Building for the Future
Towards an integrated public service
Each of us is a knowledge worker and a learning champion in this knowledge economy. We all have a role to play in turning the Public Service into a “Learning Public Service for Quality Service Delivery”. Let us pursue this ideal by using the Service Delivery Review as a facility for sharing our experiences, successes, mistakes and methodologies and for growing our own intellectual capital.

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Opinions expressed in this journal are not those of government but reflect the views of individual writers
By the time you read this, political parties will be far advanced in unrolling their election manifestos in preparation for the day of the next election which is already shimmering on the horizon.

This will be our third election in a democratic South Africa. Importantly, it will also mark a decade since we South Africans, black and white, overthrew apartheid and installed in its place a non-racial, egalitarian society.

But how do you measure the success or failure of a democracy? How do you differentiate the current South Africa from that of the past? Books have been written on the subject, and many more will be released to coincide with the anniversary celebrations. These books will be assessing, interrogating and interpreting the success or failure of our democracy.

This process of assessment and taking stock will demand time and place, which we don't have in this journal, suffice to remind you as a member of the public service corps that you are a crucial cog in this great wheel of transformation.

One of the crucial measures of democracy is the improvement of the lives of the citizenry.

It is not for us to make a final, informed pronouncement on the successes or failures thus far notched in our journey to further deepening democracy and transforming the lives of those who put this government in power.

For a taste of a thorough self-introspection and assessment of the journey thus far travelled, read the input by Dr Frank Chikane, the Director General in the Presidency, on issues that he believes should fall under the microscope as we chart the path thus far travelled, and the hurdles and challenges lurking ahead of us.

One of the challenges facing us is that, try as we might as public servants to do our work, try as we might as citizens of this country to celebrate the successes of our democracy, there will always be that element of pessimism, which many have decided to call Afro pessimism. This new strain of the virus assumes that nothing good will ever come out of this continent, this country.

It was against the background of this corrosive virus that two South Africans, Brett Bowes and Steuart Pennington, decided to publish a book in 2002 entitled South Africa: The Good News.

The book did not try to paint a falsely optimistic picture of South Africa as this happy little country inhabited by contented citizens, but rather the book highlighted and celebrated the successes that we had achieved since 1994.

It was a book which included a number of contributions from a diverse section of writers.

As a result of the success of the book, the authors have released a sequel, predictably entitled, South Africa: More Good News.

One of the inspiring excerpts from the book is a comment by the former academic, politician and diplomat, Dr Dennis Worrall, now leading an investment research company, who writes: “The political leadership that took South Africa from white minority rule to at least the beginnings of a democratic society was exquisitely mature. And that leadership, and the smooth transfer it affected, had a profound impact on levels of business confidence not just in South Africa but internationally.”

Charl Kocks, Director at CA-Ratings, writes: “South African businesses are tough. Very tough. They are tougher than most of their counterparts in countries that fall under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. We in South Africa manage to keep our businesses alive and safe from default to a greater extent than those in the (United) States and in Europe.

This is a challenge for those of us in the public service: while celebrating the humble achievements thus far scored, to work hard enough to deserve comments that will say emphatically that the public service in South Africa is tough. Very tough.
Integration of the Public Service

Integrated and co-ordinated government is a fundamental necessity in our effort to improve service delivery. It prevents the existence of unnecessary duplication because of lack of communication and promotes the responsive sharing of scarce resources for better service delivery throughout government.

To strengthen integration and co-ordination at the highest decision-making level, the cluster system comprising six Cabinet Committees was established along functional lines in areas such as governance, investment and employment, economic sector, social sector, justice and international relations for Ministers to debate on cross-cutting issues. On the other hand, inter-departmental task teams exist where discussions on policies that affect several departments take place very often as part of the DG Cluster system. At the provincial level similar arrangements are being pursued.

However, my main concern is the effectiveness of support that is provided to the Executive to aid decision-making and implementation of decisions. Government generally under-utilises the experience of those at the frontline of implementing policy and the significant professional expertise (not the managerial perspective). Also discussions about cluster programmes are often not cascaded down to senior management and other employees in departments resulting in a monopoly of information and political insight very high up in our organisations.

A further aspect of integration in the context of improved government performance relates to the interface of our people with government and the potential that information and communications technology offers to facilitate a seamless experience. The Gateway project will establish a single Internet portal for information on Government services, accessible 24 hours a day. The services on the portal will be arranged using the “life events” approach to allow users to find the information without physically visiting departments. Phase two of the project will, for instance, enable citizens to conduct service transactions on the portal such as paying for their speeding tickets!

The Gateway portal will also revolutionise the management and sharing of information within government. An integrated “front office” on the portal will require substantial work to integrate “back office” systems and processes. A call centre will be in operation which will be Gateway-enabled so that staff can provide information on services to callers who do not have access to the Internet.

In some rural areas a range of government services are already accessed under one roof through Multi-Purpose Community Centres. By soliciting the help of intermediaries such as the Post Office, Government will be able to provide approximately 1 500 additional points of access to the Gateway. Furthermore, mobile units will be deployed to remote and rural areas.

Government services, however, should also benefit from the people or personal dimension. Like the famous example of the Chinese “barefoot doctors” of the 1950s who brought basic medical services to remote rural areas of China, government is deploying a cadre of community development workers to work with communities. There is great potential for synergy and integration between Gateway, MPCCs and community development workers.

One other very important aspect of integration in government is of intergovernmental relations. It is at the centre of our efforts to integrate the public service. Much progress has been made in transforming the operations of government in all three spheres and redefining and improving the relationships between the different spheres. We have rationalised and restructured, and strengthened management through the establishment of the Senior Management Service. We have improved service delivery through the implementation of the Batho Pele principles, and many other strategies to strengthen our performance.

Local government has been undergoing its own process of transformation, notably the creation of a new system of local government in December 2000, reducing over 800 municipalities to 284. However, the crucial responsibility as regards service delivery and promoting community development shouldered by municipalities needs to be widely recognised. The national and provincial government should implement these programmes in consultation with local government and always be available to monitor progress and assist with problem solving and institutional capacity development.

It is critical for the process of intergovernmental relations to achieve the convergence of nationally defined policies on the one hand, and the expression of local preferences on the other. An important way to achieve that is to co-ordinate and integrate strategic planning through the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) across all three spheres of government. It is crucial for there to be a constructive interaction in the planning processes of the three spheres.

Perhaps the most significant area of integration is the establishment of a “single public service”. The “single public service” in fact refers to an integrated public service consisting of all three spheres of government. It is a long-term vision of government, the achievement of which is expected to pose enormous challenges.

Local government and SALGA, in particular, have taken the initiative in this area and have set about rationalising conditions of service and bargaining systems within local government with the aim of developing a more uniform approach.

Our task as government is enormous and difficult. We need one another. We cannot tolerate a situation wherein different spheres of government, or components within government as well as the public sector, pull in different directions or compete. I would like to remind this group about the African proverb that says one hand cannot lift a thatch roof. No one can in isolation achieve our noble goal of transforming South African society.
Excellence in service awarded

The Free State Health Department recently celebrated excellence of service by awarding trophies to 11 projects in different categories of health facilities. Prize money to the value of R547,000 was awarded. More than 570 guests attended the gala event held in Bloemfontein on 20 November 2003. The categories and results are:

**Best Mobile Clinic of the Year**
1. Thaba Nchu Mobile (R20 000)
2. Jacobsdal Mobile Clinic
3. Welkom Mobile

**Best Fixed Clinic of the Year**
1. Khotso Clinic in Edenville (R25 000)
2. Mahaig Primary Health Care Clinic in Sasolburg; R45 000-
3. Matlakeng Clinic in Marquard

**Best District Hospital of the Year**
1. Bongani Regional Hospital (R55 000)
2. Botshabelo Regional Hospital
3. National District Hospital

**Best Health District of the Year**
1. Thabo Mafutsanyana (R65 000)
2. Xhariep Health District
3. Northern Free State Health district

**Revenue Collection Awards Category**
1. Metsimaholo District Hospital in Sasolburg; R45 000-00
2. Botshabelo District Hospital
3. National District Hospital

**Category for the Regional Hospitals**
1. Bongani Regional Hospital (R55 000)
2. Boitumelo Regional Hospital
3. National District Hospital

**Best Professional Nurse**
1. Mrs JM Qhali, Free State Psychiatric Complex (R9 000)
2. Ms M Reid, Mangaung Local Municipality (R5 000)
3. Ms L. Strydom, Universitas Hospital (R3 000)

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**Special Recognition Award**
A special recognition award was presented to Universitas Hospital and they received prize money to the value of R55 000.

Special awards were also presented for service excellence and achievement.

Mobile clinic: Welkom Mobile clinic
Fixed clinic: Matlakeng Clinic in Zastron

**Buffalo City Number One in SA**

Buffalo City made Eastern Cape history on 5 December and scooped a R3 million prize when it was named the best municipality in South Africa at the Vuna Awards for Municipal Performance Excellence.

The city beat 279 other municipalities, including Ekurhuleni Metro in Gauteng and IKKara Hais Local Municipality in Northern Cape.

The awards are aimed at promoting innovative municipal service delivery, identifying and supporting poorly performing municipalities, and improving the image of local government.

Vuna, meaning “to harvest”, is an initiative of the Department of Provincial and Local Government in partnership with the National Productivity Institute, the Development Bank of Southern Africa, and the South African Local Government Association.

Sindisiwe Maclean, the Executive Mayor of Buffalo City, said: “It is indeed a proud moment for Buffalo City and its people. We hope winning this award will bring us even closer to our communities.” She added that the municipality owed its successes to the people. “This victory is not ours only but yours as well, as you have contributed to the city’s vision.”

Mayor of Buffalo City, said: “It is indeed a proud moment for Buffalo City and its people. We hope winning this award will bring us even closer to our communities.” She added that the municipality owed its successes to the people. “This victory is not ours only but yours as well, as you have contributed to the city’s vision.”

City Manager Mxolisi Tsika said the communities played a major role in the city’s vision which was for it to be a place of opportunity. He thanked Mr Maclean, the councillors and staff. “The city has indeed made the city’s vision a reality.”

The goal is to inculcate a culture of excellence and professionalism which can only be achieved through the commitment of the municipality as a whole, to continuous improvement,” he said.

Tsika said the Revitalisation Programme contained in the IDP Review was designed to speed up transforma-
tion, and enable the municipality to bridge the gap between the city's aspirations and the limited capacity within the organisation. He said the four programmes for the municipal organisation and three for the city focused on effective and efficient management, customer care, service improvement and financial management. He also said that the commitment as a city was to focus on developing a healthy, sustainable city and to increase growth, jobs and income in partnership with other stakeholders. These programmes and partnerships were seen as a solid base to create a comprehensive City Development Strategy.

Tsika said the vision for the city was to be productive, well-governed, inclusive and sustainable. HIV/AIDS was also a priority issue for the municipality.

Adding to the celebrations, Buffalo City was voted the winner in the Social Housing category at the Housing and Infrastructure Awards ceremony hosted by the Department of Housing Local Government and Traditional Affairs, held in East London recently.

The Executive Mayor who opened the proceedings could not contain his excitement: “Buffalo City is definitely on a winning streak, we owe this to the entire Eastern Cape.

Tshiame community Child Support Grant Registration

On 9 October 2003 at the Tshiame community hall near Harrismith in the Free State, the Premier of the province, Ms Winkie Direko, launched a child support registration grant project in the small community. The project is financially supported through the Integrated Provincial Support Project, working in close collaboration with the provincial Department of Social Development and Home Affairs.

Nearly 800 community members and other dignitaries gathered under the shelter of a big white tent for the occasion. Also in attendance were the MEC for Social Development, Ms B Marshoff, the head of the Department of Social Development, a local councillor, representatives from the Home Affairs office, DPSA, the Free State IPSP co-ordinator, project managers, Deloitte and Touche and other guests.

The Premier paid tribute to the IPSP and the Department of Social Development for the project and also to Deloitte and Touche. She said that as a private company Deloitte and Touche had an obligation and responsibility to do the job given to them well. She told the community that the government cared for its people and was doing everything it could to assist young children and create jobs to give people back their dignity.

She lashed out at those recipients of the child support grants who abuse and misuse the money, especially young girls, and warned them to practice safe sex and not be promiscuous, because HIV/AIDS kills.

The Premier also lashed out at the non-attendance of many councillors in the area and made it known to the sole councillor in attendance that she was not happy at all as councillors represented the community. At the end of the formal
function the Premier took time to listen and chatted with some members of the community who were voicing their concerns and stating their situations to the Premier. For about 15 minutes she stood, listened attentively and conversed with them.

Phuthaditjaba’s Thaba Blinds grass weaving factory launched

On the afternoon of the 9 October, 2003, the Premier of the Free State province Ms Winkie Direko officially launched a grass weaving factory, Thaba Blinds in Phuthaditjaba, a project co-owned by a group of women. Approximately 200 people attended the function. The four communities in the Thabo Mofutsan-yana district organised themselves into a community forum. They identified grass, which is in abundance in the area, as potential raw material to be used for job creation. They now sell the grass to the factory which in turn makes blinds, table mats and other decorating items. Some of the factory products are also exported to other countries.

Before the launch, the Premier and her entourage were taken on a tour of the factory. Back in the main factory display hall, the chairperson of the Board of Trustees welcomed the guests. The MEC for Social Development delivered a short speech, with a background on how the project was initiated and urged the women to sell their products at home in the Free State. The MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Mr Webster Mfebe, reaffirmed the department’s commitment to supporting the project, emphasising the important role of women as beneficiaries and owners of the project.

The Premier advised the women to reinvest the profit back into the project and not spend all of it. She encouraged them to be proud of what they had achieved, and further encouraged them to sell their products anywhere in the world. The Premier then cut the ribbon to officially declare the project launched.

Human Performance Today

Highlights from the International Society for Performance Improvement Conference in Cape Town

Bill Sewell of Anchor International/Partners in Change (a Cape Town-based performance improvement consultancy) reports on this landmark conference, and the formation of the South African chapter of the International Society of Performance Improvement.

The newly formed South African chapter of the International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) held a very successful workshop and conference in the Cape Town Convention Centre during October 2003, on the theme of “Human Performance Today”.

Over 100 participants from throughout Southern Africa came to the workshop and conference to share success stories of effective performance improvement programmes in their organisations; and to learn from some very experienced performance improvement practitioners from the USA and UK.

The South African inputs included: Sasol Technology, ABSA Bank, Department of Justice, Chairperson of the Wholesale and Retail SETA, and the Netcare Health Services Group.

Some of the highlights of the ISPI Conference are featured in this article, all of which can effectively be applied to service needs of our people.

What is Human Performance Technology?

HPT (Human Performance Technology) is the process involved in designing a solution for a specific organisational performance problem: it looks at an organisation’s current situation, compares that to its ideal situation, identifies the gaps between the two, and addresses the gaps with a purpose-designed performance improvement programme. HPT focuses on: results analysis; “systems” rather than “projects”; goals that drive outcomes; forging close, collaborative client relationships; solutions designed to fit specific needs; and constant programme assessment and cost-benefit comparison to identify performance improvement opportunities.

Highlight — “Performance Architecture: Tips, Tools and Techniques”

(Dr Roger Addison, Programme Director of ISPI, Washington DC)

Tip: for success in any Human Performance Improvement programme:

Focus on the results you want to achieve.

Take a systems viewpoint, to analyse and understand the key business processes.

Establish partnerships with key people in these processes.

Add value by achieving “quick wins” and longer-term, sustainable results.

Tool: Organisational Culture Assessment and Change:

Identify the positive culture factors that can enhance performance improvement.

How can we strengthen these positive factors, to increase success?

Identify the negative culture factors that can inhibit performance improvement.

How can we turn these negative factors into successful performance?

“When good strategy meets negative culture … culture always wins!”

Highlight: “The Key to long-lasting Organisational Change”
(Dr Don Tosti, Vanguard Consulting, USA)
In a recent international study of 294 organisations (The Economist: 15 July 2000) 20% reported successful, sustained change, 63% reported temporary improvement, and 17% reported NO improvement.
Don Tosti’s years of international Performance Consulting experience have led him to draw up these “Ten Rules of the Road” for robust, lasting strategic change:
1. Clear, compelling purpose: What are we doing — and why?
2. Support: How will we regulate and maintain the change?
3. Clear communications: Does everybody understand what it means, in practice?
4. Interdependence: How will this change fit with the rest of the organisation?
5. Senior management commitment: Does the power structure really want this?
6. Organisation-wide intent: Is this for everyone — including me?
7. Knowledge of implementation: How will we get here?
8. Benefits: Why is it worth doing — and what’s in it for me?
9. Symbols of success: How will we represent the change to others?
10. Monitoring and evaluation: How will we know that we are successful?

Highlight: “A practical perspective on the new role of Human Resources Managers on Building a Performance Improvement Culture”
(Mr Kobus Taljaard, HR Director, Sasol Technology)
In its thrust to become an international player in the Chemical Technology sector, SasolTech has refocussed its HR department as a team of Performance Improvement consultants, working closely with Business Unit management.

Key steps taken by SasolTech:
• Establish the base for a “performance improvement culture”: clear strategic and operational objectives; alignment between organisational and individual objectives; consequences for results.
• Identify, select and develop competent, pro-active people.
• “Co-ordinate the levers of effective governance and performance management”: plans, values, targets, measurement, motivation, feedback, consequences.

Key steps taken by ABSA Learning and Development team:
• Using the “Partners in Change” approach of Performance Consulting skills.
• Contracting with line management to achieve required business results.
• Analysing complex business processes to combine good training with systems and workplace culture changes.
• Regular monitoring of results, feedback and recognition of performance by managers.

Bill Sewell is a registered Master HR Practitioner with the SA Board for Personnel Practice, a Fellow of the South African Institute of People Management, and a Certified Performance Technologist with the International Society for Performance Improvement. Bill is a consultant with wide experience in performance management and performance improvement in the public and private sectors throughout Southern Africa and will be glad to discuss performance improvement ideas with anyone who needs further information.

Highlight: “Lessons learned in ABSA Bank in implementing Human Performance Technology into our work practices”
(Ms Eva Cruz, Learning and Development Management, ABSA Bank)
The ABSA national “Learning and Development” team of 44 professionals (instructional designers, skills development facilitators and admin staff) have re-engineered their approach and have contributed to ABSA’s impressive results in recent years.

Key steps taken by ABSA Learning and Development team:
• Using the “Partners in Change” approach of Performance Consulting skills.
• Contracting with line management to achieve required business results.
• Analysing complex business processes to combine good training with systems and workplace culture changes.
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The Performance Improvement Framework
(Ongoing) → GET and MAINTAIN STAKEHOLDER AGREEMENT

Consider Institutional Context
Mission
Goals
Strategies
Culture
Client and Community Perspectives

Define Desired Performance

Find Root Causes
Why does the performance gap exist?

