



FOR PSA MEMBERS: DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS (DHA)

17-02-2025

Feedback: DHA Departmental Bargaining Chamber – 13 February 2025

Occupational health and safety (OHS) report

The employer reported that an audit was conducted at the Pampierstad district office and Port Elizabeth (PE) Refugee Reception Office. It was established that the Pampierstad district office failed to comply with OHS regulations owing to a lack of ventilation and evacuation systems and the office is not user friendly for people with disabilities. The office further lacked proper lights, and toilet facilities are not working. It was reported that the PE Refugee Reception office experienced challenges with the ventilation system. The independent contractor was on site to fix the air conditioning.

The PSA noted the report with huge disappointment and urged the Northern Cape Provincial Manager to look for alternative office accommodation for employees working at Pampierstad regional office. The PSA will request the intervention of the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) to conduct an inspection so that the office can be closed ultimately. The PSA reported that it has reported the non-compliance of the PE Refugee Reception office to the DEL and subsequently a notice was issued against the Department. The Department was instructed to repair the ventilation system within 14 working days, failing which a prohibition notice will be issued. Parties agreed to convene a national OHS committee meeting on 25 February 2025 to deliberate further on other offices that are reported to be non-compliant. Members are requested to report unsafe and dilapidated office buildings to PSA Provincial Offices so that the employer can be taken to task.

Discipline management quarterly report

The employer reported that there were 31 grievances lodged, 17 finalised, and 14 still under investigation. The majority of the grievances included harassment and victimisation. There were 54 cases reported, 17 were finalised, and 37 are pending. There were 57 arbitration notices issued, eight awards issued and five were in favour of the employer and three against the employer, which were implemented accordingly. The employer further reported that there were 12 suspensions with full pay instituted and four finalised and eight are still outstanding. The suspension under the current reporting period cost the Department over R1 million.

The PSA noted the report and urged the employer to manage the number of reported harassment and victimisation cases. The PSA demanded that the employer must implement awareness campaigns

against harassment and victimisation. The PSA further demanded that the Harassment policy, which was recently developed by the DPSA, must be used as a guiding tool to deal with such acts of unwarranted conduct. The PSA also urged the employer to finalise suspension cases within 60 days as per the provision of the Disciplinary Code and Procedure to avoid fruitless and wasteful expenditure.

Provincial Consultative Forums (PCF)

The employer reported that all nine PCFs were resuscitated, and new committees were instituted. Parties agreed to visit the Free State PCF on 20 February 2025 to assist in resolving challenges experienced in the last meeting held. The PSA welcomed the progress to resuscitate all PCFs to address issues of mutual interest from points of origin.

Vacancy report

The employer reported that it received approval from National Treasury to advertise 99 vacant funded posts. The recruitment process is still underway, and a comprehensive report will be submitted at the next Chamber meeting. The vacancy rate is at 2.75% under the current reporting period. The employer further reported that it envisaged introducing an eRecruitment system to fast track the filling of posts.

The PSA noted the report and urged the employer to fast track the filling of posts and demanded that labour must be consulted before the eRecruitment system is implemented.

Training and recognition of DHA qualification

The employer reported that 264 learners completed their DHA qualification with 120 credits. There are 252 officials who are still busy with their skills programme to be completed in the next financial year.

The PSA welcomed the report and appreciated progress pertaining to the completion of the DHA qualification. The PSA encourages officials to enrol for DHA qualifications to increase opportunities for career pathing.

Supply of Civic Services uniform

The task team reported that a meeting was held with the Civic Services uniform committee on 11 December 2024. A plan of action to purchase and distribute the uniform to frontline officials was discussed. The Department allocated R5.8 million for the procurement of Civic Services uniform.

The PSA welcomed the report and committed to monitor the allocation and distribution of the uniform to all front-line officials across the country.

Review: DHA organisational structure

Parties agreed to defer the agenda item to a task team and a provide progress report at the next Chamber meeting.

Non-payment of overtime: Immigration officers

The employer reported that the budget for overtime was depleted and, as result, a submission was routed to the office of the Director-General to approve additional funds for the long-outstanding overtime payments of Immigration Officers at the Inspectorate Directorate.

The PSA urged the employer to fast track the process and pay affected officials accordingly.

DHA staff members working at commercial banks

It was previously reported that the employer intended to recall all DHA officials rendering civic services at commercial banks.

The PSA objected to the decision and demanded that these officials should remain until proper consultation with labour is completed. The employer agreed that these employees will continue to work at banks until further notice.

Five-year vision: Digitalisation, on-line service, and automation of Immigration and Civic Services

The employer reported that the Department intended to implement a five-year plan to digitalise core functions of the Department to enhance service delivery for citizens of South Africa. It further reported that it has already started to pilot the on-line services with some commercial banks. It intends to extend the service to more commercial banks across the country.

The PSA noted the report and cautioned the employer that as much as the initiative is supported, the automation process must not reduce the capacity of employees. The PSA urged the employer to use the system to enhance and give support to current staff, which is already below 45% capacity. Parties agreed to establish a task team to monitor and facilitate issues that involve the digitalisation processes and provide constant progress reports to the Chamber.

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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GENERAL MANAGER