Employees in the bargaining unit at the NTA Head Office and five of the six Vocational Training Centres under its supervision (Okakarara VTC, Eenhana VTC, Rundu VTC, Valombola VTC and Zambesi VTC), embarked on industrial action on Wednesday, 07 October 2015.

An agreement reached between the NTA and the Namibia National Teachers’ Union (NANTU) and the Namibia Public Workers’ Union (NAPWU), on 09 October 2015, brought an end to the industrial action.

Underlined verbatim below, a joint media statement issued by the parties on Tuesday, 12 October 2015.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the NTA by its Acting Chief Executive Officer, Jerry Beukes, and on behalf of the unions by Secretary General, Basilius Haingura (NANTU) and General Secretary, Petrus T. Nevonga (NAPWU).

1) The NTA and the recognised labour unions, the Namibia National Teachers’ Union (NANTU) and the Namibia Public Workers’ Union (NAPWU) have reached an agreement on salary increases and benefits on Friday, 09 October 2015.

2) The agreement effectively brings to an end the industrial action at the NTA Head Office and the Vocational Training Centres (VTCs).

3) The agreement includes the following:
   - A salary increase of 7.5% Total-Cost-To-Company (TCTC) for all employees in the bargaining unit, effective from 01 April 2015; and
   - As an additional component to the NTA’s TCTC remuneration model, a monthly transport allowance of N$ 510-00 (five-hundred-and-ten Namibia dollars) for all employees in the bargaining unit, effective from 01 October 2015.

4) The parties, furthermore, agreed to review the NTA’s TCTC remuneration model before 01 April 2016.

5) The parties wish to place on record that they remain committed to sound and harmonious labour relations.

END
CHAIRPERSON COWLEY VAN DER MERWE BIDS SACC FAREWELL

Cowley van der Merwe has reached the end of his second term as a member of the NTA's Standards, Assessment and Certification Council (SACC). Van der Merwe served as an ordinary member of the SACC since September 2009 and succeeded William January as chairperson in April 2012. He was reappointed for a second term in September 2013. Van der Merwe is also a former Director of National Examinations and Assessment in the Ministry of Education.

NTA Acting CEO, Jerry Beukes thanked Van der Merwe for his commitment and dedication during his tenure as a member and chairperson of the SACC. “Mr. Van der Merwe has indeed served the NTA and the broader VET sector with distinction. He leaves behind an indelible legacy of consistency, fairness and accountability. On behalf of the NTA and the VET fraternity, I wish him well with his future endeavours and that he enjoys his well-deserved retirement”, Beukes noted.

Established in terms of the Vocational Education and Training Act of 2008, the SACC operates as a sub-committee of the NTA’s Board of Directors. It advises the Board on the performance of standards, assessment and certification settings as set out in the VET Act, and as such, performs an invaluable role in overseeing the work of the NTA in relation to its regulatory functions.

Some areas of responsibility of the SACC include the approval of policies on assessment methods, including Recognition of Prior Learning; considering applications for the registration of training providers; and considering and endorsing unit standards developed by the Industry Skills Committees (ISCs).

The SACC’s Terms of Reference makes provision for individuals to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms on the SACC and other Board committees. Dr Andreas Mwoombala now takes over as the new Chairperson of the SACC.

Outgoing SACC Chairperson
Cowley Van der Merwe

FROM THE ACTING CEO’S DESK

Greetings!

A recent meeting of the management teams of the Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), currently under the NTA’s supervision has once again confirmed the excellent progress these entities have made over the past few years, in solidifying their reputations as credible and quality-driven institutions.

Leading these institutions to self-reliance is part of the NTA’s mandate as per the VET Act of 2008. We have embraced this responsibility and together, we have made huge strides, including accreditation by the Namibia Qualifications Authority; the ongoing upskilling of management teams and trainers; the upgrading of facilities; and the installation of industry-current training equipment.

Through increased accountability and teamwork, I am confident that the VTCs soon will reach even greater heights and take up their rightful places as cutting-edge training institutions, serving the Namibian nation at large.

They need the ongoing support of our industry partners.

Yours in Vocational Education and Training,
Jerry Beukes

STAFF STAKE-OUT

SH: Tell us more about Zack Haakuria away from the office? Hjirvirue Zack Marii Haakuria is an ordinary down-to-earth person, a family man, and a brother to all. Born and bred in Okotjize in the Omaruru district, I am a people’s person and a philanthropist who enjoys helping others in the strong African spirit of Ubuntu.

SH: What is interesting about your job? As an assessment officer I enjoy fieldwork and I find the interaction with various stakeholders very exciting and stimulating. Seeing candidates going to great lengths to achieve success is what motivates me. I really love my job and it certainly helps being a perfectionist, results-oriented and meticulous.

SH: How would you describe the NTA work environment? Enriching. We are indeed like a family. Our organisational values motivate us to strive for the best in all we do. I really see the NTA becoming a formidable force soon. Indeed, it is a noble employer of choice to work for, and to retire at.

