

Achieving decent work in South Africa

The world celebrated Decent Work Day on 7 October 2010 and in recognition of this auspicious month, APSO seeks to provide our members with more information about the promotion of Decent Work in South Africa.

Decent work is defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and endorsed by the international community, including South Africa, as "productive work for men and women in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity".

Decent Work is encompassed within the 4 pillars:

Pillar 1:	Pillar 2: Social Protection	Pillar 3: Social Dialogue	Pillar 4: Rights at Work
Promoting employment by creating a sustainable institutional and economic environment	Developing and enhancing measures of social protection – social security and labour protection – that are sustainable and adapted to national circumstances	Promoting social dialogue and tripartism	Respecting, promoting and realizing the fundamental principles and rights at work.

Decent Work involves opportunities for work that:

- Is productive and delivers a fair income;
- Provides security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families;
- Offers prospects for personal development and encourages social integration;
- Gives people the freedom to express their concerns;
- To organize and to participate in decisions that affect their lives; and
- Guarantees equal opportunities and equal treatment for all.

Launch of the DWCP South Africa

The South African Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) was officially launched, by the Minister of Labour, on 29 September 2010. APSO's representative, Bev Jack, was in attendance and provided the following feedback on the key themes for South Africa's programme.

Fundamentally, DWCP seeks to entrench the rights of all people to work, access to decent work and a decent life. These fundamental rights equally apply to those in employment and the unemployed, rich and poor and are enshrined in the Constitution. Skills development, vulnerable groups and the informal sector were key focus areas during the development of the South African DWCP.

Unemployment seen as one of the biggest hurdles

Unemployment is seen as one of the biggest challenge facing South Africa and so it is fitting that 17 out of 44 outputs in the DWCP address the challenge of unemployment and job creation. The South African DWCP appears unique in terms of Community's role in committing as a social partner. It is unknown if there is any other country where the community has played a key role in the social partnership. It is very encouraging that all of the social partners

demonstrated their commitment to implementing the programme.

Youth focus

The ILO's focus for 2011 is on youth and entrepreneurship as this has been identified as critical in terms of supporting the global job pact. The ticking time bomb of disillusioned youth remains a major challenge, particularly for emerging economies like South Africa. Riots are not about skilled engineers protesting, but rather of masses of under-educated, unskilled and frustrated youth who don't see any positive future for themselves.

Strong public and private employment services essential

Government's role in enforcement is critical and the need for a competent inspectorate was raised. The Private Employment Services Bill is urgently required just as a strong public employment services is required to fight unemployment. APSO is committed to developing strong public-private partnerships in this regard, as cooperation between social partners is vital if the large unemployment figures are to be significantly reduced.

Industry Initiatives well on the way to meeting the Decent Work Pillars

APSO has implemented, or is actively supporting, a variety of industry-lead initiatives that seek to address the four pillars of Decent Work.

Pillar 1: Employment – Industry Initiatives

Temporary Employment Services (TES) is seen to be a key driver of employment in an economically flat market and is very often the conduit for first time entrance into the labour market for previously unemployed individuals. Since 2000, private employment agencies introduced around 3.5 million temporary, part-time and contract employees into the South African labour force, approximately 2 million of whom were first-time job-seekers, 92% of whom are African, and 85% of whom are youth (aged between 18 and 35).

The industry is also the primary driver of skills development and since 2000, based on audited figures provided by the Services SETA, private employment agencies contributed R415 million to the National Skills Fund and facilitated the highest number of learnerships as a single industry within the country. The industry, primarily TES providers, continue to actively drive the skills development agenda and create opportunities for employment security for their assignees, more than 32% of the employees (indicated above) secured traditional, permanent jobs within 12 months – and 47% did so within 3 years.

Pillar 2: Social Protection – Industry Initiatives

The industry seeks to drive Social Protection through the creation and promotion of industry-specific benefits, such as the CAPES Provident Fund. Members, particularly those operating a TES, are encouraged to participate in this scheme. The fund was specifically created to cater for the unique circumstances of a TES assignee and ensures that, irrespective of length of contract or transfer between

different TES providers, the TES assignee is able to contribute to a single fund that will provide ample savings for retirement. For more info on the CAPES Provident Fund please contact 011 615 9417.

Pillar 3: Social Dialogue – Industry Initiatives

APSO recently concluded a month-long training contract the purpose of which was to provide the Gauteng Provincial Department of Labour Employment Services Practitioners with recruitment and selection training. This forms part of the ongoing commitment of the industry to upskilling and capacitating the Public Employment Services to ensure that they are able to render an efficient and effective service to the unemployed.

The industry is fully committed to social dialogue with all social partners. APSO, via our membership of CAPES, engages on tripartite forums including NEDLAC. Furthermore, we actively engage with labour, that currently holds the Chair, on the Labour Recruitment Chamber Board of the Services SETA. APSO representatives are involved, in various forums, on issues including Decent Work, Skills Development, A-Typical Employment and others.

Pillar 4: Rights at Work – Industry Initiatives

CAPES, with the full support of APSO, is conducting a pilot with FEDUSA to explore union membership amongst TES assignees. The pilot, of 1000 long-term TES assignees, will be kicked off

shortly and will run for a period of 6-months. The intention is to encourage social dialogue between unions and the TES industry; both providers & assignees. At the conclusion of the 6 month pilot period, feedback will be gathered from all parties so as to determine how best to ensure that social dialogue, and in particular the rights of workers in terms of unionisation, are met. If you are interested in participating in this pilot, please contact Natalie Singer – nataliesinger@apso.co.za

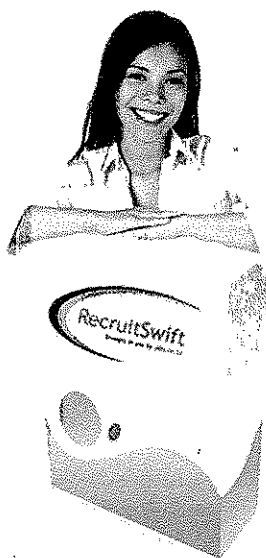
Decent Work Road Shows

APSO will be hosting a road show in January 2011. The various sessions will take place across South Africa including, Gauteng, KZN, Free State, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and Western Cape. The road shows seek to educate and empower members, particularly those who operate Temporary Employment Services (TES), about Decent Work and how this can be achieved within their businesses.

APSO, together with other key stakeholders including organised labour and government, will address the South African DWCP and provide practical tools to assist members in implementing the pillars. The sessions will be aimed at recruitment owners as well as TES practitioners and will be provided free of charge to members, as a result of funding from the National Skills Authority (NSA).

Dates for the road show events will be published shortly. If you have any questions, please contact the APSO National Office or visit www.apso.co.za

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