

FOR PSA MEMBERS: SOUTH AFRICAN REVENUE SERVICE

13-05-2020

## Report: Special National Consultative Forum (NCF) - Meeting

### **Insourcing: Cleaning Services in SARS**

Members will recall that previously parties agreed that labour will collect the CV's of cleaners. During the special NCF meeting the PSA confirmed that those CV's, which the PSA was tasked to obtain was submitted to the employer.

### **Task-Team on Wage Negotiations (Items deferred ) : Agreement to be signed and finalised**

The PSA confirmed that it had submitted its final input. Once the employer applied their minds to the submissions made, the process will be finalised. The employer has undertaken to circulate the final draft for review and to convene a special NBF meeting to discuss submissions made.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The PSA requested a status update on the supply of PPE. The employer indicated that they are 100% aligned to the continued supply of PPE's and adherence to the Regulations relating to Covid-19. The employer requested labour to highlight any areas of concern or where shortages might have occurred.

### **Voluntary testing and screening**

Labour raised a concern regarding infections of staff while performing their duties at work and requested, if possible, for the employer to test employees. The employer indicated that staff can get voluntarily tested through their own medical aids and that the employer cannot afford to pay for all employees. Further discussions in this regard will be held with the employer as the PSA's position is that, should any employee test positive for COVID-19 and were in contact with other members then the employer must test those employees.

### **Transport**

Labour raised a concern that the employer undertook to assist employees who are experiencing challenges to get to work. The employer reported that business is willing to assist where individual staff members do experience extraordinary challenges, but these circumstances must be raised with their line managers. Members with transport challenges can request their respective FTSS to assist them should they need further assistance with regards to transport.

### **Feedback: usage of pool cars**

One of the suggestions made by labour was that the employer make available pool cars for employees who are struggling to get to work. The employer indicated that because staff are now returning to work, there are not enough pool cars available as they are being utilised for operations.

### **Divisional Plan**

It is a concern for the PSA, that while employees have already been advised to return to work, the Divisional Plans for each business unit have not been shared. The PSA also indicated that the plans need to address the following aspects:

- Remote work;
- How each division will return employees back to work;
- Which of those employees have been identified to work from home;
- Which divisions are going to bring back their entire staff compliment;
- The social distancing measure that will be put in places.

The PSA emphasised that consultation on the Divisional Plans is non-negotiable. The employer advised that the Divisional Plans will be circulated before the end of the week.

### **Data requirements**

A submission was made by labour that SARS should allocate 10G to employees working from home doing SARS related work. It was an expectation that all protocols regarding increasing data allotments should be bypassed. The employer advised that employees who are working from home should engage with their direct managers regarding data requirements. They further stressed that the protocol for data increases need to be followed and that the approval of the CFO is still required and therefore, this process cannot be bypassed.

However, as most employees are returning to work, the issue will again be addressed after the Divisional Plans have been consulted on, and the return to work process has been finalised.

### **Leave for parents**

The PSA raised the issue that schools and day care facilities are still closed, and this is posing a serious concern for parents. Therefore, it is required that work from home measures be implemented for parents where single or both parents need to go back to work. The compassion of the employer is requested in this regard. The PSA further suggested that if such an employee cannot work from home, then special/discretionary leave must be granted to the employee after they have utilised the 5 days family responsibility leave.

The employer responded that the issue of leave was deliberated on at length and that going forward, the normal leave provisions will apply. However, the employer conceded to obtain a new mandate from their principals in this regard.

The PSA emphasised that special/discretionary leave is currently part of the leave dispensation and this should be considered for those employees who are faced with this dilemma.

### **Danger allowance**

The PSA demanded that the employer pay employees an allowance, for days in which staff are expected to report to the office, for the duration of the lockdown period. The employer responded that they will not be able to pay a danger allowance for employees who are required to report for work as they do not have enough funds in this regard.

### **Investigative Audit, LBC employees and employees in general**

The PSA reported that employees, as indicated above, and more especially in the Investigative Audit and LBC divisions have all been called back to the office, whilst the nature of their jobs allows them to work from home to a large extent. It appears that management in these divisions is not eager to adhere to the guidelines where employees should be allowed to work from home as far as possible. Members reported that management is mostly not physically at work, but members are still expected to report. The PSA emphasised the importance of management's presence at work to ensure all aspects of management and control are delivered whilst their members are at work.

The employer indicated that everybody is required to return to work, ensuring that social distancing measures are adhered to.

The employer reiterated that the confidentiality of taxpayer information and the nature of the work that the Auditors do remains of paramount importance. In this regard, the employer will request that the Head of Enforcement submit her written response to labour for consideration.

The PSA took note of the employer's response but reiterated that the employer considers its proposal, which are in line with the Regulations and suggested that a policy should be implemented to regulate how employees should work from home.

Members will be kept informed of further developments.

GENERAL MANAGER