

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DALRRD)**

20-09-2022

Feedback: Departmental Task Team meeting – 15 September 2022

Fit-for-purpose structure presentation

Members are aware that the Department has been reconfigured after the announcement of the President to merge some departments. Prior to tabling the proposed organogram, labour raised the following concerns:

- The allegation that the employer has already started consultation with employees before tabling the matter at the Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC), which undermines the spirit of collective bargaining.
- A service provider has already been appointed to conduct a skills audit to check compatibility with the new structure whilst the issue is yet to be presented at the DBC.

The employer rejected the notion that consultation commenced prior to tabling the matter at the DBC. Subsequently, labour reminded the employer that shop stewards confronted them when they were directly consulting with employees without involvement of unions. Seeing that the employer was disrespectful to labour by continuing with lies, it served no purpose for labour to continue engaging on this matter. Labour decided to invoke section 17 of the Chamber Rules. The General Secretary of the Council with thus be approached for intervention through a facilitation process. The employer was also directed not to continue with scheduled consultations with employees pending conclusion of the facilitation process.

Transfer: Agricultural Colleges from provinces to National Office of DALRRD

Members will recall that President Ramaphosa announced that Agricultural Colleges should be transferred to the DALRRD. The employer tabled this issue during a DBC meeting sometime in 2021, indicating that it was directed to commence with consultation to implement the government decision. During the last week of August 2022, the employer proposed dates starting from 19 September to 23 October 2022. Dates were confirmed by parties and a program of action was developed, which led to formation of team to deal with the matter. It was thus resolved that each union must submit three representatives to be part of the consultation team.

The employer informed the meeting that the consultation program in provinces was suspended owing to unhappiness by labour because of inadequate consultation. The employer indicated that the matter will be tabled at a special PSCBC meeting. Labour was shocked as they are aware that the PSCBC has long concluded consultation and directed the DALRRD to commence with consultation in provinces. Labour indicated that they are unaware of any displeasure from provinces from both unions and proposed as follows:

- Dates initially identified for the consultation to transfer members from Agricultural Colleges be converted and utilised to address members' challenges in various borders regarding OHS challenges in their dwellings and workstations.
- Locked dates to be used for special DBC meetings and to visit GADI to address long-standing issues in that province.
- Special DBC meeting to be considered to address issues around the Employment Equity Committee after members reported that they were not trained and are also unaware of the departmental EE targets that the employer is currently using as basis for recruitment.

The employer noted the proposal but indicated that it is not able to comment owing to a lack of mandate as the matters were not raised prior to the meeting. Labour was not happy with the response but committed to find ways to ensure that the raised matters are addressed as these affect members, particularly issues of the Employment Equity Forum and dilapidated conditions of buildings.

Members will be updated on developments.

Employees who want to join the PSA can visit the PSA's website (www.psa.co.za), send an email to ask@psa.co.za or contact PSA Provincial Offices.

GENERAL MANAGER