

Poor working conditions at Thohoyandou High Court

Members would recall that Department of Employment and Labour conducted inspection upon report of poor working condition during June 2020 wherein a Contravention Notice was issued. The PSA was alerted on 12 August 2021 that the situation has not improved despite the inspection of the workplace by the labour inspector a year ago. Shop Stewards tried their best to raise the matter with the employer without success. Although the Department of Public Works visited the workplace to evaluate the building, no feedback was forthcoming. The poor conditions remained contrary to the provision of the *OHS Act* to provide a workplace that is safe and without risk to employees.

The PSA managed to visit the workplace on 13 and 16 August 2021 respectively during which engagement with the court manager ensued, but without success hence the matter was escalated to the Department of Employment and Labour for inspection. Inspection was again conducted by the aforementioned Department on 1 September 2021 and a Contravention Notice was issued giving the employer 60 days to:

- Provide a ventilated workplace as some offices did not have working air conditioners or windows;
- Supply and maintain firefighting equipment as fire extinguishers and hose reels were not serviced;
- Fix lights, provide a clean workplace, and clear obstructions in front of the emergency exit door;
- Provide adequate storage for files;
- Fix the leaking roofs, cracked building, and tiles in the ablution blocks;
- Paint the workplace;
- Provide functional, clean, hygienic, and safe toilets;
- Address the loose and exposed electrical wires and maintain the certificate of compliance for electrical installation;
- Display the corresponding symbolic sign for the staircase caution;
- Constantly service the lift;
- Provide a towel to each employee for sole use or disposable paper towels, install hot air blowers at washbasins;
- Provide toilet soap or similar cleansing agent;

Members will be kept abreast of developments

GENERAL MANAGER