MEDIA RELEASE	**PSA** is shocked by the non-adherence of regulations by the Department of Defence Signal Unit in Potchefstroom
DATE	28-05-2020
EMBARGO	None
ENQUIRIES	communications@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA), in the North-West has received complaints from concerned members, working in the Department of Defence in Potchefstroom, regarding the unconducive working conditions that employees are exposed to. The Signal Unit at the department has a problem with access to water, including for flushing toilets and washing hands, which increases their risk for possible contamination from COVID-19. It is unacceptable for employees to carry buckets of water for operating of toilets.

The department is failing to provide a safe and healthy workplace, as per section 8 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*, exposing employees to the possible danger of being infected by the virus. It is in fact the duty of the employer to ensure that workplaces are safe and risk free. Furthermore, it has come to the attention of the PSA, that employees over the age of 60, are being forced to report for duty. In terms of Section 5 subsection 5(d) of the Regulations issued and in terms of section 27(2) of the *Disaster Management Act*, 2002, specifically requiring employers to adopt "*special measures for employees above the age of 60 who are at a higher risk of complications or death if they are infected with COVID-19*". The actions of the employer evidently show that the stated action is not being adhered to.

The PSA forwarded an urgent *communique* to the employer to intervene in this situation to ensure the protection and safety of public servants.

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