



## PUBLIC SERVICE CO-ORDINATING BARGAINING COUNCIL (PSCBC) REPORT NO 1 OF 2017

23 January 2017

WE can report that Council met on 21 February 2017 to deal with the following issues:

**Irregular Cancellation of Membership:** The employer presented a draft circular directing departments to comply with section 13 of the Labour Relations Act (LRA). Section 13 deals with deductions for union subscriptions, and it came in response to Hospersa's complaint regarding the incorrect cancellation of membership by a number of public service departments. We gave the employer a go-ahead to send out the circular, but we cautioned that the matter will be brought back to the PSCBC if there is non-compliance.

**Pension Redress:** We raised concern about the poor communication between the Government Pension Administration Agency (GPAA) and beneficiaries. The GPAA is failing to inform beneficiaries of the status of applications. The employer undertook to address the matter.

**Scope of the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC):** We reported that we are still consulting on this matter of ELRC unilaterally including Further Education and Training (FET) colleges in its scope, which see as a contravention of section 37 of the LRA.

**Draft Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):** We reported that we will convene a labour caucus to arrive at a joint position on this matter. It was agreed that the matter will be discussed at the next meeting.

**Draft Bill on Border Management Authority:** The Secretariat reported that, having sent a meeting request, the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee indicated public hearings were held on 13 September 2016. The PSCBC was advised to refer its concerns to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP). However, we pointed out our members have already received transfer letters, even though consultations are still in process. The employer requested us to provide evidence of such letters, undertaking to make follow-ups with the relevant departments.

**Amendments to Government Employee Pension Fund (GEPF) Benefits:** The GEPF issued an apology for the amendments of the members' benefits without firstly negotiating such amendments in the PSCBC. This action contravened section 29 of the GEPF Law of 1996, which envisages a process of negotiation prior to amendments being made to rules regulating member benefits. The GEPF assured PSCBC that these amendments have not been implemented, and requested consideration for discussion at the next meeting. It was further stressed that these amendments to benefits will be funded from GEPF reserves, and that no extra money will be paid by either members or employer. The amendments include an increase in funeral benefits, the improvement of orphan's pension to children left with one parent where the main member has passed on, an additional voluntary contribution scheme, preservation, a

review of spouse's pension, a review of the divorce benefit, as well as an improvement to the cash resignation benefit.

**Annual Salary Adjustment:** We requested clarity regarding the 2017/2018 salary increment, the employers view regarding the current Consumer Price Index (CPI), as well the ultimate actual salary increase. The employer said that it can only confirm the official CPI rate after the annual Budget Speech, undertaking to provide such at that stage.

**Capacity of State in the PSCBC and Sector Councils:** We indicated our concern about the apparent lack of permanent employer chief negotiators in the PSCBC and some of the Sector Councils. We indicated that this renders councils ineffective and with lacking continuity. The employer reported that posts were advertised and interviews were being conducted, with a view to newly-appointed chief negotiators commencing duties on 1 May 2017.

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