

MEDIA STATEMENT - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEHAWU CALLS FOR AN INVESTIGATION ON E-RECRUITMENT TENDERING PROCESS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAND REFORM

Tuesday January 16, 2018

The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union [NEHAWU] calls for an immediate investigation into the unilateral introduction of the E-recruitment system by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.

The system was implemented without following any tender process requirements. We find it worrisome that the department went ahead and appointed a service provider by the name of Graylink Media [PTY] LTD without offering other bidders an opportunity to bid for the tender. It is clear as day that the implementation of this system is not meant to help the department with its recruitment process nor does it makes it easier for those who seek employment at the department.

Immediate investigations must take place and we believe that the Deputy Director General, Mr. Eugene Southgate, would be able to provide answers to this debacle as he is the one who appointed the service provider. Furthermore, the department has been pleading poverty as is claims that their budget have been reduced by National Treasury but decided to spend money in outsourcing the recruitment processes.

The system is an internet based recruitment process and according to department this system is meant to replace the manual job application process. As NEHAWU, we raised concerns about the system as we strongly feel that it is unfair because it disadvantages people who reside in rural areas who have no access to the internet. In addition, the system contravenes the existing policy on recruitment and selection as it automatically shortlist and afford no space for supervision of the shortlisting process by trade unions as enshrined in the recruitment policy instead responsible managers shortlist on their own in their offices without even sitting together. This is a recipe for disaster and it is open to abuse and fraud.

The other downside of this recruitment system is that all job adverts no longer indicate employment equity targets and even the system itself does not indicate or cater for employment equity. The system during its shortlisting process does not consider employment equity even though it is a departmental policy and a law requirement. Furthermore this system doesn't cater for the use of the Z83 form as a requirement of the public service recruitment procedures in terms of public service regulations.

NEHAWU demands that the e-recruitment process be immediately stopped and the department must follow both the DPSA and PSCBC processes of regulatory recruitment processes. We find it very alarming that the employer went ahead and implemented the system without addressing labour concerns. This behavior not only constitutes bad faith but also a game of Dirty tricks as the employer introduced the item for

consultation at the Departmental Bargaining Chamber but implemented it before its finalisation at the Chamber.

The employer has been giving labour a monotonous response that so far the system is not violating any regulatory requirements therefore it would not be halted. As a result, there is a deadlock between the national union and the employer. In this regard, the union has one option of declaring a dispute if the employer is not willing to budge.

As NEHAWU, we are against any form of outsourcing in the public service, hence our rejection on the implemented system by the department. We have already declared dispute of mutual interest on the system and we are awaiting for a set-down date from the bargaining council, which can result in a possible strike by our members. At this point, we want to warn the department not to take workers for granted as the union is prepared to take the bull by its horns in defending the rights of its members and workers in general.

Issued by NEHAWU Secretariat

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