

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION (DIRCO)**

07-11-2023

Feedback: Dirco Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC) meeting

Payment of S&T: International travel

The PSA previously raised a concern regarding the process that was being used by the Department in the payment of S&T for employees who travel to missions, which posed many challenges for employees and was greatly prejudicial to them. A new service provider was appointed to assist with the function and the employer reported that from now onwards, employees will have an option of collecting the S&T from *First National Bank (FNB)* or have the money deposited into their accounts through *FNB*. Alternatively, where an employee does not elect any of the two options, the Department will deposit the money into the employee's account through *Persal*. Members are urged to report to the PSA should they continue to face challenges with this matter.

Organisational structure

The employer reported that the Department is in engagement with National Treasury regarding the proposed organisational structure, repositioning South Africa's global presence as well as the matter pertaining to the Department's rationalisation of its Foreign Missions. A presentation on how the Department would sustain the proposed structure and on affordability was made to National Treasury. However, Treasury has indicated that the structure is unaffordable and has not yet granted concurrence to the Department of Public Service Administration (DPSA). The DPSA has already indicated that the Department complied and met all requirements on the matter. A meeting between the Director-General of Dirco and the Director-General of the DPSA will be convened to discuss a way forward. Labour indicated that as the employer awaits approval from National Treasury and the DPSA, a parallel process of assessing current skills of employees in the Department in comparison to the skills required in the proposed new structure. Once the assessment is done, employees should be upskilled and reskilled in line with the new structure and also be afforded the opportunity to acquire new skills that will enable them to advance in their careers.

Medical-aid claims

The PSA raised a concern regarding the manner in which the employer has been implementing the Foreign Service Code on medical claims. Clarity was sought on the employer's reasons for informing employees only in 2023 that some of their claims that were claimed in 2020/21 were rejected. Furthermore, the PSA is of the view that the Department should have adjusted procedures in countries

where IDC codes for South African medical aids are not recognized. The employer committed to arranging a meeting with labour, the service provider, and relevant managers to engage on the matter and find a solution.

Implementation: PSCBC Resolution 1/2021

The PSA tabled an item regarding the implementation of PSCBC Resolution 1/2021. The collective agreement entitled employees to a payment of non-pensionable allowance as stipulated in clause 3.1 of the agreement and a pensionable salary adjustment of 1.5% for employees who do not qualify for pay progression. The Department seems to have implemented 1.5% of non-pensionable but did not implement the 1.5%-pay progression to employees who qualify for it as well as to those who have reached the ceiling in their notch levels. The employer indicated that it would relook the agreement and ensure that it is properly interpreted and where there have been errors, these will be rectified.

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 PSA Provincial Offices.

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL MANAGER