Select Interventions
What can be done to close the performance gap?

Implement Interventions

Describe Actual Performance

Monitor and Evaluate Performance

ISSUES
Senior management officials in the public service play an indispensable role. Not only are they largely responsible for guiding and steering the service delivery operations in government, but their duties as managers also include making sure that the public service is capable of effectively carrying out its mandate. Fundamental to that is the need for frequent introspection and evaluation. SMS conferences are therefore held to allow high-ranking public service officials to discuss government policies and programmes and assess their impact. Furthermore, they have to explore innovative ways of improving the image of the public service with regard to the services it provides, and, most importantly, the manner in which these services are provided.

The previous conference in 2002 dealt extensively with issues of e-government and how its introduction into government and service delivery in particular would benefit the citizenry. In addition, there was a lot of interest around the formation of a senior management professional body for mutual support and development among members of the SMS whose role as decision-makers largely determines government’s efficiency.

As you will see in articles contained in this edition, this year the main focus of the recent conference was on integrating the public service by way of establishing functional ties between the various government institutions, from the three spheres, the various departments and structures across the spheres, to institutions outside the public sector that similarly deal with service delivery issues. Various efforts by government to consolidate service delivery were highlighted. These include the establishment of parliamentary cluster systems, and HR restructuring issues made as part of the overall integration drive to align employment policies among the three spheres of government.

A quick glance into our past – how have we done?
South Africa has inevitably become more dynamic with extremely compounding challenges emanating from internal and external forces. Similarly, the public service is compelled to contend with immense pressure and constantly change to keep pace with the diverse demands of this dynamic society. However, in the midst of all the hustle and bustle associated with establishing and maintaining the right course, a quick reflection on the past would undoubtedly help in determining our next move, i.e. integrating the various systems.

There are many aspects whose influence and impact on service delivery warrant high-level assessment — e.g. operational issues, models of excellence, infrastructure, human resource, etc. These issues need to be viewed from both the government and the society’s point of view.
view, and their political, social and economic perspective.

The political environment pertains, as extensively discussed last year, the structural configuration of the country's government and its impact on the ability of government to deliver services. The social aspect refers to matters related to poverty alleviation while the economic front appeals to job creation. In addition to pulling itself together from the throes of apartheid, the government has been successful in the implementation of various policies.

Reverend Frank Chikane, the Director General in the Presidency, expressed the importance of the past, where and how we are moving forward. There were many promises made which we undertook to carry out when the new government took office in 1994. But his input elsewhere in this journal is more eloquent. We promised to transform the society from an unjust racist society born out of unjust laws. For that to happen, the valuable principles of our world- acclaimed Constitution — i.e. justice, democracy and non-sexist treatment, need to permeate through our society to be felt by all. Also of great significance, we need to be bold enough to recognise the injustices of the past to formulate our future strategic objectives. The challenge for SMS members is to take stock of the past and its iniquities and on that basis, united in their diversity, strive for change.

Whatever challenges we face and however complex they are, we as South Africans living in this era are without doubt “a privileged generation”. Quoting the words of President Thabo Mbeki, Reverend Chikane said: “It is not given to every generation that it should be present and participate in the act of creation.”

It is our privilege to participate in the historical creation of a new society and the making of a new Constitution. We need to redefine ourselves and recon- struct our being, transforming and re-engineering the state (the way the mechanisms of government are working – Cabinet, departments, new provinces, local government, etc). We need to reconstruct the economy to help share the pie equally among all the citizens. This is an enormous challenge that would require constant interaction with our citizenry through imbizos to know what they need to improve their quality of life and release their potential.

Government is indeed doing extraordinary things and as is always the case under similar circumstances, there often has to be some controversy, a few feathers being ruffled.

**The role and responsibilities of SMS members**

By virtue of their position and influence within their respective departments, SMS officials have an obligation to act as role models for other public officials at lower ranks. They have to lead by example in all respects and avoid fraudulent and corrupt practices. In addition, as managers, members of the SMS are obliged to construct an enabling environment for other employees at lower ranks to develop themselves and perform at their best. The scope of managers has been extended by the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and the Public Service Act (PSA). These Acts promote flexibility in management, so that managers exercise some authority without being authoritarian.

Throughout the conference, managers were reminded about the influential role in the public service and the requirements that come with that. These include sound management skills, and a thorough understanding of government legal frameworks and their importance.

Added to that are some important operational and ethical issues underpinning service delivery, e.g. the Batho Pele principles which have to be adhered to at all times. More valuable also, is the keenness and the willingness to go the extra mile.

Managers need to be champions for change and promote the National Strategic Objectives of government. As decision-makers SMS members need to be adaptive to change and promote teamwork, learning and sharing of knowledge and skills among employees.

**Integrating three spheres of government – to what extent?**

In our endeavour to improve the quality of services we deliver as well as the speed at which those services are delivered, we are constantly confronted with numerous dilemmas that cannot be wished away. Chief of these is the structural con-figuration of our government, comprising three spheres, and its effects on service delivery on one hand and the very nature of our day-to-day service delivery challenges which inevitably require us to integrate and collaborate our efforts across the spheres on the other.

A disjointed approach to service delivery where each sphere does its own business in isolation would deal a devastating blow to the commendable strides we have already made in improving service delivery. Our guiding principle should be that members of the community who are public service users would ideally like to deal with one government to access the respective services.

However, while integrating the spheres seems to be the most viable approach, government needs to be wary of the distinctive nature of each of the spheres. Constitutionally, the three government spheres have unique roles that should be aligned and harmonised and not over-integrated.

The status quo as has been exhaustive-ly discussed in previous discussions is that there are marked differences between these spheres in areas such as legal, financial, conditions of service as well as the level of stakeholders involvement in their running. Ms Seadimo Chaba reminded delegates that given these differences, what could perhaps be more appropriate is a unified dispensation (similar) rather than a single (same) dispensation to allow for contextual vari-ation of solutions rather than a “one-size-fits-all”.

What emerged quite strongly in her presentation is the pursuit of functional harmony in many aspects of service delivery rather than attempting to unite the spheres. To reach functional harmony amongst the three spheres we need to direct our efforts towards achieving some alignment of the fundamental policies and processes in each of the spheres. This includes streamlining conditions of employment, e.g. performance management, fiscal burden, frameworks pertaining to conditions of service and salary structures.

A vital aspect, the ignorance of which has proven to be quite disruptive of the chain of service delivery, is budgeting and planning. Admittedly, service delivery happens mostly at local government
level while, strangely, the bulk of budgeting and planning happens at national government level. In his presentation, Mr Leseja Kganyago of the National Treasury highlighted the danger of “budgeting and planning away from the front office”, thereby emphasising the need for continuous integration and collaboration within government on matters of service delivery.

Delegates were also reminded that integration, especially of service delivery procedures, should not only be confined to front-office procedures but, of great significance, should be viewed as a continual integral part of delivery that starts at the preliminary phases of planning and budgeting. Planning and budgeting are two mutual elements of service delivery that are inseparable.

During the planning phase, all government structures, that is, departments map out the annual target policy choices and produce their strategic plans. Far from being a guarantee for integration, strategic plans contain performance targets that should be viewed alongside business plans and performance agreements. All this information fits into the MTEF to guide the allocation of funds within the various structures of government. The MTEF is an important innovation for integrating policy, planning and budgeting that serves to increase the predictability of cash flow and prevents haphazard resource allocation.

It helps maintain a balance between needs as expressed by the people and the government itself and resources that government has at its disposal to facilitate service delivery.

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Raw data that is fed to government by the established credible bodies needs to be processed into information and ultimately knowledge to be useful. For that government needs knowledge management skills. This includes the ability to identify useful and valuable information from the rest, to capture and codify it and properly store it for future reference. Most importantly, we need to inculcate the spirit of learning and sharing, to ensure that information is turned into valuable knowledge, the effects of which appear in the form of improved service delivery by officials. To nurture knowledge management in departments and other official institutions, government has established specialised bodies such as the GITO Council to promote information technology as an enabler.

Integrating the public service – service delivery innovation and government information management

Another important angle which more often than not, is ignored when discussing issues of service delivery is the role of the citizenry. Is our notion of the citizenry that of recipients, consumers/customers? Our perception of the citizenry as government officials fundamentally determines our relationship with them.

Do we find ways of involving them in our service delivery activities or unwittingly impose our preconceived knowledge of what they need?

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Integrating beyond government boundaries – the implications

Factualy, government alone will not have the capacity to satisfactorily meet the diverse needs of the citizenry without over-stretching its resources. As a result there has been a growing need for it to look beyond its borders for partnerships...
with institutions in other sectors for help. This, of course, further reinforces the importance of collaboration and integration within each of the sectors and most significantly, between them.

But, as we explore this choice of integration of systems, we need to be mindful of which best practices to adopt. That is, whether we credulously succumb to the popular idea about solid project management principles only available in the private sector. However, it has to be borne in mind that the public service has its own indicators: non-profitability, protecting the vulnerable, providing infrastructure etc. These key indicators separate the public sector from the private sector.

Private/public partnerships are established in different forms, e.g. outsourcing, to enhance its ability to deliver services to the citizenry. Government derives many benefits, i.e. operational and strategic from these partnerships. Financial institutions for instance, offer help through lending money to various consortia that have an interest in service delivery. A number of PPPs already exist that have made a considerable impact in terms of service delivery. These include the Department of Labour IT project (implemented by Siemens), Tshwane Water, Dolphin Coast Water and Nkosi Albert Luthuli hospital. Of all these, the latter typically forged a partnership that has a major direct impact on the lives of the community.

One of the ABSA initiatives is with the Department of Social Services, a debit card where people have simple access to the banks without standing in queues waiting for money. An innovation is the Department of Labour UIF use of IT and telecommunication in registering domestic workers

**Performance management**

Far from being some kind of a panacea, performance management, according to Mr M Solomon from IBM, is potentially indispensable to successful integrated policy and strategy, leadership. Performance management involves planning, co-ordination and reviewing strategy and implementation. However, all that aside, organisations often ignore the most important aspect of successful performance management, the human factor. In most successful organisations, 35% of the success can be attributed to the individual performance while 65% depends upon organisational factors.

EPM (enterprise performance management), that embraces organisational performance management as well as the human factor and other factors, will most likely ensure organisational success. However, any attempts towards introducing performance management can only have a positive impact if there is sound and effective IT communication in place to guide the organisational operations towards its envisaged outputs.

Mr Solomon maintains that the kind of performance crisis that is often associated with the public service originates from the misguided tendency to overrate individual performance and performance management, at the cost of other factors such as communication that are inherent within EPM.

The trump card in enterprise performance management is constantly measuring to maintain a balance between the various elements, i.e. efficiency, outcomes, outputs, resources and to unpack the various responsibilities of components within the organisation. This will highlight who is responsible for what and also establish linkages between deliverables. The organisation will further benefit by focusing on each outcome and its overall contribution.

Organisations need to balance their scorecard and monitor their management calendar for individual performance management and to maintain proper communication channels to facilitate effective information flow to prevent overlaps in service delivery. Public officials at SMS level are strategically placed to ensure that performance management in government eventually yields its ultimate goal, the delivery of services to the citizenry. On the issue of performance agreements, Professor Stan Sangweni’s contribution is instructive. His input appears elsewhere in this journal.

The success of government in delivering quality services at a rate matching the demand depends to a large extent upon the competency levels of SMS officials. Unfortunately, many surveys conducted in the public service paint a rather bleak picture of performance management, i.e. culture, management support, follow-up, performance information and objectivity. Professor Sangweni pointed out to the delegates that up to now, five years after the system of performance agreements was introduced in the public service, many officials at SMS level have not signed performance agreements and, worse still, reviews are not done regularly.

In most instances, key performance areas of individuals are not linked to organisational performance areas. On the other hand, the level of rigidity imposed upon HoDs by a less flexible framework stifles the organisational performance rate. As a result, neither individuals nor the organisations themselves are properly monitored because of the lack of a properly structured assessment instrument with well-defined KPAs (key performance areas) to measure performance.

As a result of the confusion around assessment, particularly at SMS level, evaluation among HoDs in the public service evokes mixed feelings of excitement and uncertainty. Instead of being perceived in the light of the purpose it serves, that of providing feedback on levels of performance and serving as a management tool for HoDs, assessment is generally viewed negatively.

Performance assessment of individuals should as far as possible reflect the organisational performance and cover a wide range of aspects, i.e. knowledge, performance agreement, business plan, expenditure report, annual report, etc. However, this is mostly far from being the case because of many negative factors which

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**Public officials at SMS level are strategically placed to ensure that performance management in government eventually yields its ultimate goal, the delivery of services to the citizenry**
include the low quality of documents, annual reports that are not helpful, organisations reporting activities not achievements and outputs instead of outcomes. Performance assessment must not be an isolated event, but a process to promote integration.

**Benchmarking against credible institutions in the Private and Public Sector**

Performance evaluation is a developmental tool in every organisation. However, with the negative sentiments that are unfortunately often synonymous with it, it has become a notorious exercise.

To correct this, managers need to reassure staff at lower ranks of the benefits of evaluation and encourage them to communicate. In every progressive work situation efforts should be made to foster a culture of learning and achievement. However, one should be mindful of all the risk associated with change, i.e. exploitation of what was meant to be a healthy and fulfilling environment.

Additional contributing factors to a healthy and fulfilling work environment include:

- benchmarking against behaviour and not systems,
- creating an achievement culture;
- preparing and reflecting on interactions and conversations;
- asking “what could I have done differently”;
- knowing what turns people on. (the fixed/variable remuneration challenge); and
- emphasising the importance of core competencies and the overall benefits of having them.

**Strategies for Human Resource Management and Development**

Because of its awareness of the importance of the human factor in the overall struggle to effect positive changes in people’s lives, government has exhaustively formulated strategies to improve its workforce. Numerous resources have been invested in the recruitment, training and development of a competitive and highly skilled cadre of public officials. People management throughout the public service is recognised as an important and fundamental pillar to the transformation of the public service into a successful organisation. It is also a vital element of integration across the three spheres of government as it ensures alignment of the policies underlying employment.

Delegates were reminded of the importance of proper recruitment practices. The public service has laws and regulations that underlie recruitment such as equity, affirmative action, etc. which contribute to the overall strategy of government to address the faulty employment policies of the past. Following these would ensure that the public sector is representative and properly reflects the social demographics of South African society. It has to be borne in mind that government’s actions have inevitable repercussions. Public service transformation is linked to social and economic transformation.

Central to the challenges inherent within human resource development is the aspect of change. Integration in itself amounts to change, which in turn is a vital part of transformation. The role of SMS members is to coax resistant members of staff into accepting that this process is an inevitable necessity. Much effort should be invested in reassuring other employees that in restructuring government is not striving for a “minimalist” state but an effective and efficient one.

At the centre of people management and human resource development is the aspect of employee assistance and care. Apart from the obligation to encourage self-development and empowerment through learning and the acquisition of skills, we have to also invest in the well being of employees. The scourge of HIV/AIDS globally affects South Africa, like many other countries.

The biggest challenge is the impact that this disease would ultimately have on the demographic structure of the population in the country. Its impact is greatly felt amongst the youth that are the future breadwinners. One of the devastating consequences is that with time there will be more young and old people, and less of the middle strata that are the most economically active.

Added to that, HIV/AIDS adds a huge financial burden to the state in the form of huge employee benefits, huge costs of training new employees and the cost of caring for the sick. Presently, HIV/AIDS is largely regarded as a “by-the-way issue” by many employees in the public service. A good communication strategy is required to increase awareness. Other challenges involve resources allocation, especially in departments, as well as the lack of commitment, especially at SMS level to the issue of HIV/AIDS.

**Conclusion**

Judging from the array of issues that were discussed, as well as the quality of presentations and subsequent discussions, the SMS conference lived up to expectations. Amongst other things it helped to impress upon SMS members the importance of their role within the public service. As managers they oversee projects from their conception to their implementation, taking into consideration the “how” aspect and also who implements. Their role is indispensable to government’s success in delivering services, albeit planning, budgeting or implementation.

In order to fulfil this crucial role SMS members are obliged to have extraordinary management skills to manage people and bring the best out of them, and to manage the work environment to make it more encouraging to the upcoming employees.

These managers are also required to be up to date with various government policies and strategies to help anchor the decisions and align them with the overall national strategies of government. This relates to project management, outsourcing for instance, that should reflect government’s BEE policy to achieve broad-based economic empowerment in the country, equity and affirmative action in recruitment and Batho Pele in providing services.
Public Servants need to be Intellectually Inclined

In this opening address to the recent SMS conference, Eastern Cape Premier Reverend Makhenkesi A Stofile highlighted the need for the public sector to have leaders who are authoritative in the work they do.

It is an honour for me to not just be with you but to welcome you to this your second annual SMS Conference. Indeed it is an honour for the people of the Eastern Cape in general and the people of Mandela Bay in particular that this second conference is hosted by this province and city.

The public service is not a static institution but has evolved over centuries through the interplay of social, economic and political forces to try and address the vexing question of what the role of government in the delivery of services should be. The South African public service has not had a different path in that evolution. We have a young democracy and have had to evolve from the public service of apartheid to that of a constitutional democracy.

The values and principles of our public service are clearly outlined in the Constitution of our country, Act 108 of 1996.

In my previous addresses I have often alluded to the importance of public servants in the successful implementation of government policy. The importance of quality in what services are rendered has been frequently emphasised. Today we will rather focus more on the senior managers than the civil service as a generic instruction. This, we hope, will make a humble contribution to the eternal quest to always strive for the best ways of rendering our service.

In a world where efficiency and competitiveness are key elements for survival, the private sector is often touted as a model for good management. I believe there is a lot we can learn from the private sector. But this should not lead to a blind mimicking of the private sector.

We can learn, for instance, its principles of management, delivery, marketing, productivity, etc. But there are distinct features about the public sector. These include its non-profit ethos, the commitment of the State to protect the vulnerable, the need to protect the environment, to combat poverty, to provide bulk infra-structure etc. The public sector is expected to harness the centrifugal forces of society and guide communities in order for the desired social change to be attained.

Today our focus is on that category of the public sector which must act as the
facilitator of other role players who must provide the above — those who must develop the capacity to work with others and empower them to render quality service.

Your scope of authority and the expectations we have both as citizens and politicians have been extended in law by both the Public Finance Management Act and the Public Service Act together with their regulations. There may be tensions between these two pieces of legislation but they still give you a lot of flexibility.

The need for authoritative senior managers

For the public service to work well, senior managers must have authority/mastery over their work. They need not be authoritarian. The need for authority derives from the massive workforce that constitutes the civil service. Both the labour force, the fiscal and physical resources of a province or a country need efficient and effective management. Therefore senior managers need to know their work and to perform exceptionally well in the roles assigned to them.

If they are not exceptional, senior managers must, at least, perform to the expected standard as defined in the performance agreement. They must know the legal framework very well and be prepared to go the extra mile to satisfy customers always within the law.

