

Feedback: Departmental Chamber Meeting (DBC)

A Chamber meeting was held on 15 February 2022 and the following issues were discussed:

OHS and COVID 19

The employer presented a verbal report on OHS, which did not contain relevant information pertaining to statistics of current cases. Labour rejected the verbal report and requested the employer to submit a written report. Parties agreed to convene a special DBC on 23 February 2022, given the developments around return-to-work as per Circular 5 from the DPSA.

Benchmarking: Security working conditions

Labour expected a detailed report from the employer regarding the outcome of a benchmarking exercise that was conducted. The employer failed to provide the report and labour raised concern, noting that this issue dates three years back and is yet to be finalised. The employer committed to circulate the report by the end of the week. This item will be added for discussion at the special DBC on 23 February 2022.

HR Policies

The employer presented the following policies for adoption after these having been on the agenda for more than three years:

- EPMDS Policy and Procedure
- Bereavement Policy
- Telecommunications Policy
- Bursary Policy for Part-Time Study
- Parking Policy
- ICT Security Policy
- Wi-Fi Policy
- Draft Disability and Equity Policy
- Security Policy

The DBC adopted the policies for endorsement by the DG after labour was given ample time to consult with its members for inputs. The item will be removed from the agenda.

Performance moderation and payment of bonuses

The employer reported orally that it has received 12 appeals, which were concluded. Payments will be made to the 12 employees by the end of March 2022. Labour raised a concern and rejected the oral report and requested the employer to submit a report that will enable labour to read and understand how the matter was resolved. The employer committed to submit a written report by the end of the week. This item will be included in the agenda for the special DBC on 23 February 2022.

Human Resources staffing levels and cost of employment

Labour previously requested information pertaining to the matter and the employer confirmed that the information was sent to labour in December 2021. Labour acknowledged receipt, will engage its members, and then provide a response at the next DBC.

Letters of unpaid leave

The employer reported that it has been waiting for employees who were identified as having taken leave that exceeded their available leave since 2020. To date, the system is still pending responses from those employees and it is reflecting badly on the Department. Labour challenged the accuracy of the report as some of the employees saw deductions on their salaries when they have not given permission for such deductions to be affected. The employer stated that it has not effected any deductions as it has been requesting meetings with affected employees without success. Parties agreed that an urgent meeting between the employer and labour will be convened next week to resolve the matter and will report back at the next DBC.

Microstructure

The employer submitted a presentation to the DBC Secretariat on 16 February 2022, which was not in line with Chamber rules as it did not afford labour sufficient time to consult and obtain a mandate before the DBC. Furthermore, labour raised a concern that the information that was requested in the last DBC relating to the new structure on number of employees and positions which will be affected by the new structure to enable them to engage and obtain a mandate from members has not been received. The employer committed to send the information and to allow labour to look at the presentation that was submitted a day before the DBC which did not accord parties ample time to familiarise themselves with the document. A special date will be identified for a follow-up meeting to discuss the issue.

GENERAL MANAGER