



MEDIA RELEASE

PSA calls for arrest of Limpopo Department of Education acting Head for disregard of Prohibition Notice

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the Limpopo Department of Education's defiance of a Prohibition Notice issued by the Department of Employment and Labour.

The Prohibition Notice was issued as the Inspector concluded that the building in Phokoane Cluster was not habitable and threatened the health and safety of employees. The building houses Eensaam, Glencowie, Ngwaritsi, and Phokoane circuits respectively.

The Inspector discovered that the building had structural defects posing a danger to employees. A notice was immediately issued on 9 May 2024. In terms of the notice, people are prohibited from using the building and it is not safe for occupants. The Department of Education was made aware of the danger presented by the building but went on to issue a communicate for employees to remain at work and continue accessing the office until further notice. This is a clear disregard of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, as the Inspector is empowered to close a dangerous building. In addition, the Department has to date failed to establish a Health and Safety Committee.

The Limpopo Department of Education is one of those departments that is constantly found wanting with dilapidated and neglected buildings. The PSA calls on the Department of Employment and Labour to exercise its authority fully and impartially by reporting the matter to the South African Police Service to force the Department to understand that it is not above the law. The decision by the Department to disregard laws calls for harsh punishment.

Despite the Department's acting Head being alerted to this illegal action by the Department, nothing has been done in clear disregard of employees' health and safety. The PSA urges the Limpopo MEC of Education to ensure consequence management for those who issued an unlawful letter to employees to continue accessing the building in disregard of the Prohibition Notice.

END