SH: Tell us something no one knows about you? People think I am an office person. On the contrary, I am actually an outdoors person passionate about nature. Nature evokes in me a sense of belonging and I can spend hours admiring animals and plants. I find the intricacies of animal behaviour very enriching. Give me a fully equipped Toyota Land-cruiser and a good quality camera and I will be out there doing some bundu-bashing. I am an ardent 4X4 enthusiast. I also dream of owning a game farm, while Auto-Mechanics is also a passion.

SH: What is the first thing you do when you wake up? I am a dreamer. I sit at the edge of my bed and reminisce about how the night disappeared with all its tiny sounds of all creatures big and small. Some of them scary!
The NTA’s National Training Fund Department is making good progress in investing in the training of young Namibian men and women, under the Key Priority Training Grant Funding Window of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Levy.

This was said by the General Manager: National Training Fund, Joseph Mukendwa at a sending off ceremony for a group of 63 young Namibians who left for South Africa in early September to benefit from further training on Levels 3 and 4 in the fields of Electrical General, Welding and Boilermaking.

The trainees have been enrolled at two South African-based training institutions, namely Industries Education & Training Institute in Cape Town and Adcorp Technical Training Campus, operating as Capital Outsourcing, in Johannesburg. “These young men and women are funded under the VET Levy’s Key Priority Training Grant Funding Window and are going to South Africa to obtain Level 3 and Level 4 qualifications in a wide range of occupational areas, all of which are related to the broader manufacturing sector. We are sending them to South Africa, because the qualifications they are to obtain are not offered locally”, Mukendwa explained.

He highlighted that the NTA invested in demand-led training as per industry needs identified by the NTA’s Industry Skills Committees and broader industry partners. “Our Industry Skills Committees - in this case the Manufacturing Industry Skills Committee - act as vehicles through which we source intelligence from industry on sector-specific training needs. We will continue to solicit their input and rigorous evaluations of our future training proposals to ensure that training is implemented as intended; the quality of training is high; and that industry employers are benefiting from the VET Levy scheme”, Mukendwa stressed.

Mukendwa also encouraged all VET Levy-paying employers to continue to support the VET Levy programme as an investment in the country’s people.

“Employers should embrace an employer training culture under which any investment in training is deemed an investment in our country and its human resources, as its most important asset. The VET Levy’s raison d’etre is simple and straightforward: It is aimed at better refocusing our training system and resources on meeting national socio-economic development needs.” he emphasised.

On his part, Acting Chief Operations Officer, Richwell Lukonga highlighted other investments by the NTA under the Key Priority Training Grant Funding Window.

“Local training institutions accredited by the Namibia Qualifications Authority (NQA) have already started to deliver training programmes in Crane Operations, Hospitality and Tour Guiding for 108 unemployed young Namibians. Three local institutions have also been approved by the NTA Board to assess and certify about 500 candidates as having received prior learning through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) service, which credits individuals after demonstrating their competence in already gained knowledge and skills through a series of assessments specifically designed to assist them to display their competence” Lukonga stressed.

Lukonga also encouraged the trainee beneficiaries to be disciplined and to grab the opportunity to upskill themselves and obtain qualifications at higher levels with both hands. “Focus on your training throughout your stay in South Africa and do not allow yourselves to be distracted by unproductive activities” he noted.
The Promotion of Vocational Education and Training (ProVET) Project has released a Needs Assessment Report for the Water & Sanitation Sector. The report highlights the importance of water and sanitation in Namibia as well as the importance of vocational and technical training within the sector. It also makes recommendations with regard to the development of unit standards and qualifications.

Speaking to The Stakeholder on the sidelines of a recent Water and Sanitation Sector Roundtable Meeting, held at NTA Village, ProVET Expert, Sebastian Wenz (photo), said a national consultation round conducted in 2014 revealed that stakeholders were not fully convinced that the needs of the industry in terms of dealing with current skills gaps, would be adequately covered by the unit standards and qualifications proposed at the time.

“ProVET, therefore, agreed to consult the industry further and supplement the existing information from the initial job profiling and unit standards development with new information from the Sector Skills Plan (SSP). We followed up with further visits to key industry players and collected additional research, which culminated in the Needs Assessment Report on Water and Sanitation”, Wenz explained.

The report identifies possible gaps between current levels of training and performance and the objectives and expectations regarding the delivery of services by water and sanitation supply personnel. Thus, it evaluates learning and training needs and, on this basis, attempts to propose solutions as to how the sector can leverage human resource potential and improve capacities within the water and sanitation trades.

“This Needs Assessment Report on Water and Sanitation should be seen as additional information and thus supplements current information and data contained in the NTA’s recently-approved Energy, Water and Sanitation Sector Skills Plan, especially in view of the development of unit standards and qualifications, which ProVET is currently busy with”, Wenz noted.

