

Update: Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC)

A DBC was held on 12 October 2021 and the following matters were discussed:

OHS compliance and COVID-19 regulations

The employer reported that a steering committee on COVID-19 is held through the task team every week to give updates on developments of OHS compliance and COVID-19 regulations. Risk registers are submitted to the Compliance Officer every fortnight. Emerging risks are reported at the National Steering Committee for discussion and mitigation strategies. Vulnerable employees and those over 60 years are encouraged to work from home. All managers must manage service delivery via remote working arrangements. Consultation with the DPSA is ongoing with the work from agreement to be concluded between employee and supervisor. Staff rotation is mostly at 30% throughout the Department and all offices are implementing all health and safety protocols. Labour welcomed the reported but raised concern about security officials who ask employees if they were vaccinated when they enter the building, particularly in Head Office. The employer was surprised to hear the complaints and indicated that it will investigate the allegations and feedback will be provided in the next meeting.

Collective Agreements and Policies (Policy Task Team Report)

The employer indicated that only the sexual harassment policy was adopted by parties in the previous meeting, and it was tabled at the EXCO and now it was submitted for approval by the acting Director-General.

Waste Water Treatment Plant

The employer reported that this matter has been allocated to Chief Director dealing with Water Care challenges and he is not available to provide progress report, but he will be invited in the next meeting to give an update. Labour raised a concern that this matter is now postponed for the second time, and that the employer is not giving it the full attention that it deserves.

Insourcing: Security personnel at regions

The employer indicated that the *status quo* remains, in that it does not have enough budget to insource Security personnel. It, however, committed to see if in the next financial year funds will be available to insource these employees.

Conditions of employment: Security officials, Workshops and Call Centre

The employer reported that the matter is dealt with at the Task Team. The proposed collective agreement will be circulated to all parties for consultation with members. The employer will also circulate the current collective agreement together with the proposed agreement to all parties to give inputs and amendments. Labour requested the employer to invite representation of all affected directorates (Security, Workshops and Call Centre).

Organisational Culture Diagnosis and implementation of Change Management Strategies in DPWI

The Department is currently conducting an organisational culture diagnosis and the implementation of change management strategies project, which is overseen by the Deputy Minister. Several briefing sessions have been held with the emphasis on the need of a change management strategy to instill the ideal organisational culture, which will impress upon good working ethics, the change strategy that cherishes the strategic goal, i.e., a resilient, ethical and capable organisation. The inception of the organisational culture diagnosis project was introduced and projected on a five phases trajectory with articulated timeframes and currently concluding phase two. All relevant stakeholders were engaged, including labour (unions), which eventually recommended the formation of the operational task team that meets on a weekly basis to ensure that employees embrace this project as well as unblocking areas.

Lifestyle audit: SMS members of Department

The employer reported that the lifestyle audit is voluntarily and not mandatory anymore. The process is subjected to only SMS members. Labour welcomed the report.

GENERAL MANAGER