



MEDIA RELEASE Electricity crisis: PSA calls for Public Service to contribute to immediate solutions

DATE 19 January 2023

EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

The current loadshedding impact has moved the Public Servants Association (PSA) to request the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) to participate in solutions to ease the burden on public servants.

Apart of the severely negative impact of loadshedding on the country and the economy, public servants who are struggling to make ends meet under the current economic climate and in the absence of real salary increases over the past three years, are also directly affected. Apart from the resulting additional financial strain, the majority of public servants - like so many other workers across the country are – often arrive late at work and home owing to loadshedding. Many have no alternative means to prepare food or run household activities, which further impact on parenting and the schooling of their children.

Many workplaces in the public service, including schools, police stations, the Department of Home Affairs, and health facilities, are also severely affected by the loadshedding, despite the duty of rendering direct public services. Most often there are no alternative energy solutions. This further creates health and safety risks to employees owing to non-functioning equipment, including air-conditioning in buildings. Employees are exposed to verbal and physical abuse by clients as they are unable to perform most duties during loadshedding.

In view of this reality, the PSA proposed to the DPSA that the public service must play an active role and contribute to immediate solutions that will alleviate the burden on the Eskom grid. Measures include staff rotation and virtual attendance by employees who are in a position to do so, as was the norm during the COVID-19 lockdown. These measures will also assist in workplaces reducing electricity consumption and ease traffic flow to allow essential workers to arrive at work on time. It was proven during the COVID-19 lockdown that virtual work is effective and also contributes to cost saving for public service departments.

The PSA requested the DPSA to, in the interest of service delivery, issue a directive to allow public servants to work virtually or, alternatively, implement a rotation system until the electricity crisis in the country has been addressed. The DPSA's response is awaited.

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