

Update: SARS disputes

Wage dispute

Members are aware that the employer failed to implement the final leg of the three-year wage agreement. The PSA obtained a legal opinion on the matter and is confident that the employer's non-implementation can be successfully challenged. Members were previously informed that the employer was given notice of the intended court action as prescribed by the *Tax Act*. The notice period was observed and lapsed and therefore the PSA can confirm that the court papers were filed on Wednesday, 14 July 2021. The PSA awaits the court to provide directives on the process to be followed and a date for the matter to be heard. Members are requested to exercise patience as it is estimated that the matter will be heard within six months.

COVID-19 vaccinations

The employer engaged the Department of Health to prioritise the SARS workforce during the vaccination process. Discussions between the employer and unions are also underway to finalise arrangements. Currently, all SARS staff will be able to be vaccinated, should they elect to do so, at over 70 vaccination sites that are being identified from Monday, 26 July 2021. Proposals on time-off were made by the PSA to ensure that staff take up the opportunity to be vaccinated. Arrangements will be finalised in the next two days after which a joint statement by the employer and labour will be issued.

Leave encashment

Members will recall that the PSA declared a dispute since the employer failed to pay out unused leave days of members. Members were further informed that the conciliation session at the CCMA took place and failed. The PSA applied for arbitration and received a set-down date for 16 August 2021 for the matter to be arbitrated by the CCMA. The PSA appointed legal representatives to argue its position at the CCMA.

Hay Grade

Members were informed previously that confirmation was needed by the attorneys on the payment of the arbitration. Parties agreed that an amount of R200 000 can be released to start the arbitration process. A letter to confirm this arrangement will be sent to the attorneys, which will hopefully ensure that the matter can proceed soon.

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