

Update: Implementation of remuneration benchmark

Members were updated on the PSA's engagements with the employer to ensure the finalisation and implementation of the remuneration benchmark. This matter has dragged on for many years and the PSA persistently pushed for its finalisation. A business case was developed after a number of service providers were appointed to assist with the benchmark exercise. The outcomes presented by the service providers, such as *Deloitte*, were positive and supported the case for GPW to move to a remunerative framework that would be to advantage of employees. The employer made promises to employees that the benchmark would be implemented and thus creating reasonable expectation.

When the PSA noticed that the employer was stalling the process, a dispute was declared to the General Public Service Sectoral Bargaining Council (GPSSBC) for conciliation. At conciliation, the employer raised a point *in limine*, arguing that the dispute was premature as the final decision had not been granted and the business case was still being considered by the Minister. The conciliation was extended for 30 days to allow parties to engage further at the Departmental Bargaining Council (DBC). A special DBC meeting was held where the employer announced that the business case has not been approved and therefore the remuneration benchmark will not be implemented. An outcome certificate of non-resolution of the dispute was issued by the GPSSBC and the PSA will be balloting members on possible strike action.

OHS compliance and COVID-19 regulations

The employer reported that efforts are being made to manage the risk of infections in the workplace and ensure compliance with guidelines and regulations. However, the PSA raised concerns regarding the rising number of infections and fatalities in GPW. Since the start of the third wave of COVID-19 infections, GPW has been recording new positive cases everyday and lives claimed by the virus have increased. It is on this score that the PSA recommended that the employer should consider closing some units temporarily for deep cleaning and sanitising as well as allowing a cool-off period to slow down the rate of infections. GPW functions, as a factory, makes it impossible for most employees to work from home, and the cool-off period will contribute positively to managing the spread of the virus in the workplace and allow a thorough cleaning and disinfection of all possible infected areas in the workplace. The employer committed to look into the proposal and consider it.

Members will be updated.

GENERAL MANAGER