

**MEDIA RELEASE**      PSA welcomes closure of unsafe mobile classrooms in Vhembe District, Limpopo

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**EMBARGO**                None

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes steps taken by the Department of Employment and Labour's Inspectors, to close seven mobile classrooms at Tshikundamalema Secondary School in Masisi Village for non-compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*.

The use of facilities that endanger the lives of learners, educators and other people is prohibited. The School was further issued with a Contravention Notice for failure to adhere to the general safety regulations and environmental regulations for a workplace, as it failed to ensure that at least more than one person possess a first-aid certificate to cater for emergencies, which is a norm for every school.

The Inspector discovered exposed electrical wires without covering boxes, which could cause fatal electrocution. A prohibition notice was previously issued where learners were using old, dilapidated, and cracked classrooms at the same School. The Department of Education seemingly does not care about the health and safety of learners and educators at this school it moved them from dangerous dilapidated classrooms to dangerous mobile classrooms.

The Department has a legal obligation to provide a workplace that is safe and without risk to employees and those accessing the workplace. The PSA has, on numerous occasions, taken the Department on for continued non-compliance with the *OHSA* in schools, circuits, and district offices where the Department has not shown any willingness to address matters. The Department is taking advantage of the shortage of Labour Inspectors, as it takes a long time for inspection to take place after non-compliance has been reported. The PSA thus urges the MEC of Education to conduct audits of the schools and offices that need urgent attention, as the PSA cannot accept the disregard of learners' and employees' lives.

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