

Update: Wage Negotiations

Members have been informed that on 11 May 2021 the PSA filed for conciliation to the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) after parties in the PSCBC have reached a deadlock on the wage negotiations on 23 April 2021. Parties thereafter entered a 10-day facilitation process with the employer as of 7 May 2021.

In the interim SAPU referred its dispute on 7 May 2021 as they did not agree to have the facilitation process and the PSA referred its dispute later when it became clear that the current facilitation was a mere time delaying tactic from Government as the employer.

The legislative purpose of the PSCBC, which is a creature of statute, is to ensure that there is labour peace in the Public Service and to provide for an effective and speedy dispute resolution process. The PSA is concerned that 7 days has already lapsed of the 30-day conciliation period without receiving any set down date from the Council. After the 30 days have lapsed, the Council will be obliged to issue the PSA with a certificate of non-resolution which will entitle the PSA to embark on industrial action.

Currently, with the lack of urgency from the Council to set the matter down, the time for finding a resolution is running out and the PSA can give the assurance that the remaining time will not be enough to assist parties to find a proper resolution.

What raises more questions of the seeming further delay or alleged hesitation to set our matter down, is that the PSA have been excluded by the Council to participate in the facilitation process. This is when the actual Conciliation process would require parties to engage in facilitation to reach an agreement.

The intentional exclusion from the PSA is also questioned and became clear when the PSA learnt of the recent offer which was made to the remaining labour parties during the facilitation.

The employer made the following offer to the rest of labour:

- That employees **will not receive a pensionable** salary increase during 2021, but will have their salaries adjusted by at least 1,5% (employees currently receive a 1,5% pay progression)
- A monthly non-pensionable cash gratuity of R978-00

- **Members will recall that employees currently already qualify for a 1,5% pay progression based on satisfactory performance. In essence the only offer on the table is a therefore is a non-pensionable gratuity (type of allowance) of R978-00 before tax as stated above**

The offer by the Employer does not come close to what was demanded by organised labour bearing in mind that employees have not received their salary increases for the 2020 financial year.

The rising cost of basic needs and the effects caused by the Covid-19 epidemic has equally affected those frontline workers.

In-fact is has affected them more as they have been directly exposed to the epidemic and some have lost their lives as a result. Increases costs in food, fuel, transport, and other commodities has added to the hardships suffered by PSA members who are Teachers, Nurses, Doctors, EMS, Cleaning staff, those who service clients directly such as in Home Affairs who deals with the Public and its Immigration Officers along with other Public Servants.

GENERAL MANAGER