

Update: PANSALB Labour Forum meeting – 27 August 2021

Relocation challenges of employees on movement of Mpumalanga and Gauteng offices

The employer reported that on movement of offices, there was engagement with Gauteng office staff members to update on how relocation will affect them individually and how the employer will assist in that regard. Some of the concerns raised during the meeting was the increase in taxi fare. The employer has since given a report to EXCO and letters of reply will be sent to employees on this issue. The employer could not provide the exact date for the relocation of the Gauteng Office as it is not fully functional. The date for occupancy will be reported to the forum. The employer further reported that the Mpumalanga office will be relocated by 1 October 2021 but the office is not yet ready for occupancy. The employer has not yet activated relocation benefits owing to the readiness of the office, the activation of benefits include rental assistance to affected employees as part of the agreement. The employees affected by the relocation process will have travel over 200 km, hence they will require the necessary support. The PSA welcomed the report and requested the employer to ensure that no employee suffers in the process of relocation.

Relocation: Chief Language Practitioners

The PSA raised a concern that affected employees should be consulted before the process began during the meeting in April 2021. The employer then engaged affected parties following the concern from the PSA and a meeting was held with affected members. Only one employee was reported to have refused to engage with the employer, citing that if the employer wants to engage him that should be done through his supervisor. During the meeting with the employer other employees also highlighted some of their challenges with the relocation and the employer committed to provide formal responses to parties, following the employer's response decisions will be communicated next week the latest to the forum.

Rejected approved structure

The PSA raised an issue after reports that the current approved structure was rejected. The reasons for rejecting the structure was that due process was not followed, including consulting employees and Manco. The employer further reported that it is busy trying to appoint an organisational development specialist to review the structure and advise accordingly. The employer emphasised that all parties will be consulted before the finalisation of the new structure and before its implementation.

Recognition agreement

The employer reported that the Recognition Agreement between the PSA and the employer was signed and subsequently regulates the relationship between parties.

Employee Wellness Service

The PSA raised this matter to get the development from the employer regarding Employee Wellness Service. The employer reported that the document that regulates this program was signed by the ACFO's office and the service provider will start in September 2021.

Performance management backlog

Following the 2018/19-performance assessment, there were gaps identified for PMDS. Workshops were arranged to deal with the challenges. The employer reported that it started with the process of getting someone from the Public Service to assist. The PSA suggested that the employer get anyone from the Public Service as long as the person works in PMDS directorate and helps HR to fast track the process as it frustrates employees.

Independent Compliance Officer appointment and supply of PPE for employees

The employer reported that the memo was circulated for the appointment of an independent compliance officer. It is anticipated that parties will find each other in terms of costs and the report will be provided to the forum as soon that is finalised. Update on PPE is that Supply Chain management is highly regulated, will ensure that due process is followed as the process is close to being completed, however they could not specify on the exact dates. The challenges that were identified were on a temperature monitoring system at head office and the insufficient supply of PPE.

The PSA has indicated disappointment with the report and reminded the employer of its duty in terms of *Section 8* of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. The forum resolved that the employer should issue a *circular* to all employees, informing them about compliance.

Public Service wage agreement

The employer reported that they have received a *circular* from the DPSA and will be making a submission for payment of non-pensionable allowance backdated to April 2021, however the employer indicated that they are still waiting clarity about the 1.5 adjustment from their principal and feedback will be provided to the forum.

Housing allowance

The PSA enquired on how much is the employer is paying employees in respect of the monthly housing allowances, the employer indicated that a memo to amend the housing allowance has been circulated and monies will be backdated from July 2021.

GENERAL MANAGER