

FOR PSA MEMBERS: **GENERAL PUBLIC SERVICE SECTORAL BARGAINING CHAMBER (GPSSBC) - LIMPOPO**

01-07-2024

Feedback: Limpopo GPSSBC meeting – 28 June 2024

The following agenda items were discussed:

GPSSBC Resolution 5/2014: Recognition of Improved Qualifications

The outstanding report from the Department of Public Works Roads and Infrastructure regarding the total applications and number approved for payment of cash bonuses was received to the satisfaction of labour. The matter was removed from the agenda.

Minimum requirement of Undergraduate Qualification - NQF Level 7: Posts of Assistant and Deputy Director – Limpopo Provincial Treasury

The employer advertised posts for the Deputy and Assistant Director with the minimum educational requirement of NQF Level 7 undergraduate qualification, whereas in other provinces the requirement is NQF Level 6. The PSA viewed this as an overqualification with a potential to prejudice members and insisted that there should be uniformity in the Public Service. The matter remains on the agenda awaiting the position of the employer.

Nature Reserves: Provision of uniforms

The PSA has been rigorously engaging the employer regarding the provision of much-needed uniforms and protective clothing. The employer had experienced many challenges, including failure by a previous supplier to deliver, the subsequent cancellation of the purchase order, appointment of a new supplier, and inadequate funds to procure sufficient uniforms. The employer previously reported that R7 million had been received for the procurement of uniforms for Field Rangers during the final adjustment allocation from Provincial Treasury in December 2023. Whilst this was good news, the employer had made an about turn and reported that the tender would be re-advertised, and it was awaiting budget for the 2024/25-financial year. The PSA declared a dispute as the employer has shown no urgency and the provision of protective clothing is not a matter of negotiation.

Job evaluation: Education Management Information (EMIS)

The PSA requested the employer to subject EMIS employees to job evaluation. The employer previously reported that EMIS posts were not on the organisational structure and therefore could not be subjected to job evaluation. Employees could also, for example, not be considered for subsidised vehicles. It was reported that EMIS posts have now been included on the organisational structure and Treasury was

requested on 24 May 2024 to upload the new structure on Persal. EMIS members will be able to apply for subsidised vehicles and the employer will embark on job evaluation in the new financial year. This is a major victory for the PSA.

Department of Agriculture: Alleged incorrect implementation of Resolution 3/1999

The PSA is representing several members affected by the employer's intention to recover alleged overpayments from the salaries of 77 employees affected by alleged irregular translations from non-OSD posts to OSD posts in July 2009. The employer previously reported that it had consulted the DPSA on how to address the matter. No report was provided, and the matter remains on the agenda.

Policy consultation outside GPSSBC

Following the tabling of several draft policies by the Department of Transport and Community Safety in a recent MANLAB meeting, the PSA was of the view that policies cannot be concluded at departmental level but should be ratified by the Chamber. An example is the current draft Pregnancy Policy for Traffic Officers. It was resolved that the employer should table policies of transverse nature at the CCPLP and department-specific policies at the GPSSBC.

Limpopo Provincial Treasury: Redundancy of Cashier posts

In the previous meeting, concerns regarding the Department's decision to declare the posts of Cashier redundant, were raised. Cashiers had been responsible for the sales of tender bulletins in all districts, a service that was no longer required. Affected employees were informed that they would be "temporarily placed" at Supply Chain Management for 24 months. The PSA cannot allow the employer to continue making unilateral decisions regarding these employees and insists on a proper consultative process. The employer will provide a detailed report in the next meeting.

Department of Education: Withdrawal of Scheme B travelling allowance for ECD Finance Admin Clerks

Early Childhood Development (ECD) Finance Administrative Clerks were recently informed that the Department has taken a decision to withdraw their Scheme B allowance with effect from 1 April 2024, alleging that their functions were mostly office based and citing austerity measures as the reason for its decision. The decision was communicated to clerks in departmental *Circular 57 of 2024*. The PSA highlighted an example of an ECD Finance Clerk in Vhembe responsible for 364 ECD centres that required him to travel almost every day to monitor the utilisation of funds, ensuring compliance with funding policies, and providing training for newly funded centres. In a three-month period, the said Clerk spent only ten days in the office when processing payment of funds to the 364 centres. The PSA argued that the Early Childhood Development clerks are not office based and that because of the lack of availability of government vehicles they are not able to perform their duties and responsibilities, which posed a risk to the employer (misuse of funds). The PSA requested the employer to reconsider its decision and allow the ten ECD Finance Clerks to continue using the Scheme B vehicle allowance. The employer reported that it would intervene and ensure that employees will be provided with tools of trade (government vehicles) to perform their duties. A progress report will be given in the next meeting.

Nature Reserves: Substandard/Dilapidated accommodation

The working and living conditions of Field Rangers at most reserves are deplorable and do not comply with the requirements of the *Firearms Act*. The PSA previously proposed in a bilateral meeting that the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure be approached to urgently provide mobile offices and

accommodation, whilst waiting for the necessary funding to maintain and renovate existing accommodation. The HOD previously agreed to a proposal by the PSA that unused mobile accommodation, generators, and fencing material at certain reserves be allocated to reserves where needed. A decision was taken that this item be escalated to the CCPLP.

Nature Reserves: Understaffing and filling of posts

The PSA reminded the employer that in the past there were more than 1 300 Nature Conservators (Field Rangers) on the fixed establishment, which were now reduced to a mere 350. The PSA submitted that Field Rangers have noticed that their names appear on the payroll of three Reserves and wanted an explanation. The PSA called upon the employer to urgently address the problem of understaffing and cited that the appointment of EPWP workers and interns could not replace Field Rangers in doing law enforcement activities, firefighting, and dealing with problem animals. This agenda item will be escalated to the CCPLP.

Prioritisation of training: Field Rangers

The PSA submitted that Field Rangers have not been subjected to critical training such as refresher courses in the use of allocated rifles, firefighting, law enforcement, and environmental knowledge and skills. Neither have they been provided with service kits for their rifles, which could lead to damage or render the weapon useless in a crisis. The PSA would like to see the individual training needs of Field Rangers prioritised as it concerns their safety. The employer disputes that no training has been provided and the PSA will provide details of training needs submitted before the next meeting.

Members will be informed of developments.

The PSA will protect members' rights and promote their interests as practicing service excellence is an important value of the PSA. Members needing assistance with their cases can contact the PSA Provincial Manager in Limpopo on email: john.teffo@psa.co.za / WhatsApp 079 513 9856.

Employees who wish to join the PSA can contact Lawrence Muvhango on 082 880 8995, Paulina Moloto on 082 880 8957 or the PSA Provincial Office on (015) 295 0500.

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