Senior managers must always remember this: to succeed, managers depend on effective teams that they have built. Managers must not try to be implementers. They must manage implementers. Their stature and status will be enhanced by the extent to which they have been able to make others do their parts well.

The civil service is operating in a changing environment. The managers are therefore challenged to be amenable to change. They must be versatile and creative. They must be sensitive to indicators of change (whether social, economic or political). Change need not mean a more complex management. It means a changed management style.

The senior manager needs to be some kind of an intellectual both by training and by temperament. The senior manager must not only be au fait with changes that are taking place, he/she must be able to make decisions that are commensurate with the changes.

Good decisions alone will not assist change or management. Senior managers must know how to communicate effectively. In these times of integrated government work, decisions tend to go beyond one department. They even have an impact on other spheres of government. Therefore, intra- and inter-departmental communication is very important.

Senior managers should not leave inter-governmental forum meetings to juniors. They should participate personally so as to communicate accurately. Knowledge is power, and a knowledgeable manager who shares what s/he knows gains the respect of subordinates, peers and principals.

Even with all the knowledge in the world, no single individual is self-sufficient. Mature managers will not be afraid to confess their weaknesses and to recognise the strengths of others. They know that by building the requisite capacity in subordinates, the managers’ weaknesses will be corrected by the abilities of the empowered junior.

This is the advantage of building a good team and knowing the strengths and weaknesses of each team member.

The civil service is operating in a changing environment. The managers are therefore challenged to be amenable to change. They must be versatile and creative (whether social, economic or political). This is the advantage of proper training and team building. One carries the ball or wears the armband, but all win or lose. Single good players are important in the short term, but a good rounded team is better in the long term!

A good manager is not afraid to learn new things nor is s/he afraid to go beyond his/her immediate tasks to always explore new ways of doing things. This is creativity and it should be encouraged. Do not be afraid to learn from others. This saves the manager from being comfortable with obsolete ways of doing things.

Senior managers need a lot of courage to accept and promote change. In managing for change an element of firm persuasion or coercion is needed as Aristotle realised centuries ago. This enables the manager to successfully break new ground and confidently contend with old beliefs, stereotypes and perceptions. Lack of courage on the part of the manager may compromise the agenda at hand. People do not voluntarily yield to change. They instinctively cling to their values, habits or beliefs whether outdated or not. Change is associated with loss of what one has and is hated. The manager must lead people to realise that the perceived loss is actually gain.

A manager must define issues, determine priorities and set the agenda. This way you set the pace of change. Consolidate the support of those who agree with your agenda and continue persuading the less committed. It is better to have as many as possible on board than to fight many dissenters who are outside. Once more, communication is very important. It must be as simple and clear as possible.

This is the kind of senior manager we must build in our province, in our country and on our continent. These are managers who can also step back and reflect on what has been done, determine what it is we are unable to do, where we can buy the expertise and then determine what the next step should be — always striving for excellence in the delivery of quality services for our people. Over the past nine years, our government has worked on this challenge. We are not there yet but indeed the tide has turned.
Taking Stock of our Transformation Journey

It’s been 10 years since South Africa entered a new era of democracy. Rev Frank Chikane, Director General in the Presidency, tracks the progress the country has made thus far and looks at the challenges ahead.
Right from the onset, as we take stock of the transformation journey, it is important to tell what our national strategic objective is. Clearly it is about transforming South Africa from an unjust, racist, apartheid society to a just, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society.

Way back in 1994, about nine years ago when South Africa became democratic, there were many promises made and expectations raised, about transformation in the livelihood of South Africans. We promised to correct our skewed laws in accordance with our Constitution, to enforce non-sexism, equality, justice for all, poverty reduction, etc.

We are indeed continuously making considerable strides. However, it still remains quite vital for us to constantly look over our shoulders to remind ourselves of the objectives that we set up for ourselves and to assess how far we have come on this path to complete transformation.

Our past with all its problems and complications is vital as it helps us set our strategic objectives for the future and as a result it should never be ignored. Senior managers in the public service need to always bear in mind the struggle by people for change and learn from it so that they do not repeat the same mistakes.

We need to promote imbizos in the public service, to encourage more people to participate in planning for service delivery programmes, particularly those that greatly require state services for their livelihood. Such interaction with people is vital as it would help us to know what they need and in that way enable us to be more precise in our intervention.

A privileged generation

Echoing the sentiments of President Thabo Mbeki, “It is not given to every generation that it should be present and participate in the act of creation. I believe that ours is privileged to occupy such space.” So we are that generation living in a transformational epoch, an era of evolution that will go down in history for the historical creation of a new society and the making of a new Constitution.

It is an era of rediscovery, where we have to redefine ourselves and reconstruct our being.

We daringly took on one of the most challenging ventures, that of re-engineering the face of the state and its machinery with great success. We have the Cabinet, clusters, departments, new provinces, local government, etc.

Above all, our economy has grown from a fledgling to one of the most promising economies in the world with a lot of growth potential.

This is not an opportunity for every generation, and in recognition of that we are doing extraordinary things even though there could often be controversy.

We stand on the bridge between ending apartheid and seeing the birth of a new non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society. We are part of re-imaging and creating new things.

• The development of a new Coat of Arms.
• The development of new National Orders.
• Transformation and reconstruction of South African society.
• Transformation and reconstruction of the economy.
• Re-appropriation of the institution of Traditional Leaders.
• Renewal of the African Continent through the African Union and New Partnership for Africa’s Development (AU and NEPAD).
• Creating a more just world order.

So enormous are these tasks that our endeavour to carry them out often shows weakness and deep cracks that we cannot afford. We are talking here about, among other things, the gap between the speed at which we are changing and the capacity of managers to lead and support the change in accordance with our objectives.

Ten Year Review

After 10 years in office, it is only appropriate that the government carries out a review of its policies to see whether they have been achieved, and to identify areas which need urgent attention and the focus for the next 10 years. The Presidency is leading the Ten Year Review process. The Review is based on human development indicators.

These composite indexes are:

• Infrastructure;
• Quality of life;
• Economic participation;
• Economic preparedness;
• Political participation;
• Social inclusion; and
• Safety and security.

Not only are these indices significant in identifying and celebrating achievements, but they also help highlight and expose challenges and opportunities for the future and make recommendations for further development.

Preliminary results from the ten year review are telling us that in most instances government is making progress in achieving its stated objectives and most of these seem to be the correct objectives. Government is shown as having made more progress and achieved successes in areas where it has direct influence and control, and its lack of suc-
cess in areas where it may only have indirect influence.

However, considering that government has to manage many factors and interest groups and keep everyone on board it is often perceived to be rather inefficient in delivering services when compared to the private sector.

**Key challenges**
We tend to take things in our stride and consequently waste money. Government seeks to focus on practical implementation of its transformational objectives through the employment of sound project management practices.

Government is also going to have a pool of community development workers who will go out and work and interact with the communities on government programmes.

**The qualitative difference**
As part of its review government has looked at the qualitative difference we have made and are making to the lives of the people. Without being complacent it is important that we acknowledge some of the extraordinary milestones in our transformational journey over the past 10 years that we have successfully achieved.

We have made considerable qualitative differences in many areas. Over the past 10 years our government has moved from an authoritarian dispensation to a more participatory democracy.

From a strictly controlled, system-centred approach to service delivery infested with rules and regulations, we have now graduated to a more service-oriented, people-centred Batho Pele approach where citizens are elevated from passive recipients to active participants.

The old disempowering tendencies of centralisation have now given way to a more empowering experience where decision-making powers pertaining to service delivery are largely decentralised to more relevant areas.

We have one of the best Constitutions in the world that, amongst other things, enshrines the principles of accessibility of services as a right not a privilege.

The Constitution binds our government to act transparently and adopt a clean and accountable form of governance.

**Conclusion**
Our task as government officials is to maximise the impact of the state to better the lives of the people.
Performance Management as a Leadership and Management Tool

Many Commonwealth countries have made determined efforts over the past two decades to introduce reforms in their Public Administration Systems. As measures for administrative re-engineering or re-tooling, these reforms have been aimed at improving the performance of the public sector, especially the civil service, as a means to accelerate good governance and overall national development.

With the advent of a democratic South Africa in 1994, our South African public administration has also followed the same route in effecting reforms to improve government performance and service delivery. As stated in the White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery (1997), a transformed public service will be judged by one criterion above all: its effectiveness in delivering services that meet the needs of all.

The need for an effective system to manage and monitor the performance of managers within the context of a public service in transformation is self-evident. Managers have the most crucial role to play with regard to the achievement of institutional objectives. The effective monitoring of their performance and competency levels should therefore be accorded a very high priority. It is also by the very nature of their responsibilities that it is imperative to hold managers accountable for the achievement of predetermined objectives and goals. This is even more important in the case of heads or chief executives of institutions who have a vital leadership role in translating transformational goals and principles into meaningful and achievable strategies. Heads of department have the responsibility for the execution of agreed business plans. The effective monitoring of their performance should also provide valuable information on institutional successes or failures and draw attention to areas where urgent intervention is required.

Defining performance management

In defining performance management it is important to first look at performance appraisal. According to Grobler (2002:260) performance appraisal is the ongoing process of evaluating and managing both the behaviour and outcomes in the workplace. Organisations use various terms to describe this process. Performance review, annual appraisal, performance evaluation, employee evaluation and merit evaluation are some of the terms used.

Although many writers and consultants use the term performance management as a substitute for the traditional appraisal system, performance management is a broader term than performance appraisal. Performance management is the systematic process by which an agency involves its employees, as individuals and members of a group, in improving organisational effectiveness in the accomplishment of the agency’s mission and goals. It is therefore a comprehensive approach to performance that includes planning work and setting expectations, continually monitoring performance, developing the capacity to perform, periodically rating perform-
performance in a holistic fashion and rewarding good performance.

**South African performance management: an overview**

Despite enthusiasm regarding performance management by various organisations, a comprehensive survey of nine leading South African organisations undertaken by the University of Stellenbosch Business School recently revealed a rather bleak picture of the way employee performance is managed and rewarded in South Africa. According to Joubert and Noah (2000) major problems that were identified during the survey included: the existence of a rather negative working culture; changes in corporate strategy did not result in corresponding behaviour changes; and there was generally insufficient line management support for performance management.

This situation is not different in the Public Service, particularly in the performance management of senior managers. A study conducted by the Public Service Commission (PSC) on the management of performance agreements of senior managers in 2002 revealed that a number of senior managers had not signed performance agreements and that performance reviews are not conducted regularly as required. The study found that 12% of the respondents were not told by their departments how the system of performance agreements worked.

**Linking individual performance to organisational performance**

Modern practice in performance management has moved towards linking performance appraisal with the achievement of predetermined institutional objectives. Performance management in such cases becomes a systematic process through which institutions involve their employees as individuals or as members of a group in improving organisational effectiveness. As indicated in the PSC’s report (2002) on the management of Senior Managers’ Performance Agreements there is a definite need for an effective system to manage and monitor the performance of managers within the context of a public service in transformation. Such a system must enable government to assess the extent to which managers have succeeded in achieving the objectives they have been assigned.

Realising the need to link objectives with the performance appraisal of senior managers, the Minister for Public Service and Administration introduced a system of performance agreements in 1998 for senior managers in the public service, including heads of department (HoDs). The management of the system below the level of HoDs provided for constant feedback on performance between supervisors and their staff. However there was no systematic and coherent process in place through which the performance of heads of department could be assessed.

Ministries were not provided with assistance to manage the evaluation process in a meaningful way and in many instances Departments do not appear to have had the necessary capacity to deal with performance management.

**Framework for the evaluation of heads of department**

Given the problems experienced with the evaluation of HoDs’ performance, and the strategic role of HoDs in achieving organisational effectiveness and government objectives, the PSC was requested (2000) by Cabinet to develop an appropriate evaluation framework to assist executing authorities.

In the development of the framework, the PSC conducted research to determine how the evaluation of HoDs is dealt with in the public services of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Singapore and the United Kingdom.

Emanating from this research, as well as the inputs from the executing authorities (EAs) and the HoDs, a formal evaluation framework was developed and approved by Cabinet. The framework proposed uniform but flexible structures and processes according to which the performance of HoDs at national and the provincial administration departments can be evaluated by EAs.

The following principles underpinned the PSC’s approach in crafting the emerging framework for the HoDs’ performance evaluation:

- Whilst primarily aimed at the evaluation of the individual HoD, the evaluation process should facilitate assessment of institutional effectiveness. HoDs have the responsibility to ensure that their departments achieve what is expected of them and are accountable for the achievement of departmental outputs.
- Participants in the evaluation process should wherever practicable involve independent role players as well as peers of the HoD.
- The constitution of evaluation panels should be flexible to respond to the uniqueness of departments or sectors.

The framework has been implemented for two financial years, namely, 2000/2001 and 2001/2002. As a first step the framework was made mandatory for the evaluation of heads of national departments. Notwithstanding this, seven out of the nine provinces (except the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces) decided to implement the framework immediately. The PSC has played a pivotal role in the evaluation of HoDs. As an independent role player, the PSC’s involvement is to ensure that the evaluation process is fair and that the same standards are applied equitably during the evaluation process.

**Lessons learnt during implementation**

The practice of HoD evaluation in the South African public service is a new concept and has brought mixed feelings of excitement and uncertainty to those involved.
Use of evaluation panels
The framework for the evaluation of HoDs provides for the use of a panel system to assist with the evaluation. The panels are chaired by the PSC to ensure objectivity and consistency. The use of the panels is intended to provide objective advice to EAs on the performance of their HoDs. EAs, however, make the final decision on the outcome of the evaluation. Panel members ideally should have a background on the core functions of the department as well as the performance of the HoD.

The use of panels is an international good practice as we found recently during a study tour to Canada and New Zealand. Panels comprising different stakeholders — like central agencies, peers, the Public Service Commission and the Center for Canadian Development (equivalent to SAMDI), in the case of Canada — are also used in the evaluation of HoDs.

Although the use of Ministers and MECs as panel members is regarded as invaluable, it should be noted that their heavy schedules create problems in convening the evaluation sessions on dates suitable for all panel members.

Sources of information used for evaluation
In terms of the framework the following information for the relevant financial year is normally used in the evaluation of each HoD: the performance agreement; the department’s business and strategic plan; the budget and expenditure reports; the department’s annual report incorporating the Auditor-General’s report; and a verification statement completed by the executing authority and the HoD detailing the achievement of targets and outcomes provided for in the performance agreement.

The key problems experienced during the evaluation process can be attributed to the quality of documentation submitted for the purpose. Documents submitted have not always conformed to the requirements of the framework. Problems were specifically encountered with regard to the quality of performance agreements and verification statements. The verification statement is expected to provide a concise account of achievements by an HoD against the contents of his/her performance agreement and it constitutes the most important evidence to be used by the evaluation panel members in deciding on the level of performance.

Annual reports do not always discuss the achievements by departments in sufficient detail. This made it difficult to link the departmental achievements to the key individual achievements of the HoDs. There appears to be a gap between the reporting requirements prescribed by National Treasury and the manner in which departments comply with these requirements. Instead of reporting on the achievement of key departmental objectives, departments tend to report on their activities.

Another problem experienced with regard to the performance agreements of the HoDs has been around the achievement of key result areas. In most cases the performance criteria has tended to emphasise outputs rather than outcomes. The performance criteria used have in the majority of cases been limited to target dates and have seldom provided qualitative criteria for the measurement of performance.

Evaluation periods and performance reviews
In view of the fact that evaluation of HoDs is aligned to the planning and the Medium Term Expenditure Framework cycles, the framework provided flexibility on the number of years to be covered by each evaluation. As a result nine EAs decided to combine evaluations for 2000/1 with those of 2001/2.

Whilst this decision was in line with the provisions of the framework, the lesson learnt was that this is not a sound practice for several reasons. The principle of regular evaluation and performance feedback is ignored by this approach. Agreeing on an evaluation period that spans more than one financial year creates practical difficulties, particularly when EAs change portfolios or resign and then a new EA has to review performance of more than one financial year.

The task of panel members also becomes difficult if they have to review performance of more than one financial year. One of the key principles underpinning the effective performance management is that performance management processes shall be developmental and allow for effective response to consistent inadequate performance. In cases where the evaluation period spans more than one financial year, it means non-performance will not be dealt with timeously. This will definitely have a negative impact on the effectiveness of the organisation.

Signing of performance agreements
A number of HoDs, both nationally and provincially, were not evaluated for a variety of reasons. Some of the HoDs had not signed performance agreements with their EAs. Chapter 4 of the Public Service Regulations 2001 requires that the performance of all members of the SMS (including the HoDs) be managed through a performance agreement, which should be linked to the department’s strategic plan. It further requires that the performance agreement defines key responsibilities and priorities to be achieved by the SMS member and encourages improved communication. It also requires the supervisor to assess the work of the member of the SMS.

It is self evident, as in the case of those HoDs who were not evaluated, that without a performance agreement no communication with regard to the achievement of objectives takes place. Performance management is about having everyone succeed and improve.

Critical issues to consider
Performance evaluation should not be seen as an isolated activity that only takes place at the end of the financial year, but should be viewed within the broader context of performance management.

Major lessons drawn from the evaluation of HoDs over the two financial periods (2001/2002 and 2002/2003) clearly indicate the following:

In all organisations, whatever the nature of the work, a manager achieves results through the performance of other people. Recognition of their abilities and efforts is a positive step in motivating them to perform well. The efficiency of staff, their commitment to the aims of the organisation, and the skills and attitudes they bring to achieve the quality of service offered, are fostered by good human relations.
Research shows that the “image at the top” has a more profound impact on job attitudes than any other single factor in the working setting. Intellectual strategies alone will not motivate people (John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene). Leaders must have people’s hearts to inspire the hard work required to realise a vision.

There is no doubt that the human resource is the organisation’s most valuable asset and if managed and motivated effectively, employees will make a key contribution towards the achievement of overall Public Sector objectives. As such, individual employees make or break the best organisational plans and thus performance management can ensure that employees serve major public service goals rather than subvert them.

Successful management of people is influenced by the philosophy of top management and their attitudes, which affect their relationships with staff, and the problems that affect them. Since the formulation of human resource policies comes from the top of the organisation, it is justified to argue that the implementation of human resource practices and procedures should be based on viable underlying philosophies of managerial behaviour and employee relationships. Such philosophies should embrace, amongst others, the recognition of people’s needs and expectations at work, respect for the individual, justice in treatment, and equitable reward systems and opportunities for personal development and career progression.

Performance management has emerged as a key fundamental and comprehensive tool to developing and managing the public sector. As a means of getting better results from the organisation, teams and individuals, performance management facilitates an integrated system of human resource management within an agreed framework of planned goals, objectives and standards.

