

Feedback from Departmental Task Team (DTT) – 6 August 2021

Transfer of posts

The finalisation of the National Macro-Organisation of Government (NMOG) process within the former Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) and the Department of Environment (DEA), is being delayed by the pending transfer of certain critical posts. Most of the affected employees in other Directorates were consulted and issued with letters of transfer. Some have already assumed their duties with effect from 1 August 2021.

Challenges

Initially fifteen (15) posts were contested for transfer to DFFE. The employer previously requested to be afforded an opportunity to clarify issues with their newly configured constituency's Managers, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) who were unwilling to transfer posts and incumbents. The current resistance is about the Forestry Branch: Policy Research and Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) Directorates.

Only one consultation of Forestry's Employee, Health and Wellness (EHW) Directorate is outstanding. Some of the members identified for transfer, are in possession of a Forestry qualification, but their transfer from the Department of Water Affairs (DWA) requires them to execute agricultural functions. They never executed Forestry functions and were ultimately integrated into agriculture. It was noted that the provisions of the Resolution on reskilling are to be considered. Currently, there are continuing contestation on ICT posts. DALRRD is not willing to release those posts. According to the Resolution where functions are transferred, the incumbent must follow such. Support staff are more affected than core functionaries.

Proposals

The employer emphasised that the percentage of the functions performed by incumbents must not be a decisive factor in deciding on transfers. Labour's proposal was that individual personal circumstances of affected members be considered, rather than transferring members for failure. Alternatively, reskilling, re-training and repurposing must be prioritised.

From the Organisational Development perspective, functions from former DAFF staff must be relinquished to the recipient DFFE. The PSA reminded parties not to lose sight of the financial implications if employees are transferred and then need to be reskilled, retrained, and repurposed for them to be productive.

Conclusion of the process

The employer informed labour that they have requested an extension from the Council regarding the finalisation of the process. The outstanding challenges are to be tabled before the two Ministers.

Sincere condolences to all members and their families are impacted by the pandemic. The PSA supports as well as encourages vaccination for the sake of your protection and others.

Members will be kept informed of the developments in this matter.

GENERAL MANAGER