

Feedback: Multilateral meeting - DCS St Albans Management Area

A multilateral meeting was held on 21 August 2023 between the PSA and the Management of St Albans Management Area. The following item was discussed:

PSA concerned about staff shortage following stabbing and assault of employees by inmates

On 21 August 2023, a follow-up multilateral meeting was held at St Albans Management Area office between the employer and the PSA with the sole purpose to discuss the staff shortage. The employer provided the 2003-approved post establishment for the Management Area as well as financed posts *versus* vacant and frozen posts. The Management Area has 1 324 approved financed posts of which 1 176 are filled. Of these financed posts, 96 are vacant whilst another 52 are frozen, resulting in a staff shortage of 148 correctional officers.

To aggravate the shortage of staff in addition to the vacant and frozen posts, the St Albans Management Area has an average of 105 employees absent on any given day owing to injuries on duty, sick leave, temporary incapacity leave, normal leave, *etc.* What is important to note is that on 1 July 2009 the Department nationally implemented a seven-day 45-hour work week, which introduced a two-division system whereby one division would work two days for twelve hours and be off duty the next two days whilst the other division performs duty. The current situation is that the Department is utilising a one-division post establishment in a two-division system, which means that the security staff complement is halved as the same positions need to be filled on both divisions, causing the shortage of staff. The Department is on record that to successfully implement the seven-day work week, it requires an additional 23 000 employees. These employees were never appointed.

Another meeting is scheduled for 11 September 2023, during which a progress report is expected from a task team doing an internal investigation into staff shortages.

Members will be informed of developments.

GENERAL MANAGER