

MEDIA RELEASE: PSA condemns calls for banning of staff cell phones at Department of Home Affairs

DATE: 15 January 2019

EMBARGO: None

ENQUIRIES: communicatopn@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA) has condemned the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Home Affairs' suggestion to ban cell-phone use by Department of Home Affairs officials at the Department's front desks as misplaced and ill-informed.

"The Department of Home Affairs has a policy that regulates the use of cell phones by employees. This was consulted amongst parties at the bargaining chamber. The Department was part of this process that resulted in the policy being adopted. The PSA therefore wants to sensitise the Portfolio Committee on its roles and responsibilities and advises it to rather focus on these instead of interfering with government employees' terms and conditions of employment. These matters are negotiated at the relevant Bargaining structures and the Committee does not have any power to change these, unless negotiated and agreed upon at sectoral level," said PSA General Manager, Ivan Fredericks.

The PSA as the majority Union at the Department of Home Affairs called on the Portfolio Committee to refrain from making reckless statements that provokes unnecessary crippling shut down through strike action "Such utterances expose public servants to undue public abuse and even physical attacks at the workplace when effective measures are already in place to address such conduct where warranted," said Mr Fredericks.

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