

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY VETERANS (DMV)**

18-02-2022

## Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber meeting

A meeting was held on 16 February 2022 where the following issues were discussed:

### DBC proposed Chamber dates

The Secretariat shared the proposed Chamber dates for this calendar year for confirmation and consideration. Parties accepted the proposed dates of 4 April, 14 July, and 5 October. Members are urged to coordinate with the Branch to submit agenda items related to matters of mutual interests for negotiation.

### Employer's Vice-Chairperson and negotiating team

The employer reported replacement of its previous negotiating team and introduced Mr M Makhonza as Chief Negotiator and his alternate, Mr Matli. Other members are Ms N Gwala and Mr A Maluleke. The employer's team has shown commitment as it agreed to attend a pre-DBC meeting to narrow issues. The Deputy Chairperson will be communicated shortly.

### OHS compliance and COVID-19 regulations

The report on the conditions of buildings was deferred to the bilateral meeting owing to non-availability of responsible representatives. A COVID-19 report was shared as follows:

- 1 July – 31 September 2021: 58 cases reported with 14 positive cases and 44 contacts.
- 1 October – 31 December 2021: 190 reported cases with 20 positive cases and 89 contacts.

Head office is being decontaminated twice a month owing to the number of employees and clients accessing the building daily, whilst provincial offices are decontaminated once a month. A total of 14 employees submitted their vaccination certificates as confirmation. The employer reported that 30 requests were received from employees with co-morbidities to work from home. All requests were approved. Labour will soon be engaged on DPSA *Circular 5 of 2022*. The process of appointing health and safety representatives is underway and the employer urged the PSA to encourage members to avail themselves.

### Prioritisation of policies

The employer acknowledged the PSA submission on various policies during 2021 Policy Task Team meetings although no feedback was received to date. The employer reported that the policies were

submitted to the former acting Director-General for consideration. The PSA demanded that the employer must share the list of all policies that were submitted. The employer agreed.

### **Implementation: GPSSBC Resolution 5/2014 - Recognition of improved qualifications**

The employer reported that its predecessors should have finalised the template for concurrence with the DPSA before 31 December 2021. It discovered that the predecessor never consulted labour, especially the PSA as the party which has shown much interest. Labour was to sign the template for re-submission to the DPSA. The PSA undertook to sign at the employer's earliest convenience, as its constituencies had provided a mandate.

### **Filling: Vacant, funded posts**

The employer reported on the long overdue concern raised by the PSA of the need to fill vacant, funded posts. Two key vacant, funded posts of Deputy Directors-General, which rendered the Department dysfunctional, especially Corporate Services, have been advertised, with the closing date of 28 February 2022. The post of Chief Director: Corporate Services that was advertised in November 2021, is on the verge of shortlisting and interviews. The panel for these processes has already been constituted.

### **Contract Workers**

The employer confirmed and gave assurance that employment contracts will not be terminated on expiry date. Permanent appointment has been subjected for a legal opinion to ascertain whether there would be any legal repercussions should the Department automatically absorb these workers. The pre-conditions are that the employer must identify posts wherein they can be absorbed and verify whether such employees meet the requirements for appointment. Most of the posts in the entry level are being advertised internally to assist in absorbing them.

### **Bursaries for employees**

The employer reported that 22 applications were received. Only two applications were declined owing to late submission. A new Committee has been constituted as some senior officials who served on this Committee are on suspension. Labour is now entitled to take part as observers in the Committee. The employer conceded on high number of grievances inherited, especially on bursaries. The employer is presently and urgently addressing these.

### **Organisational Structure**

The employer confirmed that there is a proposed structure that is being internally consulted with Management Committee (MANCO) and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). The Government Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC) is assisting the Department on the technical part of the structure for its finalisation, as recommended by the DPSA. The structure will be circulated shortly and tabled at the Chamber for consultation and/or negotiation, where necessary. The employer's target is to finalise the structure on or before 31 April 2022.

### **Performance assessments: 2020/21-financial year**

The PSA was alerted that assessment-outcome letters were distributed in December 2021 for the said financial year. Although the dissatisfied employees lodged grievances, the employer is yet to consider these. The employer reported that the Labour Relations Component is interacting with the HRM to address the grievances. The intention is to complete the grievances before the end of the financial year.

Members will be informed of developments.

*The PSA expresses sincere condolences to members who were and/or are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The PSA supports and encourages the taking of vaccinations.*

GENERAL MANAGER