

Feedback: SITA special Bargaining Forum meeting – 27 August 2024

The previous *Informus* edition refers (copy can be obtained from the PSA website at www.psa.co.za or from PSA Provincial Offices).

CCMA settlement agreement

Members will recall that the PSA lodged a dispute with the CCMA after the employer unilaterally implemented the 4.7%. During the conciliation meeting on 27 August 2024, parties reached a settlement agreement, which mandated both parties to reconvene and finalise negotiations on outstanding issues. Parties agreed to draft a collective agreement to formally conclude 2024/25-salary negotiations. The employer acknowledged and apologised for walking out of negotiations before the conclusion of negotiations. Parties committed to convene a special Bargaining Forum meeting on 18 September 2024 and conclude negotiations properly.

Fixed-term contracts

The PSA tabled the matter and demanded that all contract workers at SITA who have been employed for more than ten years be offered permanent appointments. In response, the employer indicated that owing to the nature of Service Level Agreements (SLA) with clients, it is unable to convert fixed-term contractors into permanent staff. However, the employer expressed willingness to discuss extending certain benefits, such as medical aid and pension-fund access, to fixed-term contractors. A task team will be established to engage in these discussions, with a follow-up bilateral meeting scheduled for 18 September 2024. The outcome of these discussions will be reported at the next Bargaining Forum meeting.

Stand-by allowance

The employer acknowledged the delay in implementing the agreed increase in the stand-by allowance from R200 to R220, which was meant to be paid on 25 July 2024. The delay was attributed to a system challenge that affected the back payment of this allowance, which was supposed to be retrospective to 1 April 2024. The employer has since resolved the issue and confirmed that payments will now be made on 25 September 2024, including the backdated amounts from 1 April 2024.

Outsourced cleaning services

The PSA tabled the matter during salary negotiations of 2024/25 and demanded that the employer insources the cleaning service to give proper job security to Cleaners, given that cleaning is a service that

SITA needs permanently. The employer reported that it will conduct a feasibility study where it will compare the cost of outsourcing to that of insourcing the service and will share the outcome with the PSA at the next Bargaining Forum meeting.

Full-Time Shop Steward (FTSS)

The PSA demanded that a Full-Time Shop Steward agreement be concluded at the Bargaining Forum to allow identified union representative to represent members. The PSA further indicated that a draft FTSS agreement was previously tabled for negotiation. The employer noted the demands by the PSA and indicated that it was in a process to benchmark the draft agreement with other entities. Parties agreed to discuss the matter further at the scheduled special Bargaining Forum meeting on 18 September 2024.

SITA recognition agreement

The PSA tabled the matter previously and demanded the review of the current recognition agreement. At the recent Bargaining Forum meeting, parties agreed to a bilateral meeting to be held on 18 September 2024 to engage on the matter and report back at the next Bargaining Forum meeting.

5% increased salary bands

Members will recall that in 2019 the employer benchmarked with other entities and decided to restructure the salary bands of all employees in the bargaining unit. Unfortunately, the decision was reversed. It is now reported that the employer had decided to revisit the process and subsequently adjusted the salaries of those employees with a 5% increase. The adjustment is separate from the 4,7% increase that was rejected by the PSA during current salary negotiations. The 5% adjustment would be an add-on to concluded salary increase at the current negotiations. As much as the PSA welcomed the adjustment, it raised a concern that the employer failed to consult before such decision was made. The employer agreed to provide clarification at the scheduled special Bargaining Forum meeting on 18 September 2024.

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

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL MANAGER