

MEDIA RELEASE **PSA calls for ministerial intervention at KwaZulu-Natal TVET Coastal College**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is concerned about the failure by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to appoint a permanent Principal for the Coastal College since 2012.

Other top management positions at the Central Office and various campuses of the DHET are also vacant. The PSA is aware that most senior positions are not permanently filled as a result of senior positions that are either vacant or filled with acting employees. This situation is negatively impacting on teaching staff and students. Vacant positions include, amongst others, those of Principal at Coastal College, Deputy Principal Registration, and Deputy Principal Corporate Services.

On several occasions, employees were not sure of being paid at the end of the month. The PSA had to intervene on an urgent basis to ensure that they were paid timeously. At times this was not possible owing to delays by the DHET to deposit funds in Colleges' accounts. Employees were severely prejudiced as they could not meet their monthly financial obligations, including bond and vehicle repayments. Some employees did not have funds to travel to work. The PSA is concerned about the Union's members at the Durban Campus being issued with letters of possible suspension for raising dissatisfaction with inconsistencies in decisions by management that directly impact them.

The PSA is further aware of the challenges experienced by members regarding the implementation of Post Provision Norms. Members who had performed duties in certain posts for a long time are not being absorbed in the same posts on the new structure. In fact, they are required to apply for their posts, which have been advertised, and they are not guaranteed appointment in these posts. The PSA also received complaints from members who have been performing their functions for years without a contract of employment. Administrative staff members have complained about not having a job description and being allocated functions in a haphazard manner.

The PSA places the responsibility of these alleged lapses on the possible incompetence of the Director-General. The current inaction by the Director-General cannot be allowed to continue, and he should be replaced immediately before the situation deteriorates further, with a further negative impact on teaching and learning at the College. The PSA previously approached the Deputy Minister for intervention without success. The PSA therefore calls for urgent intervention by the Minister of Higher Education and Training as the current situation is set to collapse the College.

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