

## Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber meeting – 2 November 2022

### **DHA Foreign Mission Deployment Policy**

It was previously reported that the employer agreed to review the deployment policy before the next deployment process is implemented. The aim was to rectify discrepancies in aspects such as security clearance, preparatory training, and post requirements, which were identified in the 2018-deployment process. The employer decided to use the 2014-deployment policy for the current deployment. The PSA raised concern in that regard and demanded a review of the deployment policy. Parties reached a deadlock and the PSA invoked section 17 of the GPSSBC governance rules to force the Department to reconsider its decision.

### **Advertisement of foreign mission posts**

The employer advertised foreign mission posts with the qualification requirements that only included the bachelor's degree in political science, international relations, and public administration. The PSA maintained that the decision excluded and discriminated against current Immigration Officers who possessed other post-matric qualifications. The PSA demanded that equal opportunity must be given to all Immigration Officers with relevant qualifications so that they can also compete for foreign mission posts. Parties reached a deadlock and the PSA decided to invoke section 17 of the GPSSBC governance rules to force the employer to reconsider its decision.

### **Advertisement: Adjudicators' posts**

The employer reported that the decision to advertise 16 Adjudicators' posts with a law degree would be maintained. The PSA objected and indicated that the decision was unfair to Immigration Officers who possess other relevant post-matric qualifications. The JE results did not specify a qualification but required a bachelor's degree in the relevant field. Parties reached a deadlock and the PSA decided to invoke section 17 of the GPSSBC governance rules.

### **Discipline management report**

The employer reported that 276 grievances have not been properly closed since 2015 and it embarked on a process to finalise these. It resolved 147 grievances and 130 were still outstanding. There are 35 suspensions under the reporting period and it cost the Department more than R7 million. The PSA demanded urgent intervention by management to resolve the huge volume of pending cases. A meeting with management was scheduled for 30 November 2022 to discuss intervention measures.

### **OHS compliance and COVID-19 regulations**

The employer reported that 100% of employees reported for duty since the disaster management regulations were repealed. Employees with co-morbidities also reported for duty and were provided with reasonable office accommodation. The employer further reported that OHS audits were conducted in 59 offices, 18 were compliant and 26 were not compliant. The PSA noted the report and urged the employer to give serious attention to aspects of non-compliance and provide a comprehensive report at the next meeting.

### **Provincial Consultative Forums (PCF)**

The employer reported that a departmental circular was issued to all provincial managers to resuscitate PCFs. The delegation from the DBC will facilitate the process to re-organise and improve the capacity of PCFs. A program of action will be communicated in due course.

### **Vacancy report**

The employer reported that 761 of 1 013 vacant, funded posts were advertised and recruitment processes are underway. The PSA noted the report and urged the employer to allocate more posts to the core business of the Department, which included Civic Services and Immigration Services. The matter was deferred to the bi-lateral for further discussion.

### **Modernisation projects**

The employer reported that the Department was in the process to improve its information-system capacity by introducing the following modernisation projects: E-gates, ABIS, E-visa, and BABAS. The employer will provide constant updates and progress reports to labour about the implementation of the projects to enhance the capability of the Department to render efficient and effective service to citizens.

### **Recognition of Home Affairs qualification**

The employer reported that 134 employees were trained for a DHA qualification, which is equivalent to NQF-level 5. 404 employees were trained for skills development in refugee affairs, inspectorate, and other immigration-related functions. The employees are expected to submit a portfolio of evidence before they can obtain the certificates of qualification. The qualifications will be considered a requirement during the recruitment process for other specified posts. The PSA emphasized that those who obtained such qualifications must be considered for promotional opportunities.

Members will be informed of developments.

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

GENERAL MANAGER