

Road shows

help GEPF reach out to members

GEPF members and pensioners living in and around Soshanguve in Gauteng flocked to the Falala Hall in their hundreds to spend Saturday, 7 March 2009, with senior GEPF managers and other representatives.

The highly successful Soshanguve road show was the first of many GEPF road shows that will be held around the country during 2009/2010. The aim is to take the GEPF's services directly to members and pensioners in the comfort and convenience of their own communities.

Judging by the turnout at the Soshanguve event, the road shows are generating lots of excitement among GEPF members and pensioners. By eight o'clock on the morning of the road show, the spacious Falala Hall was already proving to be too small and was packed with members eagerly waiting for the proceedings to start.

Members and pensioners who attended the Soshanguve event spent a fruitful day interacting and exchanging ideas with GEPF representatives, who were out in force. They also had the

opportunity to update their personal details and to fill in beneficiary nomination forms. This one-stop service was provided by the GEPF's Client Liaison Officers, who were on site all day with their laptops and were able to resolve most queries on the spot. Road shows will be held throughout South Africa in the coming months and members will be informed well in advance about when the GEPF road show will be visiting their area. We look forward to seeing you there!

How to contact us

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Website address: www.gepf.co.za/ www.gepf.gov.za Toll-free line: 0800 117 669 email: enquiries@gepf.co.za	Cape Town Office Tel: 0800 117 669 Physical Address: No 1 Thibault Square (21st floor)	Nelspruit Office Tel: 0800 117 669 Physical Address: 32 Bell Street, (Ground Floor)	Bloemfontein Office Tel: 0800 117 669 Physical Address: No 2 President Brand Street	

NB: Please take note that toll-free numbers, as listed in all Regional Offices, are routed to the GEPF Call Centre at Head Office in Pretoria. Regional offices are Walk-in Centres that Members/pensioners can visit during office hours.

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G E P F today

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN THE BEST NEWSLETTER CATEGORY OF THE ANNUAL COMMUNICATION CHALLENGE BY INSTITUTE OF RETIREMENT FUNDS

Newsletter for active members of the Government Employees Pension Fund

MAY 2009

Board of Trustees exists to protect your interests

Do you know who is responsible for the management of GEPF pension and membership matters? The answer is the GEPF Board of Trustees, which represents members, pensioners and employers.

The Board of Trustees has 16 members, consisting of eight employer representatives and eight member representatives.

The eight member representatives consist of:

- One pensioner member, who is elected onto the Board by fellow pensioners in a fair, independent election process.
- One person elected by members employed by the uniformed services.
- Six representatives elected by the labour representatives on the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council.

The Rules of the GEPF provide that the term of office of a trustee, including the uniformed services member trustee and his/her substitute, must be elected every

four years to serve on the Board. Four years has passed since the first uniformed member trustee and substitute for the forces were elected. This is why all GEPF pensioners were asked to take part in the 2009 election process. An election was also held for the pensioner and substitute trustees.

To ensure fairness and independence of the election process, the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) was appointed to manage the election process.

In the next issue we will be featuring the new Board members and their responsibilities.

Making the world a better place through socially responsible investment

GEPF members will be proud to know that their pension fund is a leader in South Africa in promoting socially responsible investment. It seeks to encourage companies to strike a balance between profits and being socially responsible, and to actively manage their environmental impact while maintaining high levels of corporate governance standards. This is the message from Mr John Oliphant, the GEPF's Head: Investments and Actuarial.

"This is a new era that puts demands on both investors and companies alike to ensure that the world becomes a better place," says Mr Oliphant. "The GEPF is committed to playing its part in ensuring that this happens."

As part of the GEPF's contribution towards a better society, it has joined hands with the JSE by assisting with the review of its Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) index.

The SRI index is used to assess how socially responsible South Africa's top listed companies are. Specifically, it looks at how well these companies care for the environment, how socially relevant they are and how seriously they take good corporate governance.

Demand proof

of identity before giving out personal details

Members of the GEPF are warned to be on the lookout for people falsely claiming to be acting on behalf of the Fund. This follows the recent arrest in Mafikeng of a man from Pretoria. He was posing as a GEPF broker and was attempting to arrange presentations at various government departments.

The alleged broker was found with official GEPF documents, including forms that members use to provide personal and confidential details about themselves. He was arrested after officials from the Department of Justice became suspicious and alerted the police.

The GEPF would like to advise members and employer departments about the existence of Client Liaison Officers, who from time to time visit departments for official presentations and workshops.

However, these officials carry their GEPF identification cards at all times and are expected to use these cards to identify themselves as GEPF employees.

The GEPF would also like to place on record that it does not employ brokers to act on its behalf.

All services offered by GEPF employees are free of charge. No member, pensioner

or employer is expected to pay for any services rendered by the GEPF.

