

FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION
(DPSA)

02-11-2020

Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC) meeting - 28 October 2020

A DBC meeting was convened on 28 October 2020. The following agenda items were discussed:

OHS compliance and COVID-19 regulations

The PSA previously raised concerns after a circular was issued, which recalled all employees and directed them to all report at the office. The OHS committee made several recommendations that the *status quo* must apply as for the first time after a number of years, DPSA performance reached 80% as a result of, amongst others, workers being on a rotation basis, some employees working from home and keeping very minimal number of employees at offices. The employer argued that in the revised COVID-19 regulations on Level 1 employers could recall staff on condition that they adhered to safety protocols. Labour demanded a copy of the refined Risk Assessment to understand what measures were taken into consideration when a decision to recall all staff members was taken. The report will be shared with the DBC at the next meeting.

Non-filling of vacant positions

The employer presented a Macro structure for SMS posts that was approved and implementation is underway. The PSA raised an issue regarding posts that are on the structure and budgeted for commencing 1 April 2020. However, it has come to the attention of the DBC that whilst it has created the posts, the employer is still in the process of implementing a job evaluation exercise for the same posts and seven months later it still has not evaluated the positions. Labour decided to escalate the issue to the attention of the DG as the Chief Negotiator and employer representatives could not give an account of the reasons for the delay. A follow-up meeting will be requested with the office of the DG to get answers.

Merging of Food Services Aid with Cleaning Functions

This issue has been on the DBC agenda for long as it involves a position from labour to ask the employer to re-evaluate the job profile of Cleaners given the added functions with the hope that the position will come out on an improved level. The PSA committed to benchmark with other departments where Cleaners perform similar functions and see how the role has been graded and further proposed that there should be a Task Team that will collate the information and report back at the next DBC.

Review: DPSA Organisational Structure/Restructuring

The DBC received an update regarding a structure that was endorsed by labour after intensive engagements and was adopted by the DBC in July 2020. Terms of Reference, Placement Principles as well as a detailed Project Plan with clear timeframes were adopted and approved. The PSA discovered with serious concern that the Organisational Structure was not yet approved, which had a serious bearing on the timelines that were approved and endorsed.

The PSA reserved its rights and stated that the entire process, especially around the project plan, must be brought back to the DBC for new engagements. The employer could not agree to the proposal and as a result the PSA stated that it will reserve its rights. The DBC secretariat was then requested to note that labour will evoke section 17 where the GPSSBC will be required to facilitate the dispute. The PSA, however, indicated that it will also use the forthcoming meeting with the DG to raise these concerns and see if the dispute can be remedied.

GENERAL MANAGER