Visionary performance management establishes a process of shared understanding about what the organisation intends to achieve, how the people should be managed and developed in a manner which increases the probability that both short and long-term objectives of the organisation can be attained. The fundamental usefulness of performance management is the facilitation of communication and reinforcement of organisational strategies, culture and standards, hence this creates a marriage of individual and corporate objectives. In this context Michael Armstrong and Helen Murlis (1994), writing about reward management, argue that performance management establishes a culture in which managers, individuals and groups take responsibility for the continuous improvement of business processes and of their own skills competencies and contributions.

It is indeed evident that performance management is concerned with the interrelated processes of work, management and personal development, and at the bottom end performance reward. This approach provides a powerful integrating force which ensures that these processes are linked. Therefore performance management should be regarded as a series of managerial activities that focus on input, processing, intervention and the measurement of the eventual output and outcome.

The evaluation of HoDs and other senior managers should not be seen as a once-off activity at the end of a financial year, but should be seen within the broader context of performance management.

This is one major lesson learnt in the Canadian and New Zealand study tours where it was established that performance management of senior executives is underpinned by a continuous monitoring and evaluation of the achievement of outputs on a monthly or quarterly basis. Heads of department should therefore ensure that their performance agreements and those of other senior managers are concluded early enough to enable communication of responsibilities and objectives and continuous monitoring of performance against these. A great deal of non-compliance with regard to the signing of performance agreements as revealed in the management of performance agreement study conducted by the PSC and during the HoD evaluation, is a matter of concern. An effective implementation of performance management will assist HoDs in communicating their vision, mission and objectives but more so in motivating staff to realise the vision.

Conclusion
The importance of performance management as a leadership and management tool is undeniable. Performance management is important for providing accountability to the taxpayer for the use of public funds as well as for demonstrating better and more effective public services. The success of performance management therefore lies in the effective implementation from the top. Senior managers need to play an active role in ensuring that national policy frameworks on performance management are implemented in order to yield the required results. The public service will continue to see performance appraisal as a punitive and necessary evil if it is not seen within the broader context of performance management. Senior managers need to begin to walk the talk and lead by example particularly in implementing initiatives which are geared to improving public service performance.

Bibliography
Towards becoming a Developmental State: A Focus on Poverty Alleviation

Grace Rapholo, Manager: Specialist Business Unit - Development Bank of Southern Africa, says the Ten Year Review will provide evidence of gains made towards becoming a developmental state while highlighting remaining challenges.

The SMS conference comes at the right time when the entire nation is busy assessing what the democratic government has achieved since it came into power nine years ago. Most importantly soon we will be celebrating as a nation the first decade of our democratic breakthrough. This body of the most senior civil servants of our country will be at the centre of this assessment as we celebrate 10 years of democracy.

The South African nation will be judging whether we have indeed lived up to the expectation of delivering a better life for all; whether we indeed have managed to transform the state and delivered basic services to the poorest of the poor without subjecting them to too much bureaucracy and unnecessary red-tape.

Is South Africa underway to becoming a developmental state?

In addressing the topic, “Towards becoming a developmental state — a focus on poverty alleviation”, one would quite logically firstly try to locate the position of South Africa as a country with regard to the whole notion of a developmental state.

A number of questions arise whenever reference is made to the term “developmental state”. The first question that arises is whether in South Africa we are really moving towards becoming a developmental state. If we indeed are, how far are we in achieving that ideal state? One might ask whether there is a need for a developmental state in South Africa. The Ten Year Review will provide evidence of gains made towards becoming a development state while highlighting remaining challenges.

What is a developmental state?

A developmental state is the kind of state that fosters and embodies people’s power. For democracy to be successful ordinary people must be involved in the process of development and as they get more involved they must also own the process. Whenever we develop policies which are aimed at addressing existing socio-economic imbalances, ordinary people should be involved.
The most critical aspect of a developmental state is participatory democracy, so when we talk about this kind of state, we need to make sure that we maximise the participation of ordinary people in development processes.

During his inaugural address in Parliament on 24 May 1994, the former President of South Africa, Dr Nelson Mandela, declared his government’s commitment. This was to create a people-centred society in which the goals of freedom from want, freedom from hunger and deprivation would be pursued.

We all have to subscribe to this vision and commitment that Dr Mandela outlined nine years ago.

Unfortunately many people are still not free from hunger, deprivation and destitution due to daily socio-economic hardships. These are highlighted in the report, Poverty & Inequality in SA that was commissioned in 1998.

This report stated that, “In per capita terms South Africa is an upper-middle-income country, but most South African households experience outright poverty or vulnerability to being poor.

In addition, the distribution of income and wealth in South Africa is among the most unequal in the world, and many households still have unsatisfactory access to clean water, energy, health care and education.

In the report poverty is explained as “the inability to attain a minimal standard of living, measured in terms of basic consumption needs or the income required to satisfy them. It includes alienation from the community, food insecurity, crowded homes, usage of unsafe and inefficient forms of energy, lack of adequately paid and secure jobs, and fragmentation of the family.”

Poverty is not a static condition; individuals, households or communities may be vulnerable to falling into poverty as a result of shocks and crises (such as uncontrollable events detrimental to livelihoods and food security) and long-term trends (for example, racial and gender discrimination, environmental degradation and macroeconomic trends).

Recent reports on poverty and inequality in South Africa do not make a fundamental departure from the above-mentioned report; the difference is in their emphasis. The painful reality in South Africa today is that the majority of ordinary people are poor and a growing number are destitute. The proportion of unemployed people is growing at an alarming rate, particularly in the rural areas. The situation of the poor and unemployed is worsening day by day and there is an urgent need to generate hope in our communities.

In rural areas the scope of poverty and inequality is much broader. For instance, the condition of roads is appalling and people have to travel considerable distances to major shops, putting pressure on scarce resources. This has a considerable effect on both prices of commodities and transport costs.

The unemployment industry is fast growing in South Africa precisely because of a slow-growing economy. The Bureau of Economic Research has estimated that at least 500 000 job
opportunities have been lost in the formal non-agricultural sector since 1995. This is on top of the 700 000 job opportunities lost in the agricultural sector since 1994.

In the six years from 1995 to 2001 at least 250 000 new work-seekers became part of the labour force annually. According to conservative estimates, the labour supply has increased from 13.4 million in 1995 to 14.9 million in 2001. This implies that structural unemployment has increased from 36% in 1995 to 49% in 2001.

The deterioration of employment is attributed to the poor economic growth rate that the South African economy continues to attain. The annual growth rate of real GDP was 2.6% from 1994 to 2002. Unfortunately this rate was not high enough to turn around the downward spiral as far as unemployment and poverty are concerned.

The economic growth rate that was experienced during the 90s was to a large extent jobless growth mainly due to the high and still growing capital intensity. Also, the South African economy did not get the large influx of foreign direct investments (FDIs) as it was anticipated.

There is more evidence which suggests that the rate of unemployment has grown more than what I have just presented above. The picture that I have just painted is not a very good one at all suggested above. The picture that I have just painted is not a very good one at all. The economic growth rate that was experienced during the 90s was to a large extent jobless growth mainly due to the high and still growing capital intensity. Also, the South African economy did not get the large influx of foreign direct investments (FDIs) as it was anticipated.

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You have to foster the new values and culture in your institutions where people come first and are central to departmental objectives.
is that black economic empowerment should be about the real and effective empowerment of both the urban and rural poor. We have to ensure that we do something about this problem. When we issue tenders we have to make sure that we give priority to emerging and small companies. It was good to see that we now have Mama’s specials for women-owned construction companies in the tender bulletin from DPW. Broad-based empowerment is what we should be advocating if we want to eliminate underdevelopment.

We also welcome government’s legislatives interventions and approaches in ensuring that land is equally distributed amongst the people in this country.

The problem of poverty and hunger will only be overcome if our people have sufficient arable land where they can grow some crops and be in a position to feed themselves and take whatever sizeable amount of produce to the markets.

Agricultural transformation is also very critical if we are to grow our economy. The agricultural sector has the potential for growth in this country and can absorb a number of the unemployed and semi-skilled youth into the mainstream economy.

As we engage in trade discussions with multilateral organisations like the World Trade Organisation (WTO) we need to advance the developmental agenda of our state and make sure that the produce of our farmers makes it to international markets. I hope that the South African delegation which is attending the WTO trade negotiations in Cancun, Mexico will make sure that the developmental agenda of the South African state and that of the continent wins the day. Let us all wish Minister Alec Erwin who is heading our delegation the best of luck in putting our position forward in Cancun.

As the Development Bank of Southern Africa we welcome government’s move towards the implementation of the extended public works programme. Our expertise and mandate as the Bank lies in the area of infrastructure provisioning and we are convinced that this is indeed a move in the right direction. We are ready to lend a hand to government and we are not going to fold arms and watch while you grapple with the implementation of this grand plan on your own. We will join you in pushing back the frontiers of poverty as a partner and advisor. You may be aware that at the DBSA we define our role as that of investor, advisor and partner. That's our triple role towards poverty reduction and advancing development.

We have been in this business for 20 years now and recently we had our 20th anniversary celebrations and we are confident that together we will finally turn the tide against poverty through infrastructure provisioning.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, let me briefly take you through some of the interventions that the Development Bank of Southern Africa has made so far.

The Development Bank has contributed significantly to pushing back the frontiers of poverty. Its record results of 2002/03 are a testimony to this. The Bank has touched the lives of an estimated 762,000 households in South Africa and the region through its facilitation and financing of improved infrastructure services. It has also demonstrated that this could be achieved within the ambit of remaining financially sustainable.

The Development Bank has also established itself as a role model of good corporate governance for parastatals and private sector institutions alike. This was reflected in the prestigious PMR Award for excellence in corporate governance that was bestowed on the Bank earlier this year.

The Bank continues to harness its intellectual potential as a trusted advisor and partner, and uses its resources to contribute to the development of our human resources so that we can compete more effectively in the global economy. To this end, the DBSA Development Fund has continued to grow its support for local government by providing grant funding for capacity building, in order to assist them to overcome infrastructure backlogs and to remain sustainable.

The DBSA is indeed a partner of choice and you need to engage with us as senior officials in government. The developmental state that we all are yearning for will need the support of all the development finance institutions if it is to succeed in dealing with the enormous development challenges that lie ahead.

As the DBSA we will always lend a hand in building a truly democratic developmental state in South Africa. We will not fail you.
It is difficult to deliver a farewell speech. It is difficult to make an analysis of a situation you know you will no longer be involved in. There are three options in making such a speech. Firstly, I could reflect on the content issues. Secondly, I could conduct a high-level review of the transformation of the public service, the polemic of integration — how to get government to operate in unison — and the political economy of the public service (issues such as new public management). Or thirdly, I could reflect at a personal level about the journey: a review of the G&A and DPSA from 1999 to 2003 to reflect on what I personally learned.

Perhaps the option that one chooses is linked to the questions ‘who am I?’ and ‘what is my contribution?’ Whether you are a student of public administration, a public service manager, an academic, an intellectual, a social activist using the public service to further your aims, or an entrepreneur trapped in time and history — I say this because the South Africa of today requires us to deal with the transformation of the state because it is the key to so many other things.

Perhaps my only contribution to the discourse and practice in public administration was in the form of new ideas, some of which will work, and some of which will not work. Bringing new ideas to the public service is difficult because the public service is a big institution. Your contribution becomes very tiny. Yet at the same time we are aware of what is called the butterfly effect, that small things can make a big difference. Mother Theresa said, “We cannot do great things, only small things with great love.”

I would like to reflect on some of the...
lessons I have learnt. These are not new; they are personal reflections. I will try to convey how I lived them.

The first lesson is that you must seek first to understand
When I came to DPSA in 1999 I first had to understand where the Department was. I needed to assess the people, role players, skills, capacity and attitudes. You have to get to know the territory in which you operate. Part of this approach may have to do with my consulting background.

It is not only important to understand the formal enterprise, but you must understand the informal enterprise too. This is a lesson from all general management training, but our recent experiences in the Eastern Cape also offer interesting examples.

In the Eastern Cape the informal organisation is more powerful than the formal institution. This was not so in the case of DPSA. There were some key informal networks. New DGs I have spoken to have said the same thing: that you have to understand the informal enterprise.

My second lesson is that you have to develop a common vision and agenda for the organisation
In 1999 we identified key strategic priorities: the establishment of a wage policy and the development of a personnel expenditure review, the establishment of the Senior Management Service and integrated human resources. We also identified the need to move towards supporting departments, and towards SDI becoming a consulting entity. Information and research was a priority (we failed in this area).

The modernisation of the public service was identified as critical, and learning and knowledge exchange were important priorities.

To deliver on this vision, you require an appropriate institutional framework, hence the reorganisation of the Department was required. The key issue is sustaining the vision. Linked to a vision, you need an execution strategy. You need to put together a winning team. You need to assess people so you have the right combination.

Particularly important is the nature
and character of the core team — it must be the right combination of experience, skills and capability. The core team concept is important. Although one can keep a view of the whole organisation, it is important to be able to assemble key people in a war room to respond to a crisis.

There are a number of challenges in relation to human resources. There is the challenge of recruitment and that of retaining people. I took a decision some time ago that I would not stand in the way of those who want to leave. Perhaps I was wrong in some cases in this respect. And there is the challenge of being disappointed in people, and the challenge of letting people go. There is a quote that says, “The key to being a good manager is to keep the people who hate you away from those who are still undecided.”

A third lesson is the importance of developing partnerships

The public service is very big, and you will not win all the fights — you need allies, sometimes a coalition of the willing. You have to work to win them over, but often it is not the big issues which win new allies. Often it is a DG who wants advice on an appointment or dismissal. These small favours promote alliances. Therefore we took the approach in DPSA that it would be a small unit that would develop partnerships with the right managers.

The partnership with the Presidency is a good example. It spanned G&A and the restructuring of the Presidency, but by implementing the small issues first we were able to succeed in more substantial areas. The restructuring of the Presidency is now happening. Things take a while to happen in the public service.

A fourth lesson is that you need the right systems of delivery

This was demonstrated in both the DPSA and the Eastern Cape. If you don’t have the right systems, you can’t manage. The functioning of the office and the systems need to be right. The establishment of the Programme Management Office in the Eastern Cape is a good example. It is important that before we look at the work we have to do, we first look at ourselves.

A fifth lesson is to understand the balance between single-mindedness and an open-minded management approach

You can move from passion to disinterest very rapidly in the public service because the personal stakes are so low. It is very easy to do just enough to pass the performance review. There is a culture of negotiation in the public service, which can easily make you despondent. There is always a need for consultation on a project, but there is a need to find the balance between too much and too little.

The Smart Card project, for example, has been highly consultative, but has not made a great deal of progress; whereas with regard to the Gateway project after a time we became single-minded and less consultative, and we have made some progress which we need to sustain.

Linked to the same point, is the issue of innovation and entrepreneurship. The public service rewards compliance. Again here you have to ask the question “who are you”. Your character will determine whether you are more excited about rule compliance or the flexibility and innovation that comes with uncertainty.

You need to ask yourself whether you want high levels of predictability or whether you are happy with certain levels of uncertainty. I am and was becoming impatient with managers who want to escalate problems. For example, if there is a problem, nationalise it.

The sixth lesson is that control as a general management approach does not guarantee results

You must have confidence that your managers share the same vision and that you have given them the necessary flexible mechanisms to get the job done. If they are not good enough to take the decisions, they are not good enough to be associated with you. What is required is confidence, flexibility and accountability for results.

The seventh lesson on politics and administration is that public service managers are rowers in a boat that is being steered

Fundamentally the public service is a political institution. Politics must steer. Politics must define the limits and direction of action, not the detail of it. Politics must remind us of the destination, the target of the outcome, socio-economic transformation.

There is no blueprint for the political-administrative interface — the key lies in relationships, trust, confidence and the ability to deliver on the required outcomes.

I came into the public service at the age of 30 and leave it at the age of 34. I am still growing. I have become less impatient, and more appreciative of the value in taking time to plan, reflect and sharpen your strategy before you rush into implementation.

One lesson learned from my new employers in the private sector is the difference between new and old money — what distinguishes those companies that have stood the test of time, and those that come and go. Although short-term results are important they are not the only focus, and it is important, even more so in the political realm, to build monuments that will stand the test of time.

It is important to take medium-term views. Innovation and creativity should not imply chaos and arbitrary decision making.

What we used to refer to as the “hurry up and wait” scenario is a reflection of the limits of short-termism. Medium term planning and the ability to stay the course is what inspired the Pyramids of Giza and other great monumental achievements.

There is a quote that says, “There are no shortcuts to any place worth going.” It was my pleasure and honour to be associated with everyone at DPSA.
B
espectacled. An almost pencil-thin mustache and a matching carpet of near invisible hair perched on the chin. Lightly built but not on the thin side. A youthful smile accentuated by the struggle-ingrained habit of addressing almost everyone “chief”.

Robinson Ramaite strikes one as a regular kind of guy. Just one of South Africa’s 44 million citizens. He seems to thrive on relative anonymity. Married. Three children. Enjoys non-fiction literature such as biographies. Plays golf. Beyond these snippets Ramaite’s off-public life is an impenetrable wall of privacy.

Despite having been at the helm of one of the country’s most critical institutions as Director-General of the Department of Public Service and Administration, Ramaite’s public persona exudes none of the flamboyance often associated with the trappings of power.

The smell of coffee and muffins. The drowsy buzz of the early breakfast crowds, with a handful of black faces making up its morning patronage, the atmosphere at the non-descript but popular restaurant is like an uneasy truce with the past.

Ramaite comes from a long lineage of masses of famous and not-so-famous people who had selflessly played a role in the fight against colonialism and apartheid. Like many of his peers, he was sucked into the vortex of politics as apartheid. Like many of his peers, he was sucked into the vortex of politics as apartheid. Like many of his peers, he was sucked into the vortex of politics as apartheid. Like many of his peers, he was sucked into the vortex of politics as apartheid.

South African National Students Congress (SASCO).

“Unlike today, chief, those days were uncomplicated. There was a clear enemy and a single-minded focus on the destruction of the enemy,” says Ramaite, with a hint of nostalgia in his eyes.

South Africa was on the verge of imploding in the wake of the political whirlwind of the late 80s and early 90s. New and unfamiliar phrases such as “talks about talks” seemed to slur the revolutionary slogans of those days.

“A lecturer used to tell us it’s easy to destroy and very difficult to build. We realised during talks of negotiation and transition of the post-1990s that the struggle is not just about throwing stones but also about reconstruction,” says Ramaite.

Transition was not easy. It was like fixing a plane’s faulty engine while in full-flight, as one activist remarked on the challenges of post-apartheid transformation. Eleven public administration institutions from the four largely whites-only provincial administrations as well as those of the former homelands had to be merged into a single entity.

A further hurdle in rationalisation of the disparate apartheid public sector was the drafting of a “sunset clause” in the interim constitution of 1993. The clause guaranteed employment to senior public servants, most of whom had been zealous administrators of apartheid policies.

