

Update: Special Departmental Bargaining Chamber - 15 October 2021

PMDS for financial year 2019/20

The employer provided an update report on the outstanding performance assessments. It indicated that there are two outstanding cases that must serve before the appeal committee. The PSA demanded that these cases be prioritised. The employer committed to finalise the process on or before 31 October 2021.

OHS compliance and COVID-19 regulations

A report was given orally by the employer where it gave an update on vaccination of employees. It raised a concern on the number of employees who are vaccinated. Out of the 474 staff complement, only 82 employees are fully vaccinated. Attempts were also made by the employer to encourage employees to get vaccinated by allowing them time off to go to vaccination centers. The initiative to invite GEMS to the building has subsequently failed. The employer stated through its report that after the country was placed on level 1, and in line with the DPSA circular, EXCO decided to recall staff on 100% from 11 October 2021 after the building was decontaminated prior to the return of employees. According to the circular, it is reported that HODs were given a discretion to decide based on operational requirements. It further indicated that its decision to recall 100% staff back to the office was also owing to the department having failed to reach required targets during the strict lockdown period. The employer also stated that there is enough space that will enable it to comply with COVID-19 regulations.

The PSA raised concern around the recalling of staff at 100% given that whilst the country is on level 1, it didn't mean that COVID-19 is no longer here. The employer was further mandated to convene a special Steering Committee within seven days to make a proper analysis and come up with an updated Risk Assessment. The employer reported that since 1 April 2021, it reported 25 positive cases and only five new cases to date.

Closure of GCIS offices during December holidays

The PSA previously tabled a request for the closure of GCIS offices from 21 December 2021 to 4 January 2022 for the employer's consideration. The employer escalated the request to its mandate givers who requested it to identify divisions classified to be rendering an essential service. The employer committed to give feedback as soon as it has concluded the exercise and will report back to the PSA within seven days.

GENERAL MANAGER