

SASLAW

NEWSFLASH



NEWSFLASH / February 2011

A busy start to the year

January and February 2011 has been a period of unprecedented activity and growth within SASLAW. During this period, we:

- established an advice office and implemented a pro bono pilot project at the Labour Court in Johannesburg; attended to 211 clients and logged 133 pro bono hours at the advice office;
- held 8 workshops / seminars around the country – attended by 589 delegates;
- formulated and submitted detailed comments on the 4 new labour law bills; and
- achieved our target of 1000 members.

Pro bono pilot project in Johannesburg

On 28 January 2011, SASLAW held a workshop at Wits to discuss the implementation of a 6-month pro bono pilot project at the Labour Court in Johannesburg. The workshop was attended by 65 delegates, including Mlambo JP, Waglay DJP, Gush J, Lagrange J, Cele J, Basson J and Van Niekerk J.

Following the workshop, the pilot project went live on 1 February 2011, with SASLAW having established an advice office on the sixth floor of the Labour Court building. It operates from 09h00 to 14h00 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

During the course of the first month of the pilot project, 211 people visited the advice office, of which: 133 matters were resolved in the advice office (by, for example, redirects to the CCMA, negative assessments of prospects of success, the completion of necessary documentation or immediate representation in court); 37 matters were taken on by attorneys staffing the advice office; 34 matters were referred to ProBono.Org for circulation amongst participating firms (of which 9 have been placed); and 7 matters are pending within the advice office.

To date, 30 attorneys have assisted in staffing the advice office, and have logged 133 pro bono hours in doing so.

A system has also been put in place whereby counsel are briefed by ProBono.Org to review and render an opinion over the weekend regarding which pro bono briefs generated in the advice office during the course of the preceding week should be selected for circulation by ProBono.Org on Monday mornings.

Comments on the 4 labour law bills

On 17 February 2011, SASLAW submitted detailed comments on the 4 labour law bills which were published by the Minister of Labour for comment on 17 December 2010.

This project commenced with SASLAW holding workshops on the bills in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth in late January / early February 2011. The workshops were attended by 410 delegates, with the following 14 speakers having made presentations: Brian Patterson; Joe Mothibi; Shamima Gaibie; Talita Laubscher; Imraan Mohammed; Johan Olivier; Pamela Stein; Aadil Patel; Bradley Conradie; Darcy Du Toit; Irvin Lawrence; Jayshree Moodley; Michelle Naidoo; and Francois Le Roux.

The drafting of the comments fell within Hermann Nieuwoudt's portfolio (legislation) on SASLAW's national committee. He was responsible for developing the comments together with a team of labour lawyers in the Western Cape. The comments were then finalised following the input of other members of SASLAW's national committee. The comments can be viewed on our website.

Chapter seminars held in late February 2011

- Johannesburg, 22 February 2011: Andrew Redding SC; the Labour Court's expanded jurisdiction under the new labour law bills; attended by 84 delegates.
 - Cape Town, 25 February 2011: Rochelle Le Roux, Karin Calitz and Tanya Golden; employer liability for harassment in the workplace; attended by 30 delegates.
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Other membership news

SASLAW's annual conference will be held at the Radisson Hotel in Port Elizabeth on 14 and 15 October 2011.

The Eastern Cape chapter of SASLAW is in the process of establishing a satellite chapter in East London.

Membership of SASLAW now stands at an all-time high of 1007.

Susan Stelzner memorial lecture

In memory of the outstanding contribution that Susan Stelzner (a past national president of SASLAW) made to labour law, John Myburgh SC will present the Susan Stelzner memorial lecture on 18 March 2011 in Cape Town. Invitations to the lecture are in the process of being prepared.

Clare Fincham

National administrator