By 1994, when Ramaite joined the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), the old bureaucracy still wielded a lot of power in the public service. Perhaps out of spite — combined with bureaucratic inflexibility — the new GDE recruits went without salaries for three months.

It was not easy, but Ramaite believes that the many cadres deployed to the public service during this period were well prepared. This included swotting the details of governance at institutes such the University of the Witwatersrand public service school and the UK based Civil Service College.

Ramaite was appointed to the DG’s position in the DPSA in 1999. He resigned in the middle of 2003 to pursue business interests in the mining sector. For the former DG who readily admits that “the public service defined me”, the private sector is a continuum in the pursuit of public good. “There is an obvious social imperative to deracialise the private sector,” says Ramaite.

Flanked by some of Johannesburg’s wealthy suburbs, including Sandton, the ambiance of the Woodmead restaurant where we are sitting is a microcosm of a wealthy “nation” at peace with itself. It is one of the “two nations” President Mbeki often refers to.

Less than five minutes from the restaurant, lies Alexandra, a symbol of the other “nation”, which is black and poor. Despite evident signs of changes in the township in the last 10 years, much work still lies ahead for the public service. “In the next five years pressure for service delivery is going to increase,” predicts the former DG.

Ramaite asserts that his departure from the department does not represent a “brain drain”. He is still in the country and is “not excluding” rejoining the public service in future. In fact, he says, “I’d love to”.

We realised during talks of negotiation and transition of the post-1990s that the struggle is not just about throwing stones but also about reconstruction.
Best Practice Models/Strategies in Limpopo Province

Innovative ways of Improving Service Delivery

Ms B Monama, the Director General of the Limpopo Province, highlights some best practices and strategies being adhered to in the province in an effort to improve service delivery.

The purpose of this presentation is to give an overview of some of our innovative projects implemented in the provincial administration of Limpopo Province.

These projects were showcased at our provincial learning network conference. Some of the case studies were presented at the 2nd Annual Learning Academy in July 2002. Through this project, the face of Limpopo is transforming at a faster pace.

Improving delivery of services to our communities and the public at large is our strategic objective. Through the innovative projects, we are able to create cost effective and ingenious ways of delivering quality services to the communities we serve.

Multi Purpose Community Centres: Changing the face of Limpopo

Before the first democratic elections in 1994, people had to travel long distances when they wanted to apply for identity documents, birth certificates for their newly born babies and social grants. However, after the 1994 elections, all this changed and people are now starting to get government services they so very much deserve nearer to where they stay. The national government adopted a Multi Purpose Community Centre (MPCC) strategy to promote access to government information and services.

Based on that, the Limpopo provincial administration developed its own strategy to implement the MPCC projects in the province.

The province has three types of MPCCs:

MPCCs providing government information. All the MPCCs in this category provide government information to the community. Both provincial and national departments have offices wherein officials provide information on the services rendered by their respective departments. Some of the MPCCs falling under this category are Vaalwater and Mapela.

MPCCs rendering integrated services. The MPCCs in this category provide integrated services to the community.
The integrated services include information services and actual services that include community development projects. Some of the MPCCs in this category are Leboeng and Kgautswane.

Situated in the Sekhukhune District, the Kgautswane MPCC offers the community almost all the services at one stop. The centre has a village bank for community banking services and a clinic for health and welfare services. It also offers Home Affairs services and police services. The community is also able to get government information from various departments at the centre. Another category of services is the development projects.

Leboeng is a one-stop centre for actual service delivery. The centre provides full-time government services by various departments. For that reason, the centre offers residences to employees nearby.

MPCCs focusing on capacity building programmes. The third category of the MPCCs is those that focus more on training and development programmes.

Most of the centres in this category are the former colleges of education. Such centres are known as EMPC. Hoxane is a good example of what this category of MPCCs offer.

Other MPCCs in the province are at Makhulu in the Mopani District, Atok in the Sekhukhune District and Mapela.

Generally, the province is moving towards establishing MPCCs that will render integrated services where the community will receive information, use the information to get services, and also receive training services.

Models of service excellence: Letaba and Maphuta Malatji hospitals

Limpopo province takes pride in the two institutions that were successfully transformed from being ordinary state hospitals to centres of service excellence with a hotel approach in delivering services.

Before the transformation, the two hospitals had numerous problems, i.e. dilapidated buildings, neglected and unattractive gardens and an inadequate supply of linen. Support services such as radiography, dental, therapy and occupational therapy were available only during the day and at specific hours.

Today the two institutions have improved tremendously. The buildings have been revamped; the surroundings (gardens) are breathtaking; wards are individualised and each ward has its own toilet and bath. The linen and gowns are of high quality, the dispensary is improved with clean and secured storage for medicines. While previously catering was done in a mass fashion, today it is individualised.

Patients are given food parcels from the kitchen. The kitchen is renovated and the cutlery and crockery is of quality. The hospitals provide improved services over 24 hours.

All posts in the organisational structures have been filled and staff members are happy and proud of their institutions.

Restructuring of state assets

Zebediela Citrus Estate is an example of
our success in restructuring state assets for improved service delivery for the improvement of the quality of the lives of our people.

Zebediela Citrus is situated on the Mokopane-Lebowakgomo road, approximately 50km from Mokopane and 28km from Lebowakgomo. It covers a total area of 13 785ha on 12 state-owned farms, the majority of which are under claim. Citrus produced on this farm comprise 45% navel, 29% Valencia and 26% lemons.

The Zebediela Citrus project was established in 1918 by the Schlesinger Group and taken over by ARDC as one of their projects in 1996.

When the ARDC was abolished as a result of budgetary constraints in 2000, the Zebediela Citrus Estate was placed under direct management of the Department of Agriculture. The estate was restructured in terms of the provincial government policy on restructuring of state assets.

Overall monitoring of the process and operation has been the responsibility of the Department of Agriculture.

There is a plan in place that ensures that the community is capacitated in terms of skills to enable them to continue with the operation of the estate on sustainable basis. The Department of Agriculture also assists the children and youth of the claimant community, and the workers to obtain relevant degrees and diplomas from universities and technikons to support their estate and assets.

In the future the estate will be expanded in order to generate more income and create more job opportunities. Table grapes and mangoes have been identified as potential expansion possibilities. As a result, the present work force will have to grow from 300 to 1 000 people.

In 2002, Zebediela produced approximately 13 500 tons of citrus fruit with about 328 000 cartons of citrus fruit exported.

Road maintenance programme
The aim of the roads maintenance programme is to carry out maintenance on provincial roads. It is only involved in routine road maintenance activities like potholes repair, edge-break repair and crack-sealing, balding and limited graveling. One aspect of the programme was improvement of service delivery processes in road maintenance and possible outsourcing of roads construction units.

The Department of Public Works, in partnership with the IPSP, embarked on the Service Delivery Initiative programme. This programme is aimed at dealing with capacity constraints in the implementation of the Public Service Regulations and the broader transformation of the South African Public Service. The programme also receives funding from the British government, through the Department for International Development (DFID).

**Integrity of personnel records**
As already mentioned above, transformation in the province is also happening in the field of human resource. The province was faced with a big challenge in terms of restoring the integrity of human resource records. One of the major challenges that the Limpopo government had to contend with was to integrate and consolidate four governments created by the former apartheid regime into one government.

Accordingly, there was a fundamental restructuring and transformation of new provincial departments in 1994. What resulted was a continuous movement of personnel files between different locations. This resulted in a buildup of backlogs in the processing of information and maintenance of records, and a huge backlog of forms that were not properly filled. Manual records were in disarray.

The provincial administration developed a strategy that was adopted by the heads of various departments. Accordingly a set of activities was implemented to achieve the following:

- streamlining paper-based manual records in all personnel offices;
- updating of résumés on PERSAL to adhere to the National Minimum Information Requirements;
- audit and update leave on PERSAL;
- establishment of a Human Resource Forum;
- the development of the Best Practice Model for Keeping and Managing paper-based employee records.

The project was piloted in 2001 in Mopani and Vhembe districts with the assistance of Geopen Consultants. During the implementation of the project, a best practice model was developed with the assistance of the Department of Public Service and Administration’s Internal Consulting Unit.

During 2002-2003 the strategy was implemented in the districts of Capricorn, Sekhukhune and Waterberg. The Transversal HR Unit implemented the strategy, applying the knowledge and skills acquired during the piloting process. Registry offices were eventually transformed as a result of the strategy.

**Conclusion**
For its success, the province is highly indebted to the following people:

- political heads for the support they give to the administrative heads;
- heads of department for their commitment to ensuring that the projects are implemented as planned;
- all public service employees who are in the forefront in ensuring that the projects are implemented; and
- IPSP and DFID for enabling the province to implement the programmes.
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- To provide a forum for influential members of the business community to learn from the experiences of those organisations playing pioneering roles as social change agents.
- To examine the role of business in creating the future.

We will broadly explore the following:
- bringing soul into organisations
- creating meaningful work
- creating innovative and entrepreneurial business cultures
- establishing business practices rooted in local relevance and bearing global fruits
- fostering new leadership practices
- creating community in the workplace
- managing work/life balance issues
- reviewing case studies of companies that are bringing a renewed spirit to the workplace.

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  Debby Edelstein, Co-founder of QualityLife Company and The Alternative School for Business

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  While capitalist business principles underpin the success of an entrepreneurial poverty alleviation strategy, the traditional beliefs and values of most impoverished communities are at direct odds with those principles. A number of paradigm shifts are necessary to bridge these gaps.
  Claudia Ford, Development researcher and coordinator of Community Partnerships at Wits University

- Morally Speaking: Creating a shared moral vision in South Africa

- Anglogold: Living it’s Values
  A Case Study with Paul Hollesen, Social Development Manager of Anglogold

- From Foot Soldiers of Greed to Transformation Warriors: A personal journey of seeking soulful work
  Ketan Lakhani, Management Activist and Leadership consultant

- Spiritual Awareness in Business: The Challenges
  Mpho Makwana, CEO of the Marketing Federation of South Africa

- Key Strategic Issues facing business today: Addressing globalisation, Black Economic Empowerment and competition for best people
  Bonang Mohale, CEO Drake & Scull SA

- The IBM Example: creating an able working environment
  • through innovative techniques like e-workplace
  • successfully fostering work life balance by taking into account employee care and support programmes
  • developing a conducive working climate through employee loyalty
  Dudu Nyamane, HR Director, IBM SA

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Enterprise Performance Management as an Integration Tool

In this article, Michael W Solomon, Strategy Executive at IBM Business Intelligence Solutions, explores best practices and challenges in using EPM to integrate the activities of organisations with those of others that have similar goals.

Enterprise Performance Management is the emerging discipline of directing organisations towards common goals, strategies and policies. In the public sector it can also serve as a tool to help integrate separate branches of government. Therefore, to proceed, let us lay out the points of the discussion:

- Five focus points for integration.
- What is performance management?
- The “35:65 rule”.
- Enterprise and individual performance management compared.
- A model of enterprise performance management.
- Performance measurement is a critical aspect of EPM.
- A central scorecard is needed to structure integration.
- Other building blocks for EPM and integration.
- How EPM helps address the key challenges of integration.

There are at least five focal points to concentrate on in the effort to integrate disparate organisations. These are:

- policy and strategy;
- process and structure;
- leadership and people;
- information and communication technology; and in the centre; and
- performance management.

What is enterprise performance management?

Simply put, it is a co-ordinated process of planning, executing and reviewing strategy at all levels of an organisation to ensure the achievement of the organisation’s purposes.

Enterprise performance management is often known as Business Performance Management (BPM) or Corporate Performance Management (CPM).

Its dimensions include: strategic vs tactical (or operational), enterprise vs individual performance management, and performance management vs performance measurement.

The “35:65 rule” demonstrates EPM vs individual performance management.

W Edwards Deming observed that at best the individual is only responsible for 35% of variance from plan. The rest can be attributed to the organisation itself. What then is the consequence of focusing on individual performance only?
Enterprise performance management and individual performance management are different in several respects. While EPM (enterprise performance management) focuses on performance of a country, province, city, department directorate, team and project, IPM (individual performance management) in turn focuses on personal performance of an individual. In addition, the two differ in frequency of occurrence, i.e. annually, quarterly, monthly weekly, daily and hourly for EPM and once or twice per annum for IPM.

The Enterprise Performance Model
The enterprise performance management approach revolves around a central plan that forms the point of departure, i.e. the initial phase. The plan anchors and determines the success of the organisation.

The planning phase revolves around the translation of the main organisational strategy into operational goals.

The next stage deals with communication and agreeing and it centres on obtaining a buy-in and a commitment from all the role players. This is followed by the measuring stage, where data is collected, analysed and collated. During the review stage, a report is produced on the actual performance followed by discussions. Subsequent appropriate consequences have to follow, in the respond stage from which all the parts of the enterprise have to learn (the fifth stage). Then the learning stage follows to ensure that all parts of the enterprise learn.

The co-ordination stage, the seventh and last in the series, is central to the whole process of performance management. Though it is listed as the seventh in the series, its activities are overarching and overlap onto other stages. It is about managing the whole management process.

Performance management as a critical aspect of EPM
Performance management is indispensible to the entire EPM approach:

• It provides a means by which strategy becomes actionable through a statement of goals.
• Goals translate into targets and measures.
• Measurement can be either quantitative or qualitative.
• It provides reasonably objective means to compare the contributions of various organisations. These are in the form of four possible layers of measurement, each layer demonstrating cause and effect relationship. The layers are: Resources; Activities; Outputs; and Outcomes.

The scorecard and other important building blocks for EPM and integration
A central scorecard, whether for a country, province, city or department, is needed to structure integration in accordance with EPM.

In successfully using the scorecard, there are a number of ideal design points that are of critical importance.

• Planning is done on medium to long-term basis.
• It distinguishes between strategic and tactical aspects.
• The scorecard is outcomes-oriented.
• It promotes a balanced approach to management.
• It is endless and thus renewable; and
• Promotes transparency.

Besides the scorecard, several other tools are essential building blocks for EPM and integration. These include:

• Strategy map.
• National and international benchmarks.
• Management calendar.

Enterprise performance management is a co-ordinated process of planning, executing and reviewing strategy at all levels to ensure the achievement of the organisation’s purpose.

How EPM helps address the key challenges of integration
In government where there is often the challenge of focus, that is, establishing synergy between the different parts or departments, EPM provides uniformity of performance objectives and metrics.

To help deal with the communications schism to keep the different departments and agencies informed about one another’s activities, EPM provides measurable activities throughout the various formations.

One of the key challenges in government concerned co-ordination, that is, how to manage the links and dependencies between organisations or departments. In this regard, EPM provides a structural point of reference for co-ordination and integration between such formations.

EPM also helps reduce overlaps in terms of focus areas to ensure economy of effort. This it does by providing graphic ways to map contributions of organisations to overall objectives.

Challenges of EMP
Introducing EPM into an institution amounts to a major change which in turn, is bound to ruffle a few feathers. Below are examples of challenges that can be anticipated:

• Shifting frames of mind from “individual-only” to “individual-and-enterprise”;
• Relative scarcity of good production and operation management know-how;
• Sponsorship from the highest level;
• Overcoming objections to measurement and standardised reporting;
• Combining simplicity with depth and detail;
• Availability of supporting information and knowledge management systems; and
• Agreeing suitable levels of abstraction for objectives and measures.
Redefining the Role of the Private Sector in Public Service Delivery

Sissy Dlamini, General Manager ABSA Public Sector Banking, explains the challenges and benefits that accrue from closer co-operation between the public and private sectors to enhance service delivery.

Rationale for Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)

Public-Private Partnerships are an alternative means of service delivery for the public sector. The Inkosi Albert Luthuli Hospital is a well-known example and case study of a successful PPP. The question to be asked is what is the core function of the public sector. Typically, in the case of a hospital the main focus is to deliver public health services. PPPs also could take the form of concessions, outsourcing, build-maintain-operate-transfer, etc.

Benefits of Public Private Partnerships

The operational benefits of PPPs include the fact that they ensure efficiency in service delivery through the use of prudent processes and mechanisms. By virtue of their goal orientation they focus on tangible outputs, and they capture the economies of scale. The strategic benefits include the fact that they focus the public service on its core mandate and responsibility, that is service delivery.

Public-private partnerships promote an integrated approach to service delivery as they ensure that every step of the service delivery process/chain is followed, and resources and energies of various agencies are pulled together. They also contribute to the creation of opportunities for business process improvement.

In a public-private partnership the private sector provides upfront capital investment. As a result, government does not have to worry about raising initial capital investment at the inception of the project. PPPs can take various forms, but one of the invaluable benefits is that the public sector has access to private sector skills and expertise needed in service delivery.

Typical applications of the PPP mechanism

A well-known example of the use of PPPs as a service delivery mechanism is the Department of Labour Information Technology Project that is being implemented by Siemens. One of the innovations that resulted from this project is UIF registration of domestic workers whereby employers can register their domestic workers electronically for UIF purposes. The other typical examples are the Tshwane and Dolphin Coast water supply projects.

One of ABSA’s PPP initiatives that it runs jointly with the Department of Social Development is the debit card project. This project gives beneficiaries of social grants from the department simple access to the bank without having to stand in queues to receive their money.

Participation decision

The decision to participate in PPPs is informed by a number of variables. Risks play a large role in terms of the appetite of private sector players for specific projects. Rules that emanate from legislation and other laws will also have to apply. They include whether the project is affordable, whether it offers value for money for the company, the extent of risk involved and how transferable this is.

The Consortium Dimension

PPP arrangements are very complex. Their complexities compel the private sector suppliers to opt for consortiums. Consortiums are partnerships whereby the private sector and establishments from other sectors combine capabilities and capacities and work together. Each of the parties in the deal must know their needs and identify those that need to be complemented in way or the other. Of the critical things in the consortium decision process is that prospective partners need to be assessed in terms of capacity to deliver.

Financial partners in PPPs

PPPs depend on various consortiums/partners pooling their competencies. Ordinarily, the financial partner must be distinguished from partners that take care of the technical aspects. This partner, distinct from the others, is confronted by financial exposures and the risks attached to them. As a result a financial partner will find participation costly and will require commitments. This should not be ignored. Instead, careful consideration must be given to taking account of the high-risk exposure that financial institutions have to contend with in PPP arrangements.

Risk mitigation

Often PPP service delivery projects involve large-scale projects that carry huge risks of different forms. It is therefore important that various risks be mitigated through thorough scrutiny, contractual requirements and special covenants stipulated by financial institutions. Under regular circumstances typical risk concerns may include:

- technological obsolescence;
- technical failures;
- runaway costs;
- financial difficulties of some of the partners;
- completion delays;
- fluctuations in demand;
- environmental concerns; and
- force majeure.
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The Public Service as a Learning Organisation

The realisation after 1994 that the way we delivered services was no longer economical and effective meant that we had to transform the public service. It also became imperative to transform the modes, approaches and methodologies for delivering services in accordance with the new demands and dynamics. Effecting such change required us to embrace innovation which is underscored by learning.

