

Feedback: Bargaining Forum -18 December 2023

Draft policies

The employer tabled the following draft policies for engagement as they were due for amendment:

- Performance Management Policy (PMDS)
- Recognition of Improved Qualification Policy
- Inconvenience Policy
- Prevention of Harassment Policy

The draft policies were circulated to members for input. The policies were deferred to a policy task team for consultation and discussion.

Budget for 2023/24 and 2024/25

The employer tabled the budget reports for 2023/24 and 2024/25 for noting by labour. The employer indicated that the budget reports will be shared with labour going forward. The PSA was not comfortable with the proposal to note the budget reports. They wanted to interrogate the reports. The PSA wanted to discuss the costs of legal fees, cleaning, and security contracts. The employer noted the concerns raised by the PSA and requested to refer the matter to the EXCO and give feedback at the next forum meeting in 2024.

Building Task Team

The employer previously reported that they intend to move from the current building after the lease agreement expires. The OHSC was still looking for an alternative building. Parties agreed to submit two names who will form part of the task team. The PSA submitted the two names. The meeting schedule for the task team will be shared with parties in due course.

Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) deductions

PSA raised a concern about the processes implemented to implement UIF deductions from the employees. The PSA argued that the employees would struggle to access the UIF contributions should they be dismissed from the service. The employer committed to inviting a representative of the Department of Employment to clarify the concerns raised by labour. The employer indicated that a benchmark process was conducted with several entities. It was discovered that only two out of five entities deducted UIF from employees. PSA objected to the decision to deduct UIF and reserved its right. They indicated that they would follow the dispute resolution process to challenge the decision.

Tax issues

The PSA raised a concern that most employees owed huge amounts of tax to SARS without a clear explanation. Employer appointed a Tax consultant to investigate the reasons behind huge tax deductions. The appointed TX consultant failed to complete the task and the outcome of the investigation was not submitted. The PSA objected to the report and requested that an independent tax consultant be appointed to conduct a proper investigation. The recommendations made by the independent tax consultant were not shared with labour. The PSA decided to reserve its right and will consider following dispute resolution to challenge the decisions taken by the employer. The members will be informed about the developments.

General Public Service Sectoral Bargaining Council (GPSSBC) deductions

The PSA raised a concern that the GPSSBC deductions continued to be implemented, even though the employees were transferred to an entity called OHSC. The affected employees no longer fall under the scope of GPSSBC. The employer committed to refunding the affected employees. The PSA requested the employer to commit to a date as to when will the monies be refunded to affected employees. The members will be informed about the developments.

Remuneration and Condition of Service Policies

The employer reported that they are in the process of submitting a revised policy on remuneration and condition of service. The employer committed to share the draft policy in due course.

Access to SAGE payroll by supervisors

PSA raised a concern that the supervisor's access and view confidential information of employees through the SAGE payroll system. The PSA deemed such conduct to violate the *POPI Act*. The employer noted the concern raised and committed to rectifying the omission. The matter will be reported at the next forum meeting in 2024.

OHS issues

The PSA raised a concern that there were carpets which made some employees sick. The air conditioner was not functioning properly, especially when it's hot in summer. The employer committed to address the concerns raised and report back at the next Forum meeting.

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 Offices.

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL MANAGER