Members are advised not to give their personal details to anyone claiming to be acting on behalf of the GEPF without demanding proof of identity. The only proof that members should accept is an officially issued GEPF identity card.

Members who suspect anyone of acting fraudulently are urged to contact our toll free number at **0800 117 669**.

GOOD QUALITY CLIENT INFORMATION WILL REDUCE PAYMENT DELAYS AND ERRORS

How you can help

Together with this newsletter, you have received an Information Collection Form. This form contains the 11 pieces of critical information (called 'key fields') that we need about you. Please read and complete the form and then post it back to us.

Doing this will not only help us to improve our service but will put you in line to win a fantastic prize.

See enclosed form

provide exceptional service to our stakeholders.

The better the quality of information the GEPF has about our pensioners, the better the quality of service we can provide. Improved pensioner information will:

- Minimise delays in paying out benefits
- Reduce the incidence of incorrect payments being made
- Improve our communication with pensioners.

Why QPID matters

QPID is expected to correct many of the problems we are currently experiencing with pensioner

information. With more than 311 000 pensioners, it is a major challenge for the GEPF to keep our pensioner information relevant and up to date.

To make sure that we have the best possible information, the QPID team has identified all pensioners whose personal information is dated or incomplete. The next step is to make direct contact with these pensioners through the GEPF contact centre.

We urge pensioners who are contacted to help us verify their personal details. Remember, the better the information we have about you, the better the service that we can deliver to you.

Critical information about our pensioners

There are 11 critical pieces of information that the GEPF needs to have about each pensioner. This information consists of each person's:

- Surname
- Initials
- Full name
- Pension number
- ID number
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Tax number
- Telephone number
- Cell phone number
- Postal address

GEPF REMAINS SOLID AND SOUND

Contrary to recent media reports that the Public Investment Corporation (the organisation which manages the GEPF's assets) lost some invested money last year as a result of the worldwide economic turmoil, the GEPF as a Fund remains solid and sound. The PIC manages the GEPF's assets against a benchmark that has been set by the Trustees. Relative to this benchmark, the PIC has performed well. The GEPF continues to strive for a good investment performance; however, it is important to note that the risk inherent to investment is carried by the employer and not the member. This is because the GEPF is a Defined Benefit Fund.

What is a Defined Benefit Fund?

Defined Benefit (DB) Fund

In a DB fund, the benefit payable upon exit from service by the fund is defined in the rules of the fund. Normally this takes the form of an actuarial pension accrual factor multiplied by the years of pensionable service (i.e. the years the member contributed to the fund) multiplied by his or her pensionable salary (which in the case of the GEPF is defined as the average pensionable salary for

the last 24 months of contribution) for contribution purposes.

The ultimate benefit payable as per the rules of the fund is guaranteed, and not dependant on investment returns attained.

The balance of cost, should there be a shortfall to fund liabilities, vests in the sponsoring employer. As per the provisions of Section 31 of the Government Employees Pension Law, the State and the employer are the sponsoring employers to the GEPF and responsible for the balance of cost.

This means that the benefits provided by the GEPF are not influenced by market conditions and investment return earned by the fund because the investment risk vests in the sponsoring employer and not the member.

As can be seen from the explanation provided, the GEPF being a DB pension fund offers the member of the fund the security (guarantee) that the benefit payable will always, despite economic condition or fluctuations in investment returns, be the same and based on the relevant benefit formula applicable to the reason for exit from the fund.

Steps to follow when you resign

Please follow the steps below:

- Let the Human Resources department know you have resigned.
- Produce a certified bar-coded copy of your latest ID or valid passport.
- Have your employer sign your original once-off irrevocable resignation choice form.
- Complete sections A, C and D of an original bank form (Z894) in black ink. You can request this form from your HR department or call the GEPF and we will send it to you. Remember, funds can only be paid into your personal account and not to a third party, or into home loans and credit cards.
- Sort out outstanding debts with your employer. Certain debts may be deducted from your pension benefit.
- Ensure that any tax issues with SARS have been sorted out by contacting SARS in this regard.
- Confirm your starting date as a GEPF member by submitting documents such as pay slips to your HR department. (Your employer has this on record.)
- If your surname is different from that on your ID or passport, you need a letter from the Department of Home Affairs to confirm your surname, or a marriage certificate.
- If you are divorced, please submit the decree of divorce and settlement agreement to the GEPF. If the agreement states that an amount is payable to your ex-spouse, we also need a bank form and certified copy of your ex-spouse's ID.

REMEMBER:

When you resign from Government or are discharged, you have two options for the payment of your lump sum:

- It can be paid into your personal bank account, or
- The GEPF can transfer it to an approved retirement fund.

If you choose to have your money paid out as a cash lump sum, please remember that it can only be paid into a personal account and not to a third party, or into home loans and credit cards.