



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

05-02-2026

Feedback: DFFE Departmental Bargaining Chamber

The PSA provides the following feedback to members on matters discussed at the Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC), with a focus on policy reviews and other key labour issues.

Review of policies: Policy Task Team (PTT)

PTT meetings are currently considering policies previously tabled at the DBC.

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Parties reached agreement on most amendments. However, there was no agreement on labour's request to observe Senior Management Service (SMS) recruitment processes, as was the practice in former departments. The employer indicated that advice received from a DPSA colleague suggested that most departments do not allow labour to sit in SMS recruitment processes. Labour requested written confirmation from the DPSA. The matter was referred to the PTT, which will reconvene on 20 February 2026, with progress to be reported at the next DBC.

Acting Policy

Labour raised a concern that the Department operates without a current acting policy. The employer responded that an old policy existed and that a new policy was being drafted, with labour participation through the PTT. Labour requested circulation of the existing policy and the draft under development. The employer committed to circulate both, after which engagements will proceed in the PTT and be reported to the DBC.

Fisheries Research Policy

Labour sought clarity on the existence of a Fisheries Research Policy. The employer confirmed that no such policy currently exists and that the relevant branch has been tasked to draft one for tabling at the DBC and referral to the PTT. Labour requested that lobby discussions must cease and that the item be removed from the agenda until a draft policy is formally presented. The request was noted.

Human Capital Management (HCM) Circular 10 of 2025

Although parties previously agreed that workshops would be convened on this Circular, no workshops were held. The employer confirmed this and stated that the Circular had been overtaken by events. The employer committed to reverting to labour on the possible withdrawal of the Circular.

Forestry placements

The Department reported ongoing engagements with various departments regarding the placement of affected employees. Labour will be invited to consultation sessions with affected employees before the end of the current financial year.

Skills audit

The employer presented the outcomes of a skills audit and shared the presentation with labour. Labour requested time to consult members and committed to report back at the next DBC.

Filling of vacancies: DFFE

Labour noted that several posts had been advertised internally and requested an update on filled and vacant positions. The employer undertook to provide an updated report on prioritised vacancies at the next DBC, or earlier, if possible.

Changes to DFFE organisational structure

The employer requested an opportunity to provide detailed feedback at the next DBC, noting that the process must be concluded before the new financial year. Labour noted the request.

Occupational health and safety (OHS) matters

OHS concerns raised by labour were referred to the OHS committee for engagement. Unresolved matters will be escalated to the DBC. Parties agreed to remove this item from the DBC agenda, pending OHS committee processes.

Safety of officials handling cash and confiscated abalone

The employer reported progress on procuring speed points and identifying safer methods for handling cash and confiscated items to reduce risk to officials. A progress report will be shared at the next DBC.

Outsourcing of security services

The employer confirmed that the contract of an outsourced security service provider has expired and that a new provider is being sourced but disputed that departmental officials are affected. Labour requested time to consult members. The item remains on the agenda for further reporting.

Remote work/working hours policy

The employer confirmed that there is no remote work policy but indicated that a working hours policy is being drafted, informed by DPSA guidelines. The employer committed to sharing research conducted by the Public Service Commission at the next DBC.

Member input

Members are requested to submit their input on demands to the PSA via their entity Chairpersons by 10 February 2026.

Employees wishing to join the PSA can visit the PSA website, email ask@psa.co.za, or contact their nearest PSA Provincial Office.

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