

Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber - 25 October 2021

NMOG

The process is near completion. It was noted that the last phase includes the provision of office space, which is linked to relocation of former Sports and Recreation Branches to be housed in Sechaba Building. It also addresses organisational review, consolidation of DSAC assets register, branding of configured Department, consolidation and shutting down of redundant ICT systems and records management. All created workstreams are to finalise their close-up reports, which will be consolidated and tabled at the Chamber.

Office space

The employer reported that renovations and electrical replacement of all remaining five floors were completed. WiFi access and network switches received, are to be configured, tested, and installed. The State Information Technology Agency (SITA) is procuring phones for all offices. Terms of reference for audio visual apparatus, tender advertisement for branding, allocation of assets as well as disposal of unused assets through auction by Supply Chain Management (SCM) are in progress and at an advanced stage.

Relocation update

It was reported that a team, assisted by National Archives, is in place for managing and advising individuals and units on the sorting, filing, disposition and discarding of documents. The Relocation Committee is attending to final parking allocations. Relocation to Sechaba Building is effected in a staggered manner. All staff in Regent Place will be finally relocated on or before 30 November 2021. All offices have been cleared.

Provision of tools of trade

It was reported that laptops were already distributed to all newly appointed employees, including replacements. An additional 20 laptops are being procured to improvise for any eventualities. The reported poor connectivity network, including landlines in Film Archives and the Old Library by Vodacom, has been terminated by ICT Unit. SITA is installing new data lines in both buildings. Network installation

at the Old Library building will commence after the conclusion of relocation of staff to Sechaba Building. Officials were advised that, in the interim, they are to use their 3G for network connectivity.

Review and design: Organisational structure

The Minister of Public Service and Administration has concurred on the reviewed and designed new structure. The Accounting Officer has signed-off the terms of reference from the Bid Specification Committee (BSC) for tender process. The Bid Evaluation Committee (BEC) and the Bid Adjudication Committee (BAC) are in place. The BEC are dealing with the 23 tenders received between 25 and 27 October 2021.

Filling of vacant and funded posts

Between 1 August 2020 and 30 September 2021, 73 vacant, funded posts were advertised. 42 posts were filled. Six of those advertised were to be re-advertised, two were already advertised. Nine of those posts are in a process of being filled.

Occupational health and safety

The employer reported that the senior vacant funded post in OHS was re-advertised and closed on 20 October 2021. The Unit needs to be capacitated, as most posts are vacant and funded. The Occupational Certificate for Sechaba Building, which was queried by the PSA, was secured and submitted to the Risk Management Unit. Activities of this Unit has been hampered since 13 November 2020 when the incumbent resigned. The current vacant Assistant Director post in this Directorate could not be filled owing to negative screening results of the successful interviewed candidate.

Performance Management Development System (PMDS)

As of 31 August 2021, there were 366 performance agreement submitted for the 2021/22-financial year, out of expected 482 returns. It counts for 75.93%. By 30 September 2021, the submission raised to 458, which amounted to 95.02%, with 28 performance agreements still outstanding for submissions. 86 agreements were sent back for rectification. Comparative analysis with 2020/21 indicates that under the same period there were only 307 of the 482 expected agreement submitted, which converted to 63.69%. For the period as of 30 September, 447 performance agreements were received, with 39 outstanding. Under the same period, 75 agreements were returned for correction.

Workplace Skills Plan

The approved Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) was submitted to PSETA in April 2021. Implementation is ongoing with its own challenges, owing to online training on account of the COVID pandemic. The Employment Equity and Skills Development Committees do comply with their routine monitoring. Quarterly reports are in accordance with operational plans. It was reported that a Memorandum of Understanding has been concluded with the National School of Governance for the provision of compulsory and mandatory training to the value of R420 00. There are 68 staff officials, from salary level 1 to 12 who are being trained for the Compulsory Induction Programme. Registered staff members on salary levels 6 to 12 receive training through eLearning.

Job evaluations

Labour claimed that there was a favourable arbitration award on job evaluation of National Language Practitioners, which was partially implemented to the exclusion of some. It was submitted to Human Resources Development for implementation to remaining qualifying staff members of this occupational

class. The implementation was ignored by the employer. The employer reported that the benchmarking of this occupational class is as follows:

- Principal Language Practitioner on salary levels (SL) 7 and 8 were benchmarked with the posts of Principal Network Controller SL 7, Chief Network Controller SL 8, Administration Officer SL 7, Snr Administration Officer SL 8, Sports & Recreation Coordinator SL 7 and Sport Promotion Officer SL 7 respectively.
- Chief Language Practitioner was benchmarked with Assistant Director: Administration SL 9 and Snr Sports & Recreation Coordinator SL 9.

The outcomes are currently being discussed with the Department of Public Service and Administration for concurrence. This process will also be aligned during the ongoing Organisational Review.

Remunerative work outside Public Service

The employer informed labour that the Public Service Regulations, of 2016 prohibits public servants from conducting business with any organs of the state, unless financial interest is disclosed. The DPSA Directive on Remunerative Work issued in November 2016 prescribes all the prerequisites to be fulfilled. These include, but not limited to forms, process, reporting obligations by the Head of Department (HOD), compulsory capturing of applications on Persal, etc., prior to any such engagement. It was also noted that the Departmental Ethics and Compliance Unit usually coordinate with the Ethics Committee on processing and approval of applications. Such financial disclosures are on continuous basis.

Departmental Policies

The following policies were presented by employer:

- Human Resource Management Policy
- Workplace Wellness Management Policy
- Management of HIV, AIDS & TB in the Workplace Policy
- Workplace Health, Productivity Management Policy
- Policy on Reasonable Accommodation Assistive Devices

It was confirmed that the employer has accepted and incorporated all submitted inputs from labour. These will be circulated to parties after finalisation of editing by Language Unit for adoption.

The following policies were deferred to the Task Team, which will be convened on 15 November 2021 for further elucidation:

- PMDS Policy
- Hospitalisation Bereavement Policy
- Official Working Hours Policy

Policies on Bursary and Employment Equity were removed by the employer for further refinement.

The PSA wishes all members who are/were infected and/or affected by the COVID-19 pandemic a speedy recovery and sincere condolences for those who lost loved ones.

GENERAL MANAGER