

Feedback: Department Bargaining Chamber - 13 June 2023

Employee Satisfaction Survey Project

The employer reported that an Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) study was previously conducted in 2017/18. A report with recommendations and findings was submitted to EXCO for approval. The recommendations were implemented accordingly in 2022. Participation was very low. Of 8 029 employees, only 1 707 participated in the survey, which equated to 22% participation. The employer intends to conduct another ESS in 2023/24. The PSA noted the report and raised a concern about the challenges experienced in the previous survey and urged employer to implement measures to improve the participation rate in the upcoming survey. An awareness campaign must be conducted to encourage employees to participate in the project. The PSA wishes to encourage employees to participate in the project to improve employee satisfaction in the workplace.

Organisational Culture and Climate Survey Project

The employer reported a draft document was developed to implement the organisational culture and climate survey in the Compensation Fund component. The document aimed to guide the Compensation Fund in driving the successful adoption of the Organisational Culture Survey under 'Project Kharilisuke'. The survey project will apply to both management and employees to enhance organisational culture and behaviour. The change management process will include the following three phases of change, namely: Preparing for change; managing change; and reinforcing or sustaining change. Projects envisage assisting employees to adapt to change and improve organisational culture. The DEL aims to improve morale and productivity in the workplace. The PSA noted the report and requested further engagement on the report.

Revised COID Provincial Structure for Compensation Fund (CF)

The employer reported that the DEL embarked on a redesign of provincial CF offices in 2018. It aimed to address service-delivery challenges caused by the old provincial organisational structure. The process intends to enable the CF to achieve its strategic mandate and render effective service delivery to citizens. The implementation process was halted owing to the introduction of the organisational architecture review project of the entire DEL. The process is now at an advanced stage. The proposed provincial structure of the CF will be aligned with organisational goals. The CF subsequently embarked on a process of creating posts, transferring functions, and changing job titles in both the Head Office and Provincial COID structure. The Directorate: Organisational Effectiveness followed through by submitting for approval to the

relevant approving authorities the required documentation to fulfil legislative requirements of this process. The CF has now obtained concurrence from the Minister of Public Service and Administration. This presentation highlighted key changes in the structure that have been approved and will shortly be implemented. The new structure has the potential to create 660 posts. The PSA noted the report and requested further engagement on the matter.

DEL Integrated Contact Centre

The DEL provides services, such as unemployment benefits, compensation for occupational injuries and diseases, work-seeker registration, labour-market trends (to inform policy development), occupational health and safety, labour dispute resolution, employment equity, *etc.* These services are not provided in an integrated manner as the DEL had not yet established an integrated contact centre for clients. For example, the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), Public Employment Services (PES) and CF have their client call centres, whilst the DEL still operates through the switchboard. Clients experienced challenges when they enquired about the different services offered by the DEL. Enquiries are then escalated to the office of the Director-General or Minister. The DEL intends to integrate all call-centre services into a one-stop shop. Existing call centres will be upgraded and integrated to create value and improve service delivery. The project will cost R436 million. The integrated contact centre would ideally include, amongst others:

- Integrated query/complaints resolution system for DEL and its entities with the ability to monitor and follow-up the status of each and flag long-outstanding cases.
- Integrate the toll-free numbers of UIF and CF with an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) for different business units.
- Provide client service, satisfaction, and support by responding timeously to queries and/or enquiries.
- Improve accessibility to the service provided by DEL and entities to a wider range of clients.
- Combine the resources of DEL and its entities to deliver effective, efficient, and client-oriented services.
- This new channel will create a high-performance culture that will change the way DEL deals with customers.

The PSA noted the report and requested the employer to provide a guarantee that the integration process would not affect employees' condition of service. The PSA urged the employer to upskill employees so that they could adjust to the new intervention.

Conversion of Ixopo Labour Centre and Richmond Labour Centre into satellite offices

The DEL intends converting two labour centres in KwaZulu-Natal into satellite offices. There are 16 Labour Centres, 16 satellite offices, and 34 visiting points located across the province. Richmond Labour Centre has a satellite office in Ixopo and additional visiting points at Bulwer, Underberg, Highflats, and Nhlazuka. There are 29 officials stationed at Richmond Labour Centre. They include Labour Centre Head, Career Counselors, Employment Service Practitioners, IES Team Leaders, Inspectors, and Administration Staff. The Ixopo satellite office has a higher influx of clients than the Richmond Labour Centre. The DG approved the conversion of the Ixopo satellite office into a Labour Centre and Richmond Labour Centre into a satellite office on 3 October 2022. The main reasons for conversions are:

- 70% of clients who are serviced by the Richmond Labour Centre, including stakeholders, are from the Ixopo area.

- The Ixopo satellite office operates five days a week with two CSOs offering all Labour Centre Services, however, all documentation is couriered daily to the Richmond Labour Centre.
- All the work that is couriered from the Ixopo satellite office needs to be captured and processed by two CSOs at Richmond Labour Centre. This translates to time-wasting and duplication of duties being experienced daily.
- Furthermore, of the total four visiting points that are being serviced by the Richmond Labour Centre, three are closer to Ixopo and therefore the travelling distance is shorter.
- Regrettably, the Ixopo satellite office is experiencing long queues daily.
- Most inspections by the Richmond Labour Centre are conducted under Ixopo as 70% of employers are located under Ixopo.
- Ixopo is identified in both Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality and Harry Gwala District Municipality as the main service centre and economic hub in the district with high population numbers compared to Richmond.
- Richmond's location is unfavourable in that the booming economy of the capital city (Pietermaritzburg) has resulted in an exit of skilled and learned from the area as well as the relocation of industry from Richmond.

The PSA noted the report and requested that a task team be formed to facilitate and monitor the process. The PSA maintained that the conditions of service of employees must not be affected negatively as a result of the conversion process. The PSA will monitor the process. Members will be informed of developments.

Employees who want to join the PSA can visit the PSA's website (www.psa.co.za), send an email to ask@psa.co.za, or contact a PSA Provincial Office.

GENERAL MANAGER