

FOR PSA MEMBERS: LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

21-01-2022

Update: Poor working conditions - Mogodumo District Office

Members will recall that the PSA visited the above workplace in 2020 upon alert that employees were working in poor and dangerous conditions. The matter was escalated to the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) and the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC). Sadly, the situation remains unchanged after a labour inspector issued a Contravention Notice on 18 September 2020, which lapsed after 60 days and followed by Confirmatory Notice on 19 November 2020. The SAHRC is still investigating the matter whilst employees continue to suffer. Despite constant follow-ups with the DEL and SAHRC and constant engagement with the employer, the PSA visited the office on 18 January 2022 and found the following:

- No electricity from 3 January 2022
- No access to drinkable, clean water as borehole requires electricity
- Toilets still not fixed, and bucket used with harvested rainwater
- Fire extinguishers only serviced in 1992, which poses a danger to employees in case of fire
- The yard is still bushy with a presence of snakes
- No tools of trade, forcing employees to use own laptop and cellphones
- Employees just sitting as they have no means to charge personal laptops while others try to work manually
- No cleaners and groundmen with a reliance on Tjiane Drop-in Centre to provide cleaning services

Although the Confirmatory Notice confirmed that the Contravention Notice lapsed and that the matter will be referred to the Magistrates Court in terms of Section 46(a) of the *OHS Act* for prosecution without any further notice, there was no action from the Department. Fortunately, Mogodumo circuit employees were temporarily moved to a nearby school, Mangakane Lerate, which is conducive to health and safety standards. Four other circuits, namely, Sepitsi, Nokotlou, Lebowakgomo and Mphahlele are still suffering.

The PSA will table the matter at the next Chamber, escalate the matter to the DEL Director-General after the Chief Provincial Labour Inspector could not resolve the matter, and will also escalate it to the SAHRC Head Office.

GENERAL MANAGER

