

FOR PSA MEMBERS: NORTHERN CAPE

26-04-2021

Update: Provincial Occupational Health and Safety Steering Committee: Northern Cape

The Provincial OHS Steering Committee for the Department of Health has met weekly virtually since the beginning of the pandemic to address all issues related to OHS holistically, but with urgent focus on COVID-19 challenges.

The supply of personal protective equipment, infections, risk assessments, contact tracing and the establishment of the OHS committee are prioritised. Labour has been vocal about attendance and participation by employer representatives as cardinal points discussed in the meetings are related to the above-mentioned aspects. The PSA appreciates the improvement of attendance of meetings by managers and CEOs, but remains unimpressed with the constant disturbance and non-attendance of stakeholders of the Department. Failure to provide adequate and accurate feedback on critically requested information by management is a concern since it renders the Committee dysfunctional.

Labour had previously insisted on the following:

- Written reports on OHS Committee establishment, PPE stock, infections, risk assessments, structural shortcomings, and the submitting of specific incidents to labour prior to meetings;
- Provision of PPE to clinical and non-clinical staff;
- Infections statistics should include whether infections are internal or external as labour is concerned that Health is vulnerable owing to gaps in the PPE and so-called deep cleansing.

The Health and Safety Manager of the province has vented his frustration regarding the lack of assistance, feedback, and response from managers at every level. Labour has been demanding swift and decisive consequence management because infections continue to rise with the risk of a possible third wave. Unfortunately, citizens and employees suffer because of delinquent managers who do not seem to take COVID-19 threats seriously. Labour had walked collectively out of the previous meeting owing to reasons mentioned. The PSA welcomes the revival of this Committee as the last meeting sat in 2020.

Members will be informed of the next sitting and are, in the meantime, encouraged to report any non-compliance with COVID-19 protocols directly to the PSA Provincial Office. Members can contact Russle Bindeman on 082 883 7563.

GENERAL MANAGER