



FOR PSA MEMBERS: **DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT (DFFE)**

24-10-2025

Feedback: DFFE Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC) meeting

A DBC meeting was held on 22 October 2025, and the following agenda items were discussed:

DFFE structure (matching and placing)

The Department, together with labour, concluded the matching and placing emanating from the NMOG process where parties agreed that the item will be removed from the agenda and if there are still members who are aggrieved, their cases or issues will be dealt with case-by-case.

Standard operating procedure: South African National Antarctic program (SANAP)

The employer presented progress on the matter where labour was asked to submit inputs. Such inputs were received and consolidated by the employer. Parties agreed that the process will be monitored, and feedback would be provided at the next DBC for reporting purposes, should there be new developments.

Re-introduction: Improved qualifications

The employer reported that it has received concurrence from the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), where a circular was issued inviting employees who have studied and qualified for payments. To date, the employer has paid all employees who qualified. Parties agreed that the item will be removed from the agenda.

HCM Circular 10 of 2025

A circular of all vacant and funded posts was circulated to labour after approval to advertise the positions was given after labour raised a concern that the Department was not complying with the DPSA circular to uplift the moratorium. A workshop will be conducted by the employer for all employees where a date will be communicated.

Forestry placements

A task team was established and went around the country to consult with all affected employees. A report was given at the DBC whereby the employer indicated that it was in consultation with the provincial departments of education and health to conclude the absorption of remaining employees where vetting

was done on those who will be deployed to the Department of Education to ensure that they are fit to work with learners. Feedback will be given at the next DBC on the final absorption of remaining employees.

Skills audit

A service provider was procured to conduct a skills audit to check if the Department had the required skills to deliver on its mandate. A report was shared with the findings and recommendations where labour requested to be given time to go through the report and make comments where necessary. The item will remain on the agenda for reporting purposes.

Filling of vacant, funded posts

The processes of filling identified vacancies are underway after the structure was approved. Labour requested to be furnished with a list of all those vacancies with a detailed list of the report of how many vacancies were filled and how many were rejected to be presented at the next DBC.

Changes in organisational structure

Labour raised concerns upon receiving complaints from members who indicated that the employer is busy restructuring and consulting directly without unions' involvement. The employer stated that it was not aware of any restructuring, safe to say that there were directorates where there was a change in reporting lines which did not constitute a restructuring. Labour committed to submitting examples where the employer had consulted with employees on changes in their line of duty, which will be presented at the next DBC

OHS issues

Labour alerted the employer that there are several buildings that are not complying with OHS after raising the issues in OHS Committee without success in addressing challenges. Labour will submit a list of all buildings that are not in compliance with OHS and the employer must address the matters within seven days. In case of failure to comply, the matters will be escalated to the Department of Employment and Labour.

Acting Policy

Labour tabled the matter upon being alerted that the Department does not have an approved acting policy and, as such, the employer uses its subjective discretion, which at times discriminates against other employees. Labour proposed that in the absence of an approved policy, the employer should rely on the DPSA guidelines when considering appointing acting personnel. The employer noted the concern and indicated that a policy is being developed by its service benefit department and will be brought to the DBC for consultation.

Consulted policies

The following policies were presented at the last DBC meeting and subsequently deferred to the Policy Task Team (PTT). In this meeting, the employer reported that the PTT meeting could not take place as scheduled and a new date will be identified for further engagements: Review of Learning and Development Policy; Firearms Control Policy; Firearms SOP; Remote Work Policy; and Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Employees who want to join the PSA can visit the PSA website or contact PSA Provincial Offices.

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GENERAL MANAGER