

Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber

Implementation: Settlement Agreement on Recognition of Experience of OSD for Correctional Services Officials

Retired members are aware that the employer is still finalising their outstanding second-phase payment in terms of the settlement agreement. The employer previously provided reports, indicating that progress is being made. The same updated report was again requested by labour. Unfortunately, the response from the employer was that owing to numerous disputes now being declared on the matter, it can no longer provide an update in the DBC as the matter is now *sub judice*. The employer, however, did report that the audit process was halted on 1 July owing to the contract terms expiring. National Treasury was engaged and the audit process was approved to go ahead on 13 October 2021. The PSA is hopeful that the remaining files will be audited in the coming months that will enable the employer to finalise payments without further delays.

Travel and subsistence policy

Members were previously informed that the DBC discussed the new requirement that all meal claims must be supported by a receipt as this is a requirement from National Treasury. The PSA requested to meet with the office of the CFO to discuss the special circumstances DCS works under to obtain deviations from the requirement to produce a receipt to claim for meals. Although the employer indicated that the office of the CFO will be engaged, the employer now refuses to set up such a meeting or to request for deviation from the directive. The employer position has a negative impact not just on employees but potentially on the operations of DCS. If employees were to decide to work according to the directive, offenders will be left unguarded. The PSA voiced dissatisfaction with the employer stance on the matter and declared a dispute. The General Secretary of the GPSSBC will be tasked to mediate the dispute.

Ex-officials: Re-employment

The PSA placed an item on the agenda on the re-employment of ex-officials. Reports show that the employer did not implement the re-appointment criteria consistently in all provinces. This resulted in years of service/years of experience not being considered for all and resulted in lower salary levels for certain employees. The employer proposed that a special multi-lateral meeting be convened between parties to find an amicable solution. The special meeting has not taken place and the employer could not provide a clear direction in this regard during the DBC. The PSA therefore decided to refer the matter for facilitation.

Pay progression

The PSA previously enquired from the employer when the 2019/20- and 2020/21-pay progression will be paid to qualifying employees. The employer requested time to obtain the official position. According to the employer, pay progression for both the 2019/20 and 2020/21-financial years was paid to all qualifying employees. Any member who qualified for the pay progression payments and was not paid should submit a grievance at the respective management area or with their supervisor.

Exceeding 30%-overtime threshold

The PSA is aware of the unique working circumstances in correctional centers. These circumstances lead to members exceeding the 30% threshold and therefore not qualifying to receive payment for all the overtime they have worked. The PSA is of the opinion that the Department can approach the DPSA and obtain approval to deviate from the 30% threshold, which will result in members receiving payment for overtime worked. The employer, at this stage, is not willing to request for a deviation. Members should therefore take note that no overtime over the 30% threshold will be paid, and members cannot be forced to work for such over time. Members who experience problems where they must work, and will exceed the 30% threshold, must report this to their respective PSA Provincial Offices.

Members will be informed of developments.

The PSA wants to take this opportunity to wish all employees who are unwell owing to COVID-19 a safe and speedy recovery.

GENERAL MANAGER