". More than 24 employees at Mahumani must share the only working toilet whilst 18 employees at Sehlagane are sharing two dysfunctional toilets with the seven pit toilets that are no longer usable and are without doors.

The roofs of some classrooms were blown by the storms in 2018 and 2019 respectively. The Department of Education failed to repair the roofs and has since put the Schools on the waiting list. In addition, the Schools have poor access control because of dilapidated fences whilst some classrooms are also in poor condition with collapsing ceilings and no lights. There is also a dire shortage of furniture, no library and no proper facilities to prepare food for learners. The impact of these conditions on learner success is evidenced by a matric pass rate of only 32% and 38% in 2018 and 2019 respectively.

The PSA has engaged the employer to use the time of extended school holidays to attend to these problems and create a safe and healthy environment and conducive conditions for educators and learners. The engagement was followed by a letter giving the Department 14 days to comply, failing which the PSA will approach the Human Rights Commission as these dismal conditions are denying employees and learners of their fundamental human rights.

END

