

Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber meeting – 2 November 2023

Conditions of employment: Security Officials, Workshops, and Call-Centre employees

The employer reported that it has received and incorporated inputs from labour. Additionally, a task team meeting was held on 25 October 2023, where the employer indicated that it had received advice from the DPSA regarding overtime payments. The DPSA suggested that overtime payments should be implemented every three months owing to shifts varying from month to month. The PSA raised concerns about this new formula, as employees were currently being paid their overtime monthly. It was requested that the employer benchmark with other sister departments before making any final decisions. The employer agreed to investigate the matter and provide feedback at the next meeting. The PSA will monitor developments.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

The employer reported that there is progress at waste-water care treatment plants.

- On 19 October 2023, a meeting was held with Mpumalanga SANDF Principals at Macadamia Military Base regarding accommodation for the two DPWI water-care facilities personnel. The issue was successfully resolved.
- The procurement process in the Mpumalanga Region for the vaccination and medical assessment of the two personnel and others is ongoing.
- The crocodile issue at Matatshe Prison was attended to and the Wildlife Trade and Regulation team visited the facility on 19 October 2023. The big crocodile was isolated to the ponds for removal and the search continues for the small one.
- At Hoedspruit, a meeting was held with Facilities Works managers and personnel for an update on site accommodation repairs and repairs on the facility are in progress, but vandalism seems to be a problem as some of repairs have completely been vandalised already.
- KwaZulu-Natal is yet to be visited owing to austerity measures and limitations on travelling.
- DPWI personnel at Western Cape plants have been removed from sites owing to SANDF and contractors taking over the function and other employees went on pension. At Langebaan, the only personnel who were still at the plant have been relocated to the workshop.
- In Mthatha there are no personnel on sites, other than those belonging to contractors.

The PSA welcomed the report and will continue monitoring developments.

Departmental houses

The PSA received complaints from members that most of the houses owned by the Department are either illegally occupied or unoccupied. As a result, they tabled the matter and suggested that the Department takes action to remove those who are illegally occupying houses and allow its employees to rent the unoccupied houses to prevent them from falling into disrepair. The employer responded that Real Estate Management Services is responsible for the management of all state-owned properties, which is guided by the departmental business process together with its mandate in terms of the operation. The National Department of Public Works and Infrastructure for the management of houses does not have a policy that talks about allocating state houses to DPWI employees. The core mandate of the DPWI is to allocate accommodation to the Client Department, mainly the security cluster.

The employer further indicated that there are nine vacant buildings that have structural defects and five illegally occupied buildings in Pretoria. It reported that the matter relating to illegal occupants of the buildings is being handled by the departmental legal service for litigation purposes. The PSA raised concern about the report of the departmental buildings, which only focuses on Pretoria, whereas the DPWI has buildings throughout the country. The PSA further requested that unoccupied buildings that have structural defects be fixed and rented to DPWI employees. The employer responded that there is a high demand for buildings in the province and even after fixing these buildings with defects, priority will always be given to clients compared to DPWI staff, in terms of the departmental mandate. The employer further committed to consolidating information on other buildings across the country that belong to the department. Feedback will be provided in the next meeting.

Bereavement Policy

The PSA received complaints from members regarding inconsistencies in the implementation of a policy in the Department. Specifically, there were recent funerals in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo (Bela Bela), and whilst employees who attended the funeral in Bela Bela were provided with accommodation paid for by the employer, those who attended the funeral in the Eastern Cape were not provided with accommodation. The employer responded by stating that the policy has not been reviewed for the past 15 years and that it will be revised and shared with labour for input as soon as the internal process is finalised.

Policies

- Sexual Harassment Policy: The employer reported that the DPSA is still reviewing the policy and as soon as it is ready, labour will be informed. The PSA noted the report.
- DPWI Parking Policy
- Debt Management and Claims Policy

The employer reported that the above-mentioned policies are still in the policy task team for consultation with labour. The PSA noted the report.

Salary disparity

The employer reported that it could not finalise the issue as per the commitment made in the previous meeting because of cost-containment measures that were imposed on all government departments. The PSA raised dissatisfaction with the report presented by the employer, in that this matter is not given the

priority it deserves and proposed that a task team meeting be formed to discuss this matter further. Parties agreed to convene a task team before the end of November 2023.

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.

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