

Update Meeting: Follow-up Department of Employment and Labour - Mpumalanga

Members were previously informed regarding a follow up meeting between Senior Management and labour that was scheduled to be held on 19 February 2021. The following items were discussed:

Non-compliance of Covid-19 Regulations by the employer

It had become apparent that the Chief Provincial Operations Officer was delaying decontaminating Labour Centre Offices and the Witbank Provincial Office, with claims that since 72 hours lapsed, the “virus has died”. The Chief Inspector of the Department gave a brief presentation wherein he explained that nowhere in the prescripts is the 72 hours substantiated. Therefore, if an office has a confirmed Covid-19 case the employer has a duty to decontaminate. He further indicated that if an organisation does not have a functional OHS Committee then that organisation will have a problem.

Union bashing by Management

Labour reiterated that unions should be acknowledged and accepted as Social Partners by the employer. Management, particularly the Accounting Officer of the Province has a tendency of not recognizing the concerns of Organised Labour. The current crisis of non decontamination in the Witbank Province Office led Organised Labour in attempt to pursue an engagement with the Officer but it all fell on deaf ears. Senior Management in the meeting acknowledged this point and further indicated that even Chamber matters need to be periodically discussed.

Locking out of employees

Labour indicated that officials were locked-out, as a result of the public noting the non-compliance of the employer, who was not ensuring the safety of the workplace as per the *OHS Act*. Management indicated that no employee should be locked out and that an investigation Task Team between the two parties should be formulated. The representative from the Office of the Director-General indicated that deep cleaning will be done in the presence of all stakeholders and the report of these deliberations will be forwarded to the Director-General of the Department.

Members are still advised to report any non-compliance of Covid-19 regulations to the PSA Provincial Office.

GENERAL MANAGER