

Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber – 7 November 2024

Occupational health and safety (OHS) compliance

The employer reported that it was not ready to present the latest OHS progressive report. The PSA noted the report and urged the employer to convene an urgent bi-lateral meeting to address pressing OHS matters at the Home Affairs Call Centre. The date for the bi-lateral meeting will be communicated in due course.

Discipline management report

The employer reported the following items under the reporting period: Grievances: 45 received, 38 finalised, and 7 pending; Misconduct cases: 74 received, 38 finalised, and 36 pending; Arbitration awards: 49 lodged, 48 finalised, and 1 pending; Appeals: 38 received and 38 pending; and Suspensions: 10 issued, 3 finalised, and 7 pending (Cost: R3 599 847,21). The PSA noted a report and raised concern about the number of harassment and bullying cases reported. The PSA urged the employer to implement the recently signed DPSA policy of Harassment and Bullying to provide guidance on how to resolve such cases. The PSA further raised concern about the prolonged suspensions and the cost aligned. Parties agreed to convene a bi-lateral meeting to engage in mechanisms to address harassment cases and prolonged suspensions.

Provincial Consultative Forum (PCF)

The employer reported that eight PCFs were relaunched between April and August 2024. The only outstanding province to launch its PCF was Gauteng. Parties agreed to convene the Gauteng PCF on 11 November 2024. The PSA welcomed the work done by the Chamber task team to resuscitate PCFs.

Vacant funded posts

The employer reported that there are three prioritised DDG posts that were advertised under the current reporting period. The posts included the Immigration, Human Resources, and Information Technology posts. The PSA noted the report with disappointment and raised concern that the Department is currently operating with a staff establishment of 40% capacity. Employees are overloaded with work and are not coping. Frontline offices must be capacitated. The PSA urged the Department to make a representation to National Treasury and the DPSA to request funding to advertise more posts to fulfill the mandate of the Department. The employer requested to engage its principals on the request and will report back at the next DBC meeting.

Modernisation issues

The employer reported that the following items will be discussed at the bi-lateral meeting with the responsible DDG on 13 November 2024: Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS) replacing Home Affairs National Identification System (HANIS); Introduction of E-visa and Branch appointment Booking System. The PSA noted the report and agreed to defer the mentioned items to a bi-lateral meeting as scheduled.

Training and recognition of DHA qualification

The PSA previously raised a concern that there were employees who have not received their DHA qualification certificate. The PSA urged the employer to change the training model so that it can include as many employees as possible. The PSA further requested the employer to give preference to internal employees who obtain such qualification in the core business of the Department. The employer acknowledged the concerns raised by the PSA and requested that the matter be deferred to a bi-lateral meeting on 29 November 2024.

Supply: Immigration and Civic Services uniform

The employer reported that all branches of Immigration were allocated the required uniform. It further indicated that the Civic Services Committee would meet on 13 November 2024 to finalise the distribution of uniforms for frontline officials. The PSA noted the report and will verify and confirm if the Immigration uniform was allocated to all Immigration Officers. The PSA welcomed the establishment of the Civic Services Uniform Committee and will participate.

Review and alignment: Organisational structure

The employer reported that the matter will be discussed and deliberated at the bi-lateral meeting scheduled for 13 November 2024. The employer will give an overview presentation on digital transformation project strategy and the skills audit to be conducted. The PSA noted the report and requested the employer to share the presentation prior to prepare properly for the bi-lateral meeting.

Members will be informed of developments.

Employees who want to join the PSA can visit the PSA's website, send an email to ask@psa.co.za, or contact PSA Provincial Offices.

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