



FOR PSA MEMBERS: **WESTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

14-09-2026

Update: Somerset West - Substance leakage

The PSA was recently alerted to a suspected unknown substance leak at the Department of Social Development's Somerset West offices after several employees became ill and the reported health risk could not be managed on site.

The PSA escalated the matter to the facility's Chief Director and Regional Director. In response, the employer deployed Technical Services personnel to engage the landlord's representative and assess the situation. Employees on site reported that the gas-like odour has dissipated, although concerns remain about an unusual substance or condition in the air. SAPS personnel working in the same building reported a similar experience and were sent home earlier in the week. No further incidents have since been reported. The landlord's representatives advised the employer that the building has no gas supply. A representative attended the site on 10 September 2026 and inspected the air-conditioning pipework. No visible leaks were identified.

Next steps

- A Technical Services representative will conduct a site inspection of the air-conditioning system to determine whether it may have contributed to the incident.
- The landlord will conduct further investigations and confirm that no gas is present in the building and that all mechanical systems under its responsibility are functioning correctly.
- The Department's Technical Services representatives will inspect all mechanical systems for which the Department is responsible.
- A consolidated update will be issued once all investigations have been completed.

The PSA has also requested an inspection by the Department of Employment and Labour. The PSA assures members that their health and safety remain the Union's highest priority. The PSA will continue to monitor the matter and communicate further developments.

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL SECRETARY