

Feedback: Special Departmental Bargaining Chamber - 14 October 2021

Restructuring: Durban Naval Station

During the previous Chamber meeting on 17 September 2021, the PSA expressed concern regarding the restructuring at the Naval Base Durban. Members brought the following to the attention of the PSA, which necessitated the convening of a special Chamber meeting:

- Failure of the employer to consult whilst the Department is restructuring the Naval Station.
- Conversion of the Unit into a Base without informing either the workforce and/or labour, through the Chamber on future utilisation of the civilians or the Unit as well on any latest developments.
- Members allege that the Base has commenced matching and placing *Defence Act* personnel (DAP) at the exclusion of PSAPS. Some of the *Defence Act* personnel are being utilised in the civilian posts structure, which may cause prejudice to civilians at a later stage.
- The PSA demanded the position of the SA Navy on members who were previous transferred to Simonstown Dockyard after the closure of Durban Naval Unit some years back, who are intending to relocate to Durban.
- Presentation of the “As Is” and the “To Be” structures as well all the consultative processes that are to be adhered to in terms of the DPSC Consultative Requirements on the Organisational Structure of the Departments in terms of *Public Service Act* (PSA), *Public Service Regulations* (PSR), *Public Finance Management Act* and the Directives as promulgated in 2014 and amended in October 2016.
- Alleged Relocation of Durban Naval Base to Richards Bay.

The above-mentioned concerns were submitted by the employer’s Chief Negotiator to Chief of Navy on 30 September 2021 for actioning and response during this special Chamber meeting. The employer failed to circulate the relevant documentation beforehand for engagement.

Relocation of Naval Station to Richards Bay

The employer partly acknowledged that Transnet had engaged the Department at a political level in utilising the Naval Station premises for a container yard for import and export purposes. There is still no tangible information that can be shared at this stage. It became clear at the meeting that the Employer was not clear on this issue as the Chief Negotiator indicated that there was no plan in place whilst the SA Navy Representatives indicated that there was a plan in place. After the employer’s caucus, parties agreed that this meeting be adjourned until 28 October 2021 to afford the employer’s team an opportunity to consolidate its position. Where upon resumption, the Department will fully present all activities that

were undertaken without the necessary consultation. The PSA demanded that as of 14 October 2021 the whole process must be put in abeyance.

The PSA wishes all members who are infected and/or affected by the COVID-19 pandemic a speedy recovery with sincere condolences to those who lost loved ones.

GENERAL MANAGER