

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

05-06-2024

## Feedback: Limpopo Special GPSSBC Chamber meeting - 4 June 2024

The PSA sponsored the following agenda items and requested an urgent special meeting:

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

Early Childhood Development 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 are mostly office based and citing austerity measures as the reason for its decision. The decision was communicated 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 spends only ten days in the office when processing payment of funds to the 364 Centres. The PSA argued that ECDs are not office based and that because of the lack of the 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.

### **Nature Reserves: Sub-standard, dilapidated accommodation**

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.

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 Expanded Public Works Program (EPWP) workers and interns could not replace Field Rangers in doing law enforcement activities, firefighting, and dealing with problem animals.

### **Prioritisation of training for Field rangers**

The PSA submitted that Field Rangers have not been subjected to critical training such as refresher courses in 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 was not ready to respond to any of the items raised by the PSA, despite a detailed submission that was made as early as 14 May 2024. It undertook to respond to these issues on 28 June 2024.

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 at [john.teffo@psa.co.za](mailto: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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GENERAL MANAGER