As we were fast becoming part of the global environment, not only in theory but in a real practical sense, we were left with no option but to adopt the principles of a learning public service. Subsequently, through links and interaction with the continental and global community to learn and share experiences, South Africa has become a viable partner and player in the global learning programme.

We operate in a knowledge economy where new knowledge is developing and growing at an exponential rate and where information and communication technologies (ICTs) are changing people’s demands. These factors, combined with the fact that we have become an increasingly knowledge- and information-based society, compels us to learn continuously.

What complicates the transformation issue is the urgency to improve the way services are rendered, while at the same time continuing to offer them simply because we cannot put the citizens on hold while we explore better ways to deliver. The search for solutions and the actual delivery of services have to happen simultaneously, and that puts immense pressure on public servants to be innovative and enterprising.

Government has also embarked on various interventions to effect, facilitate and practicalise transformation. One such intervention, the Integrated Provincial Support Programme (IPSP) is a multi-faceted, multi-donor funded programme that supports service delivery. It provides funding to numerous projects in the most needy provinces, namely, Eastern Cape, Free State, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga.

Importantly and quite uniquely, the IPSP is also focused on nurturing and supporting ongoing reflection and learning in its client provinces. Whilst fast-tracking service delivery and thereby transforming the public service, the IPSP programme has been very instrumental in entrenching a learning culture in the South African public service.

Learning and knowledge management is imperative for the public service

We often claim that our inability to deliver services better is due to our lack of solutions or methodologies (how-to knowledge) to deal with and confront new challenges. What we have learnt is that, although challenges are common across the country, sadly different provinces move in different directions.
to seek solutions to similar problems. Needless to say there is little co-ordination, resulting in a duplication of efforts. As a result expenditure becomes an issue as there is little or no sharing of experiences and knowledge resulting in the costly re-inventing of solutions.

On the positive side, in the 10 years after 1994, we have also seen lots of improvements that point to the fact that we have been able to find our own solutions. The countless projects from various government initiatives before and since 1994 are a great source of knowledge and information.

Those commendable experiences from various pockets of success and excellence in the country that come as solutions, lessons and new methodologies in case studies, can be a very important part of the pool of public service knowledge. They are a huge repository of knowledge and experiences from the transformation process that can be exchanged and shared.

Therefore, the claim that there is insufficient knowledge or information is no longer entirely true. Far from being insufficient, the fact remains that there is an abundance of knowledge out there that is neither captured nor co-ordinated, and as a result remains inaccessible. What is needed is a co-ordinating programme of learning to facilitate documenting and sharing of experiences, best practices and solutions. Such a programme requires that we put in place facilities and platforms to maximise learning opportunities. There is also a need to be innovative and to create platforms for nurturing innovation in our public servants.

The Learning and Knowledge Management Programme

In 2001 the DPSA established the Learning & Knowledge Management Unit (LKM) in the Service Delivery Improvement Branch, with a mandate to establish and manage a thriving learning and knowledge management programme for the public service. It was a conscious undertaking to merge the two aspects of “learning and knowledge management”, simply because knowledge is an essential ingredient for learning. That is why we adopted an approach that brings the two aspects together. The premise is that “coordinating and disseminating our intellectual capital is critical for maximum learning” in the public service.

To operationalise the approach, the LKM Unit undertook to put in place various tools, platforms and systems as indicated in the following discussion.

Learning networks (communities of practice, communities of interest, etc.)

There is a bigger challenge facing us — that of integration. Many of us can attest to the difficulty and intricacies related to integration between departments and spheres of Government. How can we achieve integration if its drivers (human capital) do not network in an integrated environment? People from the Health sector need to understand how their colleagues in Education, Safety, Justice, Social Development, and so on work and which challenges they face in their respective sectors.

There is a need to understand commonalities for possible collaboration as well as differences for us to grasp the uniqueness of situations and challenges to avoid creating impediments and stumbling blocks for one another. Networking is thus an essential activity in a learning environment. Learning networks bring together groups of people who are involved in similar activities (as captured in their performance agreements) and undertake to share experiences and challenges for purposes of collaborative and peer learning and innovativeness.

The DPSA, supported by the IPSP, has led the launch and driving of learning networks nationally and provincially. Work on the learning networks involves a lot of collaboration between the organisers and content developers and owners/experts from various provinces to ensure that there is cross-pollination of lessons both nationally and provincially and across the sectors. While only a few provinces are directly involved, the IPSP programme is meant to benefit all provinces, particularly in relation to national initiatives.

Provincial Networks

Provincial learning programmes should be administered and rooted in the provinces where learning networks are driven by provincial learning champions. These provincial learning champions work hand-in-hand with IPSP Provincial coordinators, in liaison with the DPSA.

One of the benefits of having the coordinators and champions working together is that coordinators manage numerous service delivery programmes and projects in those provinces and are more au fait with provincial challenges, learning needs and dynamics. All IPSP provinces have officially launched learning networks which also include other activity/sector-specific networks. These networks are and must continue to be needs-driven, oriented towards service delivery, and must be linked to the work plans of the various institutions. If that practice is followed, performance agreements will inform learning needs audits.

The Learning champions organise learning events that include discussion sessions, workshops, site visits on various activities relating to numerous projects in the provinces. These projects are aimed at transforming the public service in response to specific service delivery needs. Experts from various institutions across sectors, both nationally and internationally are invited to make presentations on effective methodologies, and to share experiences and valuable lessons in these learning events.

National Networks

The LKM Unit of the DPSA, in collaboration with content owners (people who work within specific activities and develop the content) has also facilitated the establishment of national learning networks. Slightly different from provincial learning networks, these deal with transversal or cross-cutting issues such as challenges around programme/project management, E-government/IT, Batho Pele implementation, Learning and knowledge management, and provide delegates with an opportunity to explore solutions collaboratively in those areas.

The Approach

Sharing of knowledge is not only restricted to presentations, workshops, etc. It takes different formats, depend-
ing on the kind of “experience and lesson” being shared. In some instances site visits or excursions are more appropriate, a few examples in 2003 being an excursion that was organised for different provincial participants to two hospitals in KwaZulu-Natal, one to the Eastern Cape to learn about file management and two organised to case study sites in Durban during the Annual Service Delivery Learning Academy of July 2003.

Tele-conferencing is another format that was used by the E-government Learning Network at the beginning although it proved to be very costly. However, cheaper and cost-effective ways of using this facility as a means to share knowledge are being considered. Since these networks are needs-driven, the frequency of events will be dictated by the emergence of those needs as people grapple with challenges.

Learning events are not and should never become talk shows. Public service case studies are prioritised as these are real-life stories where specific problems have been identified and addressed, with practical lessons emanating from tried and tested methodologies. They are also enhanced by other informative presentations and innovative case studies from the private and other sectors.

Since the launch of the LKM programme, 45 case studies have been developed and published in collaboration with national departments, provinces, international partners and shared amongst colleagues. So clearly the intellectual capital that is presented and generated during these events is captured and documented in case study format for maximum dissemination and archiving.

An important angle to the communities of practice or learning networks is the conscious provision of networking opportunities for public servants. The different kinds of knowledge that have been usefully distinguished shed some light on the conundrum of networking for purposes of sharing knowledge. Of importance to this case study is the “know-who” which refers to the world of social relations and is knowledge of who knows what and who can do what. This is over and above the other types of knowledge, namely, knowledge about facts referred to as “know-what”; knowledge about the natural world, society and the human mind referred to as “know-why”; know-where and know-when. The relevance of the “know-who” is in the belief that knowing key people (with the know-how) is in most cases more important to innovation than knowing scientific principles.

Know-how refers to skills, the ability to do things on a practical level, which is importantly the entry point for Learning Networks. This belief has been echoed by South African public servants at different times in their request for access to one another for sharing of knowledge, rather than reference to thick, complex documents when they need practical information/knowledge.

On accessing the learning networks folder on the DPSA web page, one is able to track down and find colleagues who are in similar situations, who have participated in learning sessions.

**Annual conferences**

Annual events are also platforms that have been initiated in response to expressed needs for learning. They provide learning opportunities to large groups of public servants, from provinces and national departments and across all the sectors, to come together to share, listen to, deliberate on, and critique each other’s initiatives.

The Annual Service Delivery Learning Academy, a three-day conference, was launched in July 2002. Its purpose is to bring together operational managers of service delivery institutions, project managers and people at the coal face of service delivery, to share experiences and develop learning partnerships in an integrated environment. Importantly one finds various sectors in one venue sharing their frustrations, challenges, successes and collaboratively exploring ways to offer services in an integrated approach within the context of “a single public service”.

Important to the Academy provides public servants with a “total picture” or spectrum of challenges and opportunities for them to understand linkages, interrelationships and synergies.

The major focus of the Academy is on practical case studies that contain practical, reality-based methodologies. Importantly, it draws participation from the highest Senior Management Service members (such as Directors-General) to front office staff of any level. Rank or level is not a selection criterion but rather involvement in coal-face service delivery, from front office operations where interface with citizens takes place, to management of a service delivery institution.

This is to address one observation that has been made, that front office officials and managers of service delivery institutions do not learn together thus creating a void which leads to conflict when a lower level official brings an innovation to the manager, and possibly vise-versa.

The Annual South African Public Management Conversation (SAPMC), also a three-day conference for a select group of public servants, academics, civil society, and the private sector, was launched in December 2002. It provides an opportunity to deliberate on and interrogate issues that are major challenges to government.

This is a partnership between academics and public servants who are co-convenors to ensure synergies between their programmes. Academic institutions engage and reflect on public service issues and challenges in their programmes to ensure that the public servant of tomorrow that they develop comes prepared, with a reality-based understanding of public service issues.

On the other hand public servants rely on academic insights on methodologies based on research and on getting access to global approaches. Participants from other sectors also give crucial and valuable inputs from their perspectives whilst foreign participants provide global insights.

In the same vein, the Annual HIV/AIDS Indaba, also a three-day event, was launched in collaboration with and under the leadership of the HIV/AIDS Unit in 2001 with the support of other private sector partners. This is an important platform that brings together various sectors, NGOs, private sector and public servants, to deliberate on relevant issues and share experiences on how best to deal with and combat the epidemic through case studies.
The Senior Management Service (SMS) conference, another three-day platform that is driven by the SMS Unit of the DPSA. It is targeted at the senior management echelon of the public service to engage and share experiences and lessons on issues that concern them relating to the policy and service delivery priorities and direction of government.

The Knowledge Management Link
An important point to be made here is that knowledge management includes the aspect of generating new knowledge. This is the greatest benefit of getting officials together in various learning sessions and conferences. As people make presentations, questions are raised, debates and arguments are held and solutions are explored together and this is new knowledge.

The critical question is, what happens to all the knowledge that is generated during learning events? To avoid the loss of public service intellectual capital/knowledge, the programme undertook to develop learning products and tools that would also facilitate the documenting and dissemination of this knowledge. This summarises the link between learning and knowledge management.

The learning products or tools are discussed below:

Learning tools
Service Delivery Review: a Learning Journal for Public Service Managers (SDR)
The SDR, presently a four-monthly publication, was basically developed to serve as a learning product for public service managers across ranks/levels. The reason for this approach is that there are many officials who run service delivery centres and institutions but do not necessarily fall within the SMS category, such as many managers of magistrates courts, hence focus on public service managers rather than only the SMS category.

The major focus of this publication is on case studies which contain replicable valuable methodologies that address service delivery challenges. Project managers are encouraged to document case studies, with emphasis on lessons learnt. To ensure relevance, consistency and that the case studies are written succinctly and in accessible language, a case study template was developed and published in one of the editions of the SDR and is circulated to all and sundry who wish to develop and contribute case studies. Importantly, power-point presentations from different learning sessions and conferences, particularly the Academy, are developed into narratives by presenters themselves, with final refinement being done by the LKM Unit before publication.

The SDR also features public servants who are at the coal-face of service delivery and who are doing extraordinary things to better the lives of the public and/or are turning their institutions around.

Between 10 000 and 12 000 copies of the SDR are produced and distributed across the country (depending on funding availability at one point).

Implementation guides, manuals and handbooks
The importance of simple guides on how to implement cannot be overstated, particularly as implementation has been highlighted as one of the greatest challenges confronting the public service. Developing these tools, repackaging of sources and simple mapping of processes to assist implementation are important aspects of knowledge management.

Caution must be sounded though against developing thick products which are reportedly discouraging to pick up and read and even to carry around for perusal on travel or during free-time. A few guides introduced below (for illustration), have been developed in the DPSA.

The Machinery of Government Manual (MoG) illustrates an important aspect of knowledge management. It gives a simple illustration of the structure and system of government, that is, the way government is structured and how it operates and also gives a simple rendition of various government processes. The MoG has been applauded as a useful induction tool for government officials, including newly appointed Directors-General, and a useful teaching tool by academic institutions, including those in Commonwealth countries.

The Batho Pele handbook fills a crucial gap by giving public servants practical pointers on how to implement and inculcate Batho Pele in the work situation. Importantly, it is aimed at assisting in graduating Batho Pele from being a concept for boardroom discussions and at best ending up on walls as beautiful posters to a stage where it is lived by public servants and really experienced by the recipients of government services.

The Guide to Learning Networks and Sessions is another simple, common-sense tool on how to develop and run learning networks. It is aimed at demystifying the story around communities of practice specifically in the public service and provides simple checklists of key activities.

DPSA Web page as a knowledge tool
The web page — www.dpsa.gov.za — has also become an important thriving tool for learning and knowledge management. All the products (presentations and write-ups) from learning sessions are posted on the web page for maximum access. Officials who are inundated with thick inaccessible documents and have major time-constraints have requested quick access to solutions and lessons without having to take days laboriously wading through those documents trying to understand. Additionally, posting or publishing contact details on the web...
page allows officials to phone or e-mail one another and share informally.

All documents and publications that are developed by various components in the DPSA are web enabled and posted on the web page to enable those who do not receive physical copies to download articles.

Critical Success Factors in Becoming a Learning Organisation

Focus on activity rather than rank. Rank is not an issue when it comes to participation in learning events. Focus is on “activity” that relates to service delivery. This is a step towards diluting the effects of bureaucracy that dominates the public service and is historically renowned for clouding and hampering learning.

Focus on individuals or teams rather than institutions (to make inputs). These people are directly involved in projects and programmes and have hands-on experiences to share rather than institutions, particularly those that are removed from the practicalities of actual service delivery.

Focus on practical issues rather than theoretical debates. We minimise the luxury of engaging in highly conceptual and theoretical debates as overindulgence in these becomes costly in terms of time and other resources.

Focus on practical issues and concerns remains critical.

Provision of networking platforms. We are giving public servants platforms for engaging informally and exchanging knowledge and lessons and importantly opportunities to air their views about the way we work, in an informal setting and without fear of reprisal.

Ownership of programme. Slowly people are taking ownership of the programme and this is evidenced in the way they are demanding to publish in the SDR and, without any push, are booking well in advance to provide case studies for presentation and publication. Another positive development is the extent to which people are willing to share mistakes and failures with colleagues in a relaxed environment.

Leveraging of already existing initiatives. There are already numerous learning initiatives in the various provinces and there is a great gain in linking up and extending those where necessary rather than to re-invent the wheel. They may not be referred to as learning programmes although in practice that is what they are. Caution must be heeded against learning opportunities being compromised into management meetings and/or policy forums.

Challenges in Inculcating a Learning Culture

Bureaucracy is entrenched in the very fabric of the public service and this works against flexibility that is characteristic of a learning organisation. Many managers are comfortably stuck in old ways of operating and are resentful of new officials who are innovative and bringing in new ways. They thus stifle those people and rather work them out of the system. Learning networks nourish in an open environment of trust that encourages debate and recognises the critical importance of relationship building to the success of the organisation.

Lack of resources: The programme is not institutionalised yet and there are no proper resources to sustain it as it is largely donor-funded. Of particular importance is the issue of human resources to drive the programme: currently the learning champions that are driving learning activities in the provinces are involved simply because they feel passionate about the programme. Sadly they receive no recognition for their efforts and contributions to the learning programme.

The activities are not reflected on or included in their performance agreements and job descriptions and this has negative implications for commitment and accountability. Even in Departments that already have knowledge management programmes, there is no clarity on the different levels of officials and required competencies within the knowledge management field and benchmarking becomes problematic.

Importantly, the current Job Evaluation system does not have the KM field in its memory and processes and there is a need to develop the system to embrace and support this field which, although quite old, remains new to many but absolutely crucial to the driving of the public service into the 21st Century. The job evaluation system could support the field in drawing the right competencies and qualities to drive the learning and knowledge management programmes in the public service.

Closely related to the foregoing point is the fact that participation in the programme is largely voluntary rather than mandatory, interaction is informal rather than structured and this calls for greater marketing efforts on the side of the organisers. Importantly, there is a great need for the programme to be institutionalised and for the right drivers to be appointed formally, with the capability to exploit the passion and excitement around the field.

Lack of openness: Being a learning organisation requires openness. The unfortunate institution of CENSORSHIP that was firmly entrenched in the past dispensation discouraged openness and sharing. This had far-reaching effects on the culture of open learning and sharing as people chose to keep their thoughts to themselves than face the danger of recrimination. As is known, a learning organisation must encourage questioning of the status quo and allow dialogue, failing which no learning takes place.

The challenge in inculcating a learning culture is in drawing people out of that culture to openly and constructively criticise the way the public service operates, its approaches that are not yielding, and so on.

Writing capacity poses another set of challenges — not everybody is a writer, for various reasons: it is a skill that needs to be acquired through life (not necessarily indicative of a person’s level of intellect). Many intelligent and highly intellectual people would rather talk than write. Time to document is another great enemy of writing. In many instances we know of the most knowledgeable people but getting them to document is a major challenge. Nevertheless, persistence and various forms of support usually yield results.

The power-point presentation format has not quite helped in developing and sustaining a writing culture. It is quite easy to develop such presentations but many officials struggle to develop them into narratives, again time being the greatest problem.
Lessons learnt
Achieving the status of being a learning organisation is not quick and easy. Understandably, whilst work situations and challenges continue to develop in line with changing and growing demands for efficient delivery of services, learning will remain a life-long, ongoing and dynamic process. The little steps that we take towards learning are sufficient but must obviously be fast-tracked.

It is important to take cognisance of the fact that the learning and knowledge management programme is, within the context of change management, largely about changing behaviour and everyone acknowledges and agrees that changing behaviour and mindsets is not a linear, black or white, simple process but a very intricate/complex, elusive and emotional process. It is also very difficult to measure the impact of such a programme.

Learning and knowledge management is a cultural challenge that questions paradigms and mindsets. As has been observed a number of times, people are still clinging to comfortable ways (comfort zones) they are used to and change management is not easily embraced. Therefore success cannot be achieved overnight.