ProVET invites stakeholders interested in learning more about the report and the recommendations contained therein to contact Yvonne Doerfler, TVET Sector Specialist at telephone number, 061-207 8118, or e-mail, ydoerfler@nta.com.na.

The management teams of all the seven Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) currently under the NTA's supervision retreated to the capital recently for a five-day monitoring and evaluation workshop. The meeting was primarily aimed at assessing the progress made by the VTCs in the implementation of their respective annual business plans.

Officially opening the workshop, Acting CEO, Jerry Beukes highlighted the importance of engagement as a core and strategic consideration for the NTA, in living up to its vision of becoming a true port of call for vocational skills, and in avoiding disappointment, recriminations and damaged relationships with those stakeholders the organisation regards as essential to its business. “Engaging the management teams of the various VTCs therefore demonstrates the value the NTA attaches to the execution of well-coordinated and high quality training activities in realising our strategic endeavour”, he noted.

Beukes expressed satisfaction with the excellent progress the VTCs have made over recent years in raising their quality standards and in solidifying their reputations as credible institutions. “We must sustain this upward trend and continue to improve service delivery”, he stressed.

He also encouraged the respective management teams to come up with strategies and plans to support the further strengthening of accountability at their centres. “Accountability matters. It is the most important cog in this wheel called corporate governance. Without it, corporate governance is but a pipedream. As leaders, you serve as the foundation of our centres, so it is vital that this foundation is built on accountability and integrity”, Beukes added.

The meeting, which was chaired by the NTA’s Acting Chief Operations Officer, Richwell Lukonga, also focused on the finalisation of the 2016/2017 VTC Training Calendar.

CENTRES ON THE MOVE!

The VTC Management Teams joined Acting COO, Richwell Lukonga and other Head Office Divisional Heads for a group photo
A PROUD DEBUT!
The Namibian team is escorted into the WorldSkills São Paulo Opening Ceremony in Brazil.

TRAINING EXCELLENCE!
Eenhaar VTC Plumbing & Pipelining trainees listening attentively during a demonstration session.

ATTRACTIVE VET BRANDING!
The eye-catching entrance to the WorldSkills São Paulo competition venue.

HARD AT WORK!
Participants at a Water & Sanitation Sector Roundtable Meeting hosted by ProVET at NTA Village.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP GRADUATES
Proud participants in the CATS training programme posing for a picture with Polytechnic of Namibia Rector, Dr Tjama Tjivikua (far left) and CATS Chairperson, Patrick Kohlsteadt (far right).

FUTURE OFFICE MANAGERS!
Proud Office Administration trainees at the Windhoek VTC posing for a group photo.

SAFETY FIRST
A Welding and Metal Fabrication trainee at Windhoek VTC showing off his safety gear.

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info@nta.com.na

ASSESSOR FRIEND
Senior Assessment Officer, Moses Tjirare smiling for the camera.
A group of 13 successful participants in the Commercial Advancement Training Scheme (CATS) was rewarded for their hard work at the institution’s 9th Graduation Ceremony, held in the capital in September. All the candidates received a Certificate in Business Process Management with the top graduate, Fesse Amuyela, earning recognition and the First Prize for her average of 80% throughout the two-year programme. The programme has been running for 10 years and has altogether produced a total of 93 graduates.

The Rector of the Polytechnic of Namibia, Dr Tjama Tjivikua, congratulated the graduates on their hard work and acknowledged that while the programme may be taxing, it is worthwhile.

On his part, the Chairman of the CATS Board of Directors, Patrick Kohlsteadt, added that the success of the two-year programme was due to the Dual Training System that not only gives students theoretical broad-based learning, but emphasises hands-on practical training in the workplace. All students participated in Work-Integrated Learning programmes that saw them placed in the industry for long stints.

A tracer study undertaken by CATS last year established that 90% of graduates of this programme are in permanent employment, many of them with the companies that provided the training to them. This shows great promise to the industry, especially because the logistics and transport sector continues to experience a shortage of skilled employees.

The scheme is a unique business administration skills development programme that combines theoretical learning and practical experience in the workplace. Its vision is to proactively meet the education and training needs of industry, empower young people and contribute to Namibia becoming a competitive global player with a skilled and educated workforce. CATS is a creation of the Southern African German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AHK).

STAKEHOLDER DIARY

- **13 October 2015**
  Standards, Assessment and Certification Council (SACC) Meeting, NTA Village
- **03 November 2015**
  National Training Fund Council (NTFC) Meeting, NTA Village
- **04 November 2015**
  Board Finance Committee Meeting, NTA Village
- **05 November 2015**
  Board Strategic Committee Meeting, NTA Village
- **05 November 2015**
  Board Human Resources Committee Meeting, NTA Village

PAYMENT DEADLINE

Your monthly investment in the VET Levy for September 2015 is due, on or before the 20th of October 2015. Pay before the deadline and avoid penalties and/or interest!

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