

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **GOVERNMENT PRINTING WORKS (GPW)**

08-04-2024

Feedback: GPW Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC) meeting - 4 April 2024

Occupational health and safety (OHS) compliance and monitoring

The PSA monitors the employer's compliance with OHS regulations and requirements at the DBC. The PSA confronted the employer on its non-compliance with OHS on several issues, including the non-provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) to employees who are required by law to have PPE when performing their duties. The employer admitted that there is a shortage of PPE in various offices at Bosman and regional offices. It was further reported that the contract of the current service provider for PPE will be coming to an end around June 2024 and another service provider will be appointed to provide PPE. The PSA emphasised that the provision of PPE is not a discretionary matter but a legal compliance issue. The continued expectation of the employer for employees to work without PPE, which is a risk to their safety, is completely unlawful. It is further unfortunate that the employer intimidates employees and forces them to work without PPE. And when employees refuse to work without the PPE, the employer makes a written undertaking that it will bear the responsibility should employees sustain injuries while working without PPE. The employer takes drastic action against employees by suspending and charging them. Such behaviour from the employer is against the *OHS Act* and the Code of Good Practice on the Prevention and Elimination of Harassment in the Workplace. The attitude of the employer shows that there is a lack of care for employees, and it is only concerned with production.

The PSA raised another concern about the tardiness of the employer to respond to health and safety hazards in the workplace. One example cited was the current situation with a lack of lights at the Bosman building where employees are expected to continue working in a building that has no lights in some parts and is very dark where the employees' safety is compromised. The employer has failed to act speedily on this issue, and nothing is done whilst employees are expected to report daily for duty. The PSA demanded that the employer should issue a circular to provide a quick response to managers to release employees where there is a need whenever their health or safety is at risk. These include circumstances such as when there is no water in the building or there is a gas smell or any other hazard that might place employees at risk.

The PSA further raised concern regarding the unavailability of the mobile clinic services after hours when employees are working overtime. This is a risk to the safety of employees working overtime as the clinic is unavailable during those hours and the risk of injury is the same as during the day, if not greater. The employer committed to engage the service provider on the matter and see if the services can be provided

after hours when employees are working overtime or find alternative means to ensure that the service is available after hours.

Relocation to new premises

The employer reported that it has not been able to identify another place for relocation alternative to the one in the Koedoespoort industrial area. The PSA previously proposed that the employer should consider the Pretoria Showgrounds and the employer indicated that attempts were made view the Pretoria Showgrounds without success. The employer indicated that employees are still welcome to suggest other places that may be suitable for consideration. Members are encouraged to bring to the attention of the PSA and GPW management potential places that may be considered for the relocation of commercial printing. The PSA previously raised a concern with the size of the facility in Koedoespoort in comparison to the number of sections, machines, and employees that need to relocate. It was stated that the Koedoespoort facility appears a bit smaller to host all the sections that need to be moved. It was proposed to the employer to appoint a specialist in space planning to assess the space for GPW before a decision is taken. The employer reported that it acceded to the PSA's proposal and is busy appointing a space planner. Such service provider will be allowed to meet with labour for a briefing session and observation.

Policies for consultation and review

The employer tabled 25 policies for consultation. Some of the policies are new policies and others are being reviewed to align with the new legislative framework. When the PSA enquired about which policies are new and which ones are the old that are being reviewed, the employer could not give an immediate response and indicated that it would send a response through an email. The policies that have been tabled are the Remuneration for Work Outside Scope of Duties Policy; Relocation and Resettlement Policy; Probation Policy; Arrangement of Working Time Policy; Appointment of Employees in an Acting Capacity Policy; Overtime Policy; Leave Policy; Job Evaluation and Job Description Policy; Employment Equity Policy; Bursary Policy; Succession Planning Policy; Special Leave Policy; Standby Policy; Retention and Talent Management Policy; Gifts and Hospitality Policy; HIV and AIDS Policy; Occupational Health and Safety Policy; Employee Health and Wellness Policy; Smoking Policy; Sexual Harassment Policy; Head Office Parking Policy; Personnel Security Policy; Transport Policy; Information Security and Procedure Manual; and Communication Policy. Copies of all these policies have not yet provided and the PSA will share the details of each policy in the next *Informus* for members' input.

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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