

Feedback: Departmental Bargaining Chamber (DBC) meeting - 11 March 2024

OHS compliance

The employer reported that an OHS Committee has been established, which is comprised of First Aiders, Fire Fighters, Peer Educators/Wellness Buddies, and SHE Representatives, carrying out different roles. A meeting was held on 23 November 2023, and the next meeting will take place on 13 March 2024. The PSA demanded that going forward, a written OHS report should be shared with labour before the DBC, to allow parties sufficient time to interrogate the report. The employer committed to circulating the written report to labour.

Filling of funded, vacant posts

The employer reported that following the approval of the new organisational structure, the Department's staff complement has grown to 299. It reported that there are 74 vacancies, 14 of these are currently in different recruitment stages and 60 are still on hold, pending cost-containment measures from National Treasury. The PSA raised concern regarding the current departmental vacancy rate and questioned the employer on the plan to prevent a lack of capacity. The employer responded that 14 posts that are in different recruitment stages are a result of the Department identifying critical posts to avert a lack of capacity. The PSA will monitor developments.

Moving to new building/office

The employer reported that the current lease agreement ends in November 2024 and the Department is considering renewing the lease until April 2025. The PSA questioned the employer on progress made to acquire a new permanent building. The employer responded that on 7 November 2023, DSBD received a response from the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure regarding the departmental needs assessment. It was found that there is no suitable state-owned building in the Pretoria CBD that can accommodate the DSBD alone. A submission with a proposed project plan for DSBD and the entities to re-locate with Seda via its procurement process was approved by the Minister on 4 March 2024. The letter to the Chairperson of the Seda Board has been signed by the Minister and submitted accordingly. A deviation letter to the DG of National Treasury has been drafted and routed to the acting DG for signature. Facilities workstreams have already consulted with different units such as ICT, Security, etc., to confirm space needs and have commenced drafting the Terms of Reference. The PSA will monitor this process and ensure that the proposed building complies with the *Occupational Health Safety Act (OHSA)*.

Members will be informed of developments.

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 a PSA Provincial Office.

Reuben Maleka
GENERAL MANAGER