

FOR PSA MEMBERS: LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

24-11-2020

Compliance with *OHS*A at Works Towers - Polokwane Head Office

The PSA was alerted of the employer's failure to comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* owing to a suspicious Fire Detection Certificate issued by the landlord. Following a fire alarm, the landlord was alerted of the problem and a technician was sent on 13 November 2020 to do an inspection. The technician, however, completed the compliance certificate without conducting inspections and tests. The alarm went off again on 16 November 2020, causing doubt about the competency of the technician.

Subsequently, the Department of Labour and Employment inspector was called. Upon engagement with labour and management, it was established that although the company was registered, the technician was not registered with *South African Qualification and Certification Committee Fire*. The inspector undertook to engage the SAQCC- Fire to get the Standard Operating Procedure and will further engage the company that conducted the inspection. The inspector also called the technician and company owner to understand their procedures, particularly that the person who signed the certificate did not even come to the building and he directed them to furnish with same.

Although labour pushed for the release of workers as it deemed the building to be dangerous, the inspector indicated that the contravention does not warrant the closure of the entire building as there are portable fire extinguishers and hoses that can be used in case of fire. Further, the building has emergency exits that can be used, which comply with *Environmental Regulation 9* dealing with Fire precautions.

The Labour inspector did indicate that the employer is contravening the *OHS*A as the building does not have a valid fire detection certificate, however it would not assist if the contravention notice is to be issued on only one incident without a total building inspection. Subsequently, the inspector issued a notice to inspect the building on 23 November 2020 at 09:00 where labour was invited.

Members will be informed of developments.

GENERAL MANAGER