



MINISTER METH PRIORITISES EMPLOYEE SAFETY, SERVICE CONTINUITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY AT COMPENSATION HOUSE BRIEFING

The Minister of Employment and Labour, Hon. Nomakhosazana Meth, has called for urgent and coordinated action to address the challenges surrounding Compensation House, with employee safety, uninterrupted service delivery and accountability identified as the central priorities.

Minister Meth chaired a briefing with the Acting Director-General, the Compensation Fund Board, Public Investment Corporation executives and senior officials from the Department of Employment and Labour on Thursday, 3 September 2026.

The engagement was convened to assess the continued delays in completing Compensation House, the Fund's prolonged reliance on temporary office accommodation and the steps required to reach a final decision on the future of the building.

Opening the meeting, Minister Meth said she had directed the Compensation Fund to focus on completing Compensation House, securing appropriate interim accommodation and pursuing accountability and cost recovery where governance failures had been identified.

Service-delivery continuity cannot be compromised

Minister Meth also emphasised that the accommodation challenges facing the Compensation Fund should not interrupt services provided to injured workers, claimants, employers, medical service providers and other clients.

The Fund is pursuing a procurement process for fit-for-purpose interim accommodation for employees who are currently working under operational, connectivity and workspace constraints.

The Minister requested an honest assessment of the interim accommodation process and whether the proposed occupation timelines were achievable.

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She stressed that employees needed a safe and functional working environment to perform their duties effectively and that Compensation Fund clients could not continue to experience the consequences of an unstable service-delivery environment.

The Acting Compensation Fund Commissioner, Farzana Fakir, outlined the Fund's measures to maintain business continuity while permanent accommodation solutions were being considered.

These measures include securing suitable interim office space, strengthening coordination with the PIC, improving internal reporting and recording the operational impact resulting from the continued accommodation challenges.

The Fund has also received temporary accommodation support from the Unemployment Insurance Fund to enable certain functions, including call-centre operations, to continue.

Accountability and stronger oversight

Minister Meth called for greater accountability, stronger oversight and clear consequences where failures had contributed to the delays and challenges surrounding Compensation House.

She expressed concern about previous commitments and project timelines that had not been fulfilled, including assurances relating to the completion of the building and the suitability of proposed interim accommodation.

"Assurances alone are no longer sufficient. I want to see signed monthly reports, not verbal reassurances," Minister Meth said.

The Minister directed the PIC and the Compensation Fund to strengthen monthly reporting and provide verified information on the condition of the building, the available options and the implementation timelines.

The Acting Commissioner confirmed that the Fund was introducing enhanced reporting arrangements, supported by independent technical oversight and regular escalation of progress reports to the Board, the Acting Director-General and the Minister.

Accountability processes, including cost recovery, dispute resolution and action against responsible service providers and consultants, are also being pursued.

Minister Meth said these processes should be taken to their conclusion and should not be allowed to stall.

"Public money has been lost here, and I expect to see that recovery process followed through to its conclusion, not allowed to quietly stall," she said.

Evidence-based decision required

The Minister called on all parties to provide clear and credible information to support a final decision on the future of Compensation House.

The options under consideration include continuing with the refurbishment of the building, demolishing and rebuilding it, or purchasing an existing property.

Minister Meth said the decision should be based on employee safety, technical feasibility, operational requirements, value for public money and the long-term needs of the Compensation Fund.

She requested the PIC to provide an honest account of the structural failures, the available options and firm timelines. The Compensation Fund and its Board were expected to provide clarity on interim accommodation and service continuity, while the Department was required to strengthen its oversight of the entire process.

The Minister said her focus was not on assigning blame for its own sake, but on protecting employees and Compensation Fund clients, ensuring that public money was properly accounted for and securing a safe and permanent working environment.

"My interest here is not in assigning blame for its own sake. It is in protecting the people who rely on the Compensation Fund for their claims, ensuring that public money is properly accounted for, and getting our people into a safe and permanent home," Minister Meth said.

Following the briefing, officials proceeded to Compensation House to conduct an oversight visit and assess the condition of the building first-hand.

The visit provided an opportunity to observe the structural and operational challenges discussed during the briefing and to better understand the conditions that have contributed to delays in the refurbishment project.

The oversight visit formed part of the broader effort to ensure that the next steps regarding Compensation House remain guided by employee safety, service-delivery continuity and accountability.

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