

MEDIA RELEASE PSA demands urgent intervention in Barberton Department of Correctional Services maintenance crisis

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about persistent failures by the Department of Correctional Services in Barberton in Mpumalanga to address long-standing maintenance issues affecting official residences and institutional facilities.

The PSA has received multiple complaints from the Union's members, highlighting severe neglect of essential services that directly impact the well-being, dignity, and safety of employees. Officials residing in departmental housing report unacceptable delays in basic repairs. These include a non-functional geyser that has remained unrepaired for more than eight months. This failure persists despite the presence of a qualified plumber in the Barberton Management Area who is employed and remunerated specifically to carry out maintenance duties. The inability to provide such fundamental services raises questions about accountability, resource management, and adherence to operational standards in the area.

On 3 November 2025, the PSA submitted a formal letter to the acting Area Commissioner, detailing these concerns. To date, the Commissioner's office has not issued an acknowledgement or response. This lack of engagement demonstrates disregard for established communication protocols and undermines collaborative efforts intended to resolve employee grievances.

Reports from officials stationed across Barberton institutions further reveal deteriorating working conditions, including non-operational geysers, leaking pipes, and overflowing drainage systems. These issues have been reported through the prescribed channels without any visible action months later. Such conditions compromise occupational health and safety, hinder productivity, and erode morale amongst employees who are expected to perform critical security and rehabilitation duties under strenuous circumstances.

The PSA urges the acting Area Commissioner to act without delay and ensure that maintenance responsibilities are executed effectively at all official residences and institutional sites. A proactive and accountable response is required to restore confidence, protect the well-being of employees, and maintain the operational integrity of the Department of Correctional Services. Failure to address these concerns will compel the PSA to pursue alternative measures within the framework of labour relations to safeguard the Union's members.

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