

# INFORMUS



FOR PSA MEMBERS: *GENERAL 12/2020*

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## COVID-19: Thank you for your efforts!

The country remains locked in the grips of the COVID-19 pandemic. The PSA is aware of all the challenges that members classified under essential services are facing in the execution of their critical duties. It was already reported that several healthcare officials have tested positive for the virus.

Members are assured that the PSA is engaging relevant employers on the serious shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks, gloves and sanitisers. Related issues, including problems with water supply, which pose a further risk to not only the employees but also members of the public who depend on these intuitions for much-needed services are also being addressed. The PSA's interventions in this regard have already yielded some positive results.

The issuing of travel permits to allow designated employees to travel to work also presented challenges. At especially the Department of Correctional Services many employees did not receive the required permits. This situation left already understaffed Correctional facilities vulnerable. The PSA engaged the employer and was given the assurance that the matter will be rectified.

Many essential services employees across the country who depend on public transport have since the start of lockdown been faced with waiting in long queues for transport to shuttle them to and from work. Many of them were left stranded, especially when having to return to their homes. Despite getting home very late, they were expected to report for duty the next day. Crowded taxi ranks and long queues render social distancing impossible, which in turn, means that if exposed to the virus these workers will also expose their families, colleagues and members of the public to infection. The PSA has requested the urgent intervention of the Minister of Transport to find ways to address this challenge.

The country is facing an unprecedented crisis, but these circumstances should not endanger the lives of especially workers who, as pillars of society, are tasked to render critical services. The PSA will closely monitor government's compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* in this regard. The PSA would also like sincerely thank its members all workers who remain on duty during this crisis to serve the public. Your dedication and sacrifices are not going unnoticed. You are indeed heroes!

GENERAL MANAGER