Learning and knowledge management is an abstract and elusive field and drivers of such programmes must guard against being caught in a swirl of defining, redefining and endlessly reconceptualising about the field and its potential benefits. They must begin to implement small things whose benefits can be felt and acknowledged almost immediately. This pays off in terms of getting buy-in from various stakeholders.

The programme is about leveraging the intellectual capital of the public service in the officials that are employed to enhance service delivery and it is important for managers to value these people who possess this commodity. Therefore, emotional intelligence is essential in driving the public service and learning and knowledge management interventions. Without this aspect of emotionality the public service will continue to lose people, that is, its intellectual capital as well as the enthusiasm of the drivers of the programmes. Failure to heed this call by managers is what compromises the institutions they should be leading and developing.

Ownership is important for sustainability — the LKM Unit in the DPSA works with provinces to launch in those provinces and the provincial learning champions continue to drive the programmes based on specific needs and dynamics of the province.

Superficiality tends to undermine/compromise the success of a learning intervention. It is accepted globally that if there is no need to run a session it must not happen; it is understood and accepted that learning networks emerge and die and their lifespan does not have to be permanent. If the objectives of a learning network or community of practice have been achieved, it is acceptable to discontinue the network and launch new ones in support of emerging initiatives, in line with emerging needs.

There cannot be one definition or strategy of learning and knowledge management to suit the entire public service as the topic is very broad and covers a spectrum of aspects in a work situation. Importantly, definitions and strategies should talk to specific mandates, core functions and strategies of individual institutions.

In the same vein, there cannot be only one driver (person or department) of a public service-wide programme. Ideally there should be numerous sectoral initiatives in response to different mandates, core responsibilities, strategies, etc., that importantly converge into a synergistic tapestry of programmes.

Conclusion
Knowledge must be viewed as a corporate asset like any other asset of the public service and must thus be managed and used strategically. It really is about promoting the creation, retention and dissemination and sharing of knowledge across the public service, getting the right knowledge to the right people at the appropriate time in the right and convenient format.

The Learning and Knowledge Management Model that was developed and disseminated in one of the editions of the Review has been useful in providing some practical guidance and has been received favourably by independent consultants involved in developing training programmes for senior managers in provinces. They have indicated their intentions to refine and incorporate in their programmes.

The next step is to institutionalise and give official status to the programme to enable all public service institutions to develop their own corporate models and strategies. These strategies should also address the pressing concern of “loss of corporate memory” when individuals exit the public service.

Taking this whole story into consideration, one can confidently assert that the public service in South Africa is a learning organisation because of a thriving and developing learning programme that has been established.

As indicated earlier, there is no finality in terms of time-frames, we will not reach the end as it is an ongoing and life-long process.

What is positive is that we are constantly learning from one another and searching for best practices; we are benchmarking the best in our respective fields of activity; we are openly sharing our frustrations, achievements and challenges; we are debating and questioning the status quo; we are networking; we are striving to anticipate, innovate and to constantly find new and better ways to fulfill the mission of our public service; we are embracing, even if largely in theory at this stage, consultation, collaboration, discussion, training and development, mentoring and succession planning.

All of this means that we are a learning organisation and have embraced knowledge management principles and practices. All said and done, this is a mere drop in the ocean as public service challenges are immense and complex!
The Integrated Justice System

How Far We’ve Come

In 1996, the government launched the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS). The NCPS introduced a comprehensive, new approach to addressing crime with a shift from narrowly focused, functional approaches of reactive crime control to a co-operative approach of proactive crime prevention. A key focus of the NCPS initiative was the development of an Integrated Justice System and it was in response to this initiative that the Departments of Justice and Constitutional Development, Correctional Services, Social Development, Safety and Security, the South African Police Services and the National Prosecuting Authority established an inter-departmental board.

Challenges

Up until the late 1990s, the justice system in South Africa was subject to many challenges. Systems were manual and transactions were paper-based, labour-intensive and often error prone. Dockets went missing and/or were misplaced.

Furthermore, there were no standards governing how information should be managed or shared. As a result, the turnaround times for many were extremely slow, resulting in a justice system that was largely inefficient.

In addition to this, departments in the JCPS cluster operated in “silos” with little or no integration between them.

Once the IJS Board was formed in 1997, the Mulweli consortium was assigned to analyse the current situation and recommend a way forward. What followed was a high-level report, produced in 1998, which confirmed that the justice system was running out of capacity and was subject to excessive churn resulting in major inefficiencies. The Mulweli Report identified the management of cases through the justice system as a particular area of weakness. Courts were faced with huge backlogs and prisons were overcrowded with the number of awaiting trial prisoners increasing at an alarming rate.

The recommendations made in the Mulweli Report were, unfortunately, unaffordable and as a result the Department of Finance commissioned a study (LMI Report 1999) that confirmed the approach and costs to implement an Integrated Justice System.

Following this, the IJS Board appointed a task team in 1999 to undertake an international mission, the purpose of which was to investigate integrated case management systems elsewhere in the world. It is interesting to note that not one of the countries visited

Hassen Ebrahim, chairperson of the Integrated Justice System Board, outlines an overview of the system, its history, its vision and the challenges ahead.
dealt with integration across various business processes as extensively as the Board envisaged for its own system. There were, therefore, no real reference sites to use as a basis, leaving the IJS Board to develop a South African integrated justice system from scratch.

The task was a tall order as it was the first time that the various entities in the JCPS cluster would seamlessly work together. It was decided to pursue a modular and iterative approach to the development of an integrated solution and the IJS Board subsequently developed the IJS 2000 Plus Strategy.

**IJS 2000 Plus Strategy**
The IJS 2000 Plus Strategy was drawn up to ensure that business processes within the South African justice system take full advantage of the opportunities offered by technology. In line with government’s mandate of modernisation, the IJS aims to:
- use technology to promote more efficient and effective government;
- allow greater public access to information;
- enable the provision of value-added services; and
- make government more accountable to citizens.

The IJS is a virtual organisation. The participating departments cooperate and work together to achieve a common goal, namely to establish an integrated justice process for South Africa.

It is therefore essential to supply these organisations with the most effective Information Systems (IS), Information and Communications Technology (ICT), business processes and applications solutions to assist them in their quest for social stability and a safer South Africa.

In so doing, the historic, functional “silo” approach to the IJS will be changed to a process-driven approach across each of the departments mentioned.

These systems should be totally interoperable, thereby increasing the productivity and streamlining the operations and procedures of these organisations in order to realise the strategic objectives of the programme.

**Strategic goal**
The collective strategic goal of the IJS Board, subject to the directive of the Development Committee, is: To achieve greater efficiency in the management of cases, persons and exhibits, in conjunction with the measures instituted by the various role players. This will be done by contributing towards:
- shorter case cycle times;
- a greater throughput of cases through the system;
- fewer withdrawals of cases;
- no lost case files;
- fewer postponements of cases reduced awaiting trial prisoner population;
- greater conviction of the guilty;
- a better prioritisation of cases involving young offenders, sexual offences, and priority crimes; and
- the eradication of corruption.

**Strategic approach**

**Enterprise Focus**
The integration of the entire Justice System, as envisaged by the clustering of government’s various departments, requires the collective efforts of each department participating in the cluster. There are a large number of multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary efforts and exercises that will contribute to the realisation of such a vision. This is the responsibility of the respective cluster departments, led by the respective Directors-General within the Cluster.

A Development Committee has been established to sustain progress within the programme and the enhanced cooperation and coordination with the Cluster activities.

The purview of the Board is limited, specifically, to the realisation of those strategic objectives of the Cluster that are of an enterprise character and only in so far as they rely on the utilisation of enabling technologies. The Board cannot assume sole responsibility for the realisation of the broader business objectives of the cluster.

**Environmental factors**
When both planning and executing its tasks, the Board is obliged to take into consideration various environmental factors. These may relate to legislative changes, shifts in government policy, and departmental projects and other initiatives that may have an impact on the realisation of the IJS vision. The Programme and strategic plans are therefore dynamically updated and aligned to take these into account.

**Acquisition and Partnering**
The IJS Board advocates best-of-breed technology and maintains close working relationships with local and international technology companies. This ensures that technology solutions match critical business processes within the Cluster.

**e-Government Policy**
The IJS Board is currently one of the leading drivers within e-Government towards a fully-fledged e-government strategy. Policy in this regard is unfolding and it is necessary for our plans to respond to these challenges. In the main, the objective of the IJS must be to ensure lower costs, increased productivity and greater citizen convenience in line with the envisaged e-Government policy.

**Business approach**
The IJS Board is an executive body and does not possess an Information Technology (IT) competence. To succeed, it must adopt a business approach to its work. The intention is to recognise the importance of IT as a strategic enabler and force multiplier in the achievement of our collective vision. The importance of technology is that it adds value to services rendered and generates efficiencies and cost-benefits that could not otherwise be realised.

The IJS is a business process and not simply a matter of technology. Change Management and Business Process Re-engineering are essential ingredients to the success of the Programme. These elements need to be committed to by the departments in a meaningful way.

**Achievements**
Since its inception, the IJS Board has realised some remarkable achievements. These can be summarised as follows:

1. **Court Process Project (CPP)**
   The Court Process Project (CPP), which was initiated in 2000, was the first project to deal with an integrated criminal case management system as well as a civil solution. The CPP was the first serious attempt to bring advanced IT functionality and support to the courts.
Case Study

The CPP essentially seeks to re-engineer the way in which court services are delivered. This is done by providing the necessary tools to deal with case loads and management of the courts. This project also links, for the first time, the police, prosecutors, courts, prisons and social welfare facilities at the pilot sites.

The Durban magisterial district was selected as a pilot site for Phase 1 of the CPP because the various entities in the JCPS cluster in the area enjoy a relatively close working relationship. In addition, Durban at that stage had one of the highest criminal rates in the country, necessitating an extremely efficient criminal justice process to deal with the increased case loads. The site therefore had all the right “ingredients” to run the CPP pilot.

The end of May 2003 heralded an important milestone for the CPP pilot in Durban, as Phase One of the project drew to a close. The development team is now working on stabilising the system and adding additional functionality — such as a single sign-on facility. The single sign-on will be a huge improvement on the current system and will give users access to the entire system with only one user name and one password. This will benefit users such as the SAPS, for example, which currently operates over 70 systems, each requiring its own, unique username and password.

It is important to point out that, although the business case for the CPP has been proven, the project is still in its pilot phase. A number of technical issues still need to be addressed before it can be rolled out to other sites.

Successes to date have included:

a. Routing of dockets
   One of the most important significant achievements of the CPP pilot system has been the routing of dockets to courts. This has dropped from two days down to only one hour.

b. Scanning solution
   Since implementing the CPP pilot system, all dockets are now scanned and information can no longer go astray. To cite an example, a few months ago some 200 dockets were stolen from the Durban Central Police Station. As all dockets had been scanned, we were able to reproduce all of them and there was no need to delay any of the associated cases.

c. Biometric identification of criminals
   The recently implemented fingerprint identification system has combated the age-old problem of swapping of accused. There have been numerous incidents in the past where convicted criminals or suspects would intimidate fellow criminals / suspects charged with less serious crimes into appearing in court in their stead. This resulted in the wrong person being charged for the wrong crime. The new system has obviated this problem as it calls up a photograph of the suspect once it has read his fingerprint, allowing for instant and accurate verification.

d. Centre of Excellence
   Due to the successful implementation of the CPP in Durban, the IJS has created a “Centre of Excellence” in the area. The Court Process System in Durban has not been duplicated anywhere else in the world and no other system has integrated business processes and functions across various government departments.

2. Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS)
   Under the auspices of the IJS, the AFIS system has been implemented and rolled out country-wide. Implementation of the system has had a significant impact on the processes of identification of criminals, reducing the time to identify from 8 weeks down to only 48 hours. It has also resulted in criminal identifications increasing from 1 000 to 1 800 per day.

3. IJS members have become partners
   Working as a team, the various entities within the JCPS cluster have leveraged from the economies of scale, especially in terms of bulk procurement, and making use of systems developed in one cluster. An example of the latter is the Justice Deposit Account System (JDAS) which has been developed by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development but is used by all of the departments/entities in the JCPS cluster. (JDAS administers monies received at Magistrates’ courts in lieu of maintenance, bail, admission of guilt, fines, civil cases, contributions, court cases and estates).

4. Inter-operability
   Under the auspices of the IJS, the JCPS cluster is the first cluster within government that is pursuing interoperability. The IJS Interoperability Project is leading the path and aims to provide a comprehensive integration architecture and platform in which the underlying criminal justice business process may be integrated. The project will provide a consistent security strategy across the IJS user community base and will provide for a single point of interaction for all IJS users.

In conclusion
   The IJS is beyond conceptualisation and the IJS 2000 Plus Strategy has succeeded on all counts, having become a living document. It has focused on an ICT procurement strategy and is establishing the framework for interoperability between current systems.

   Technology is at the heart of modernisation initiatives the world over. In his review of the British Criminal Justice System, Lord Justice Robin Auld said: “The criminal justice system can be viewed as an information system — a network of millions of individual pieces of data, linked and related to each other in thousands of different and ever changing ways. “Modern information and communication technologies could transform the ways in which each agency undertakes its function in the speed, reliability and efficiency with which data are processed and also in the manner of management of prosecution from charge to disposal. Information technology has a potential, not only to improve existing structures and their working, but also to re-shape them to advantage.

   “It is clear that such technology is capable of playing an increasing part in the shaping and operation of the criminal justice system. If it is to do so efficiently and to the best advantage, it too will need more central planning and direction than has been attempted up to now.”

   These sentiments are close to the heart of the IJS Board.
Towards an Integrated Public Service

Innovation and Information Management

In this paper based on a presentation at the SMS conference in Port Elizabeth recently, Kgabo Hlalefi Hlahla, chairperson of the GITO Council and GITO: Department of Land Affairs, says government departments must start working towards a central repository of knowledge and information in order to enhance service delivery.

This paper focuses on the challenges posed by knowledge economy on information-based enterprises such as government in its quest to deliver services to citizens. The paper concludes that Knowledge and Information Management (KIM) as well as innovation cannot happen without deliberate efforts which are part of a KIM strategy supported by a solid operational plan informed by the culture and technologies of an organisation, viz. culture and collaborative technologies.

Currently government departments and state entities have information overflow resulting from stakeholders, the internet, research reports, etc. Such information is stored in no particular format. No policy exists on information and knowledge or strategies; no tools to manage information and knowledge; obsolete information still consumes space in our shelves.

Whatever information that is stored on computers, it is stored in no naming convention, making it difficult to access and retrieve it. There is absolutely no central repository. People join government and when they resign, they leave with their knowledge. Knowledge therefore remains individualistic and is never transformed into organisational property.

Government services are not integrated. The citizen still has to remember the name of the department that renders particular services. Citizens fell victim to the “wrong door” effect. IT systems still do not talk to each other, particularly the legacy systems that do not even meet the minimum inter-operability standards.

**Introduction**

The world economy has entered the knowledge age. This global pattern of change requires new forms of organisations and different ways of managing them. In the knowledge economy, knowledge is the major asset, let alone the fact that it is not recorded in corporate balance sheets.

First it was Total Quality Management (TQM), then Business Process Re-engineering (BPR), now KIM plus the Internet. The conventional manager who always wants to know if his/her subordinates are in the office, at what times, has to think differently if he/she still wants to be relevant. S/he must...
realise that “knowledge workers” (coined by Drucker in the 1950s) are the pillars of an organisation. They work independently, requiring motivation and coaching rather than control and instruction.

**Culture and current realities**
The culture in the public service needs to change to enhance service delivery. The knowledge economy presents many opportunities. Government needs to do a thorough audit of the information, skills and expertise it has and its needs and on that basis develop strategies to deal with information and knowledge.

**Contributions of KIM and innovation towards integrated service delivery**
Information is at the core of government business. Government has a duty to treat the information and knowledge it collects and produces as a valued resource. It must ensure that information/knowledge is secure, accurate, accessible and used appropriately. Unfortunately, the lack of a clear whole-of-Government approach to KIM to date creates problems, amongst which are:

- limited access to relevant information;
- inability to trace relevant information;
- problems with accuracy and standardisation of information;
- problems with dissemination of information;
- timely availability and reaction to information;
- duplication of information sources;
- the high level of inaccessibility of unstructured information because it is mostly paper based; and
- limited availability of management information and creation of business intelligence/knowledge, etc.

These problems with information and knowledge management have a negative impact on the value of government’s KIM databases and stovepipe repositories. This in turn will have a negative impact on e-government and service delivery.

Government is committed to modernising the public services. Government’s efforts to deliver improvements in key areas as those that can be seen in social security, health, education, Justice system and those by the existing agencies such as SITA, CPSI, PSC, NIF and the soon to be born Social Security Agency need to be acknowledged.

To achieve our goals we need to make radical changes to how the public sector works. We need to think out of the box. Information technology (IT) is a vital tool in this process. It offers opportunities to deliver services faster, more effectively and in innovative ways. The e-government policy and strategy will set out our commitment to using IT to deliver services in new ways. We want to focus on the needs of the citizen rather than those of Government departments. To this end we see the Gateway project as the greatest pillar of integrating the services we offer to citizens.

The citizen is currently the integrator of government business. We need to harness the power of IT and put the “I” back in IT and deliver value. However, harnessing the power of IT is not always easy. The tasks involved are very complex and fraught with risk. Government has already successfully implemented a range of complex projects. However, we still need to improve performance and avoid the mistakes of the past. We need to be innovative.

Chapter 2 of the Public Service Commission’s report that looked at an “overview of how government is working”, focussed on four substantive areas, viz.:

- Transforming the structures and functions of government;
- Human resources management and development;
- Budgeting, financial management and accountability; and
- Information management, systems and technology (IMST).

The question is no longer whether information management is critical or not. We are an information-based organisation.

**Challenges**
- Citizens are more than just customers. They have the right to receive service and have entitlements.
- Government security needs are very high when it comes to records and documents. We need to balance the rights that seem contradictory and deliver services (protection of information vs rights of access to information).
- Government processes huge volumes of records.
- The durability of records is important, because they need to be accessed many years to come. (e.g. Property records dating back to Jan Van Riebeek’s era are still there at Department of Land Affairs; SARS can still access your tax files/records dating back many moons ago, Department of Home Affairs has to keep records of citizens even long after their deaths).

Many services will for a long time still have to be handled in paper form, since technology changes faster than legislative change. This needs to be taken into account when putting plans in place to manage knowledge.

A proper workflow system is essential for government entities (the routing of documents to the right individuals or organisations is of paramount importance). Sophisticated tools to deal with this challenge have to be acquired.

- Collaborative computing is of unequalled importance, because the sharing of documents/records needs to be well controlled and at times it is important to regulate changes to such documents or records.
- Accounting officers need proper tools to assist Ministers in responding to parliamentary questions.
- Government is faced with the challenge of overhauling service delivery machinery and making batho pele principles of service delivery realisable.

**Summary**
- Innovation happens when different ideas, perceptions and ways of processing and judging information collide, and it requires collaboration of managers who see the world differently.
- The essence of innovation is to recreate the world according to a particular vision or ideal (to be shared).
- We need to establish Communities of Practice (COP) since they are critical for the success of KIM Strategy.
- Knowledge-based economy dictates that organisations, public or private, need to develop and implement a knowledge management strategy for organisational survival and efficient
Issues

and effective service delivery or productivity.

- KIM must be intentional.
- KIM strategy must be aligned to business strategy.
- Knowledge management necessitates culture change.
- The public sector CIO needs to understand government business processes in order to succeed in any innovative initiatives. S/he should not through technology at the problem (Learn lessons from the CFOs).
- The successful organisation must know how to create an environment for continual innovation on the part of all employees. We need to rethink traditional business assumptions and tap needs that citizens don’t even know they have yet. We need to invest in RND and capacitate institutions such as CPSI, CSIR and HSRC in order to innovate and survive in knowledge economy.
- We need to design new uses of technology that leverage the incremental invitation coming from within government.
- Our ultimate innovation partner is the citizen. We need to invent methods and tools to help citizens identify “talent” needs and improve their own capacity for continuous innovation.

Definitions of knowledge management

- "Knowledge management is a process of capturing a company’s collective expertise wherever it resides and distributing to where it can help produce the biggest payoff" (Hibbard).
- "Knowledge management is getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time so they can make the best decisions" (Petrash).
- "Knowledge Management applies systematic approaches to find, understand, and use knowledge to create value" (O’Dell).
- "Knowledge Management is the formalisation of and access to experience, knowledge, and expertise that create new capabilities, enable superior performance, encourage innovation, and enhance customer value" (Beckman).

e-Government: Gateway Gets Off The Ground

T-Systems South Africa, one of the State Information & Technology Agency’s (SITA) contractors of choice, has brought together over 30 people from a variety of companies, many of them Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) companies, to execute the first phase of the e-Government Gateway project.

SITA awarded T-Systems the contract in early 2003 to develop a portal and call centre, which have become the foundation for the 10-year, six-phase project to create an information gateway. The goal of the project is to transform government into e-Government. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), owner of the project, sees it as a key part of its Batho Pele initiative to bring government delivery closer to the people.

According to Desmond Seeley, General Manager of Strategy and Business Development at T-Systems South Africa, “Projects like the e-Government Gateway phase one implementation allow us, as one of the few black-empowered ICT (Information and Communications Technology) multinationals in South Africa, to follow through with our commitment to the upliftment of South Africa, through job creation, skills transfer and capacity building.”

Execution partners include Cornestone/Siemens Business Services, Star Consulting, Lechabile and Sifikile Consulting.

The portal and call centre have both been implemented and the public can access the internet on http://www.publicservicedirect.gov.za/cultures/en-za/index.html and the call centre on the toll free number 1020. The other tools to access the portal include various government buildings, service centres and multi purpose community centres, as well as manned kiosks which are still to be implemented.

The public can access a variety of documents and information, ranging from how to apply for identity books and passports to birth registration papers — basically any documentation relating to government.

Phase one of the contract, valued at R11 million, is primarily intended to be information based, with the architecture and infrastructure being designed and built alongside government’s legacy systems. The portal is structured according to a “no wrong door” approach. “This means that there are numerous ways in which to access the same information — via the life events model, according to an alphabetic list of services, as a related service or based on entering the relevant search criteria,” explains Helen Ward, Solution Crafter and Programme Manager at T-Systems.

“The portal will then relay all information pertaining to the service, from what forms are needed, what conditions exist for that service, the contact details of the department providing the service, any other services related to it as well as any other related information.”

“Integrated with the portal is the call centre where citizens that do not have internet access, can obtain the same information free via a four digit number. In support of the call centre and portal there is a correspondence processing centre who will handle e-mails, faxes and normal mail.”

About T-Systems in South Africa

T-Systems South Africa (Pty) Ltd, a solution provider with almost 1 000 employees, is based in Midrand and Cape Town. The company boasts a range of blue chip clients such as Sanlam, DaimlerChrysler SA, Murray & Roberts, Armscor, Uthingo, Denel and Senwes.
A Professional Association of Public Service Managers

How the Canadians do it

Janet Hughson, Deputy Executive Director of Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada, traces the roots of the organisation and highlights lessons that can be learned from the history of this organisation.

This presentation was made by Mr Langa Dhlomo of the Department of Public Works at the recent SMS Conference in Port Elizabeth.

The Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada (APEX) is a non-profit, voluntary organisation which represents the interests of federal public service executives and is dedicated to promoting professionalism and management excellence.

The possibility of creating an association was first floated in 1980 when a small group of executives met to explore the advantages of developing a structured support network for themselves and their colleagues.

The idea gained currency among members of the executive group over the next few years. In late 1983, a number of graduates of the Public Service’s executive orientation courses formed a working group, elected an interim chair and defined two preliminary objectives:

• to promote opportunities for professional enrichment; and
• to foster a collegial environment.

The group surveyed colleagues on their interests, expectations and needs should an association be launched, and satisfied themselves that there was indeed strong interest in creating a formal entity. The graduates of the executive orientation at that time numbered about 1 550 — approximately one third of the executive group.

On the basis of these results, the group then sought — and obtained — the support and encouragement of the Secretary of the Treasury Board to proceed with formalising the network. This acceptance by a key figure in the bureaucracy conferred a new legitimacy on the initiative and smoothed the way for further development.

Prior to the inaugural meeting of the association, several critical decisions were made:

• It was agreed to enlarge the membership pool to all executive-level federal public servants.
• The name Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada (Association professionnelle des cadres de la fonction publique du Canada) was chosen.
• A draft constitution was prepared, along with membership criteria and a proposed fee structure.

Early challenges

During the association’s first years of existence, it faced two particular challenges. These were rooted in the perceptions of two groups which have always...
been essential to the association’s viability: the Public Service’s departmental and agency heads, and the executive group as a whole.

First, a number of agency heads and other senior officials regarded the association with some disfavour, as the equivalent of a union for executives. This was not the intent of the organising group, nor did it reflect the interests of members, who saw APEX simply as a way to give voice to collective opinion. The impression proved nonetheless somewhat difficult to dispel.

The publicly expressed support of the then Secretary of the Treasury Board proved critical yet again. He wrote directly to other department and agency heads to express his personal support for the association’s goals of professional development and esprit de corps, and to reassure his colleagues that the association’s objective was not to engage in collective bargaining on behalf of executives.

His actions helped to resolve some of the misapprehension at the most senior levels, although concern over the nature of the organisation persisted for years among a small group of deputy ministers and executives.

There was also less visible, but equally troubling resistance to the association’s activities from within the central agencies of government. In large part, this was centred in the units responsible for setting the policies which determine executives’ working conditions and environment.

They felt that APEX, with its declared mandate to represent executives’ interests, was appropriating for itself a role which, in their view, more properly fell within their purview. Over time, these negative views have dissipated somewhat due to personnel turnover in the central agencies and a growing appreciation on the part of deputy ministers for the contribution that the association makes.

The second challenge was maintaining and broadening membership after the initial excitement generated by the creation of APEX.

While it was true that the association was offering executives all the services and activities they had requested through the early surveys — social and support networks; information sessions; and the chance to make a contribution to the Public Service and its executive community through APEX activities — these opportunities seemed less compelling as long as executives were fairly satisfied with their work environment.

Further, the work the association undertook yielded benefits for all executives, not just those who decided to become members. “Why bother joining when I get all the benefits of the association’s policy work without having to pay membership dues?” the association was often asked.

Indeed, maintaining the membership base was a perennial concern until the Public Service environment of the mid-1990s forced executives to re-think what they wanted from their association.

**Evolution of the association’s mandate**

Until about 1994-95, Public Service executives spoke with some satisfaction about the “moral contract” to which they and their employer were committed. The unwritten understanding was this: in exchange for the opportunity to do important and often exciting work for Canadians, executives accepted good but somewhat lower salaries relative to private sector counterparts, high expectations from their employer and a less secure position than unionised colleagues. Executives expected to be treated fairly and as professionals.

Beginning in 1994, the federal government launched a series of initiatives to reduce costs through a review of all its programmes and services. While jobs were lost at all levels of the Public Service, executives were taken aback by the way dismissal of senior people was handled. They spoke with dismay about the breakdown of the “moral contract.”

Executives became much more conscious of their employment situation and began to view the association in a new light. Whereas labelling APEX an “advocate” had previously been seen by some executives as too “union-like”, members and non-members alike now encouraged APEX to be more forceful in delivering observations and recommendations to the government.

This changed mood coincided with a decision by deputy ministers to provide stable financial support to the association through funding for the two senior secretariat positions and provision of housing for the Secretariat.

**What is the association’s role today?**

Today, the role of advocate is still central to APEX’s mandate of serving the interests of its members, both as employees and leaders.

However, the association also strives to make a positive contribution to the Public Service as a whole. It does this in two ways:

- by fostering the creation of an independent network of leaders who can envision and build the future of the Public Service; and
- by providing a credible forum through which executives can help develop a work environment which promotes excellence.

Members are encouraged to participate in focus groups, working committees and surveys, to make their views known and to contribute their recommendations. The results of these exercises are synthesised by the Association’s Board of Directors and its Secretariat and shared with government decision-makers.

In general, the Association organises its work around five themes:

i. **Research and policy development**

APEX tracks emerging issues and
conducted research into areas central to Public Service management and of concern to executives. For example: reform of the Public Service's HR management framework, survey of the career interests of executive communities, survey on the health status of executives.

ii. Two-way communications
APEX involves executives in its surveys and working groups, presents the results to central decision-makers and informs members and the executive community on topics of interest. For example: annual consultations, regular briefings to central agency heads, information session on new policies.

iii. Advocacy
APEX is a strong voice on behalf of executives through ongoing dialogue with government policy and decision-makers. For example: influencing compensation issues, promoting reform of legal support policies.

iv. Networks
APEX helps executives connect with their colleagues in the Public Service to ensure an ongoing exchange of information and ideas. For example: working with young managers to support sharing of knowledge between generations, running an annual conference and other social and learning activities.

v. Recognition
APEX celebrates executives’ career milestones and outstanding achievements. For example: an annual awards programme, special events for newly appointed executives, a network for retired APEX members.

Organisational structure and funding
How is the association organised in order to carry out these activities? APEX is a federally incorporated, not-for-profit entity and as such is regulated by the Canada Corporations Act (administered by Industry Canada) and the relevant tax legislation. It has no administrative reporting relationship to any Minister of the Crown nor to any department or agency.

The business of the association is carried out according to its registered by-laws (Annex 1) any amendments to which are approved by its members. APEX has consciously avoided being overly prescriptive in its constitution in an effort to give its management board maximum flexibility to make decisions that make sense for the time and the context.

APEX’s policy and strategic directions are set by a volunteer Board of Directors of 18 people, all of whom must be currently-serving Public Service executives. These volunteers are elected from among the membership at the Association’s Annual General Meeting. Each Director serves a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms. The board also invites a representative from each of Canada’s 10 provinces to join on an ex officio basis to contribute the perspectives of their colleagues outside the national capital area.

The role of the board is to set the association’s strategic direction and determine overall policy, based on the interests and expectations of members. Directors play supplemental roles as the chairpersons for association committees and working groups.

The association’s financial and personnel decisions are made by a sub-set of the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee, which is appointed by APEX Directors from among their number, is composed of the President, two Vice-Presidents (Public Service and External Relations), a Treasurer and a Secretary.

The committee approves budgets, staff salaries, major purchasing or accommodation decisions and significant personnel changes.

The board ensures that it maintains a direct connection with members, who play a crucial role in ensuring the Association remains active and relevant by:
• demonstrating their commitment through renewed membership
• contributing to the development of policies and positions by joining committees or ad hoc working groups, and ensuring their views are heard through the annual, national consultations
• attending APEX events, such as the annual symposium, its colloquia, information sessions and social events

These lines of communication are further reinforced by a network of Departmental Representatives, executives who agree to disseminate information from APEX to members in their department or agency and in turn, to relay their colleagues’ concerns and suggestions back to the association.

The day-to-day operations of APEX are planned and carried out by a permanent Secretariat.

The Secretariat is headed by an Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director, who are senior public servants seconded to APEX through multi-year agreements with their home departments. Once every five years, all departments and some agencies contribute three to six months of salary in order to maintain these positions. This arrangement ensures that the incumbents can remain independent and objective in developing the association’s positions.

The association’s administrative staff of three are hired directly by the Secretariat and paid with revenues of APEX’s Annual Symposium.

Symposium revenues also cover all ongoing operational costs, although the association’s office space is currently being donated by a Public Service department.

The association’s current annual membership fees of $95 (CDN) are minimal and do not contribute substantially to revenues. They are, however, a tangible sign of members’ commitment to the association.

Members
APEX membership is drawn principal-
ly from the Public Service’s Executive Group (Directors, Directors-General, Assistant Deputy Ministers), but also includes public servants of equivalent level in separate professional groups and the Deputy Minister community. Because executives’ working conditions — levels of authority and accountability, expectations, pay regime and so on — are so distinct from those of other employment groups, APEX members have consistently rejected the idea of opening the association to managers at other levels.

As of mid-2003, membership was close to 1 600 or just under half the entire executive group.

Joining APEX is voluntary. Membership dues are therefore paid by the individual, rather than the member’s department or agency. However, the fees for many association events — most of which are considered learning activities — are covered by departmental training budgets.

Members are eligible to receive a range of services from the association, from individual financial counselling, car and home insurance, time management training, banking services to legal and career advice — all at no cost or for a reduced fee.

**Successes and lessons over the past 20 years**

APEX’s effectiveness as a voice for executives reposes to a great extent in the relationships it has built with government agencies and decision-makers.

It is important to note that the association’s present credibility with key Public Service decision-makers was developed over a period of years. The association has ultimately been successful in establishing a positive reputation because:

- APEX has always researched the issues it raises very carefully before approaching the government with recommendations. This includes ensuring that positions have been tested and consensus reached with members. The quality of the association’s work is recognised by organisations outside government, such as the Conference Board of Canada and the Canadian Policy Research Network, as well as internationally.
- APEX has always taken a constructive approach to its work. Rather than merely criticising the government on a given issue, the association offers solutions and its collaboration. APEX also regularly enters into strategic partnerships with other governmental and non-governmental organisations in pursuing members’ interests.
- APEX supports the Public Service’s efforts to get objective and frank reactions from executives on new policy or program initiatives. APEX is currently the most effective vehicle for getting messages to the entire executive group quickly.
- APEX never blind-sides Public Service decision-makers. On the rare occasions that the association decides to “go public” on an issue, it will always have shared its views and its intentions with the government ahead of time.
- APEX “speaks truth to power”. The association offers information and messages that are not filtered through normal organisational reporting relationships.
- APEX always tries to be “ahead of the agenda”. It anticipates the issues that will be preoccupying its members in the next 12-18 months and plans its activities and interventions accordingly.
- APEX never duplicates services or functions that are already offered satisfactorily by a government body.

Strong leadership from the association’s Board of Directors has proven to be a critical factor in its success to date. The President in particular must be prepared to speak openly and sometimes forcefully to those who have the positions of greatest power within the Public Service. This means that candidates for this office must be senior enough in the bureaucracy that they have personal credibility with top leaders.

“The APEX President is also called upon to make representations to Ministers of the Crown, Members of Parliament and the Senate, as required. The APEX Secretariat’s Executive Director is undoubtedly the lynchpin position. Association Directors come and go, but having the right person at the helm of the Secretariat is the *sine qua non* for long-term success.

In the case of APEX, the right mix of attributes for the organisation’s formative period have included: a fine political and strategic sense; a willingness to take appropriate risks; strong interpersonal skills; in-depth knowledge of the workings of the Public Service and the government; and highly developed financial and administrative experience.

Finally, a measure of stability at the operational centre of APEX — in other words, keeping the same leaders at the Secretariat for a number of years — has guaranteed policy continuity and a consistency of approach which have served the association very well.

It is absolutely essential that members be able to see results. The association has been very consistent over the years, doggedly pursuing change on the topics that are of perennial interest to executives. Visible, positive change in compensation and benefits has been matched by improvements in the appointments system.

APEX members’ views are reflected in a number of key personnel policies and the human resources management reform legislation currently before Parliament. While movement on some files is not always rapid or tangible, the association must always be able to demonstrate that progress has been achieved on matters of substance.

Further, the association has avoided burdening itself with superfluous internal structure and maintains the flexibil-
ity to respond promptly to new or unexpected issues.

APEX has made itself attractive to executives by offering opportunities which they cannot find elsewhere. This includes, for example: access to a network of peers from other departments and agencies; quick, succinct information on developing issues, benefits and compensation decisions\(^5\); career, personal and legal advice; and the chance to influence the government’s policy direction.

Finally, in a world where Public Service employees do not always feel valued for the work they do, APEX understands the importance of recognising the contribution executives make — to their employees, to their department and the Public Service, and to the country.

The association’s annual awards programme is the only vehicle for executives to honour their peers who demonstrate outstanding leadership, innovation and partnership abilities\(^10\).

The challenges ahead

The continuing success of APEX will depend on its being able to accurately read the dynamics of the current Public Service environment and to predict what the future holds. It must regularly re-assess where the interests of its members lie and adjust its modus operandi and its partnership investments accordingly.

During the first 10 years of its existence, APEX had to work hard to establish itself as a credible voice for executives and a valuable resource for the Public Service.

By sticking to principles and maintaining its focus, the association has achieved a higher and more positive profile across the institution.

APEX now finds itself in a different type of dilemma

Because the association has become so expert in producing solid policy work quickly and inexpensively — relative to most Public Service departments and agencies — its services are much in demand. At the same time, resources are finite. It is not always desirable to refuse invitations from Public Service decision-makers to participate in important initiatives, but we will be forced to be more selective.

Perception is sometimes as important as reality. The association’s first priority remains representing the interests of its members. However, frequent collaboration with central agencies on matters important to its constituency could leave APEX open to accusations of having been co-opted by the employer. Vigilance by the association’s Board of Directors and Executive Director is essential.

Just as the Public Service of Canada will have to adjust to a period of massive generational transition, so the association must remain to be conscious of the need to renew itself.

The next generation of executive leaders will have different expectations and may demand a different type of Association. APEX must continue to be open to voices from outside its current membership.

Through patient and persistent efforts, APEX has established itself as a force for constructive change in the Public Service of Canada and the prognosis is good.

The future holds no lack of new challenges and APEX is well-positioned to take them on.

1 This is a Public Service position whose incumbent reports directly to the President of the Treasury Board, a member of Cabinet. The Secretary heads the agency whose mission is to help the Government of Canada manage its human, financial, information and technology resources.

2 Some deputy heads hoped that a stronger role for APEX might reduce the concentration of power in central agencies.