

Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber meeting

Implementation: Settlement Agreement - Recognition of experience of OSD for Correctional Services Officials

It was previously reported that the employer will provide a written report on the number of pensioners who still needs to be paid. The employer could not provide the report as previously indicated but indicated that the process to appoint the auditors is underway and the Bidding Committee should conclude on this process soon. The PSA believes this matter has not moved for quite some time and therefore invoked clause 17 of the GPSSBC Governance Rules. The PSA also reported previously that a process was started to certify the settlement agreement, which application was submitted to the GPSSBC. The PSA was recently informed that the application for Certification cannot be done as the settlement agreement does not have a case number. The matter was then referred to the Resident Panelist at the GPSSBC for further directive. The GPSSBC indicated that feedback should be received by the end of the May 2021.

Learnership

Members will recall that the Learnership Program ended in December 2020 and March 2021, respectively. The employer, owing to financial constraints, did not absorb these learners as it did in previous years. After much deliberations with the employer, including the National Commissioner, a circular was issued, which directed provinces that the learnership group of March 2021 will be absorbed from 1 June 2021 if learners meet the criteria. As much as the PSA welcomes this decision, the PSA is still concerned about the group of learners who ended their contracts in December 2020. The PSA is also of the view that the employer acted unfairly by absorbing March learners first and demanded that the December group be absorbed without delay. The employer requested time to have further discussions with its principals and feedback will be given soon.

Shift system

Members are aware that the employer finally tabled a proposed Shift System for consultation. Labour rejected the proposed Shift System and provided alternative options. The employer indicated that it is finalising its mandate with its principals. The new proposed shift pattern will be further discussed with labour once the employer's mandate is concluded.

Travel and subsistence policy

Members informed the PSA that in certain areas members are forced to submit meal receipts with their claims or these will be rejected. The employer recently issued a new directive, which confirms that if

employees want to claim for meals, they need to submit a receipt as proof. The PSA requested the employer to revisit this decision. A motivation was given as the PSA is of the view that the requirement to provide a receipt is not a feasible option. The receipt requirement places an additional administrative burden on the employer. It raises concerns in areas where members need to purchase food from vendors who do not necessarily print receipts or for members to purchase food for each other whilst others are still working. The employer agreed to engage its principals and to include labour in these discussions. Until the decision is reversed, members are advised to attach meals receipts to their claims.

Correctional Centres

The PSA previously placed an item for discussion, which relates to information pertaining to the capacity of Correctional Centers. The employer was requested to provide the following statistics:

- The approved bed space per Correctional Centre
- The number of offenders per Correctional Centre (lock-up number)
- The approved official structure per Correctional Centre
- The vacancies at each Correctional Centre

The employer indicated that a Senior Manager will be invited for a multi-lateral discussion between all parties on the matter.

Employment Equity calculations

In the previous meeting, the PSA requested the employer to provide a report on how it calculates its employment equity targets/goals. The PSA believes that the employer is making use of a Pearsal report that is reporting on employees' salary level and not the occupational level. If this is the case, equity targets are calculated on wrong information. Parties agreed to a bi-lateral discussion where the PSA further explained its concern. The meeting concluded that the employment equity plan is being consulted and the proposals by the PSA on the correct information will be incorporated in the new plan.

Re-employment: Ex-officials

The PSA placed an item for discussion on the re-employment of ex-officials. Reports obtained indicated 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 requested time to investigate the claims and provide feedback as soon as possible. The employer also agreed to provide labour with a copy of the implementation directives.

South African Nursing Council (SANC) deductions

Members informed the PSA that the employer normally deducted the SANC annual registration fee from employees and paid over to SANC. This year, a number of nurses received an indication from the SANC that their registration fees were not paid despite the fact that the employer deducted these from their pay. The employer in the previous meeting indicated that the matter will be addressed urgently. The PSA is delighted to inform members that a report was provided on 24 May 2021, which shows that the payments were made to the SANC and that the registrations of nurses should be concluded without any penalty for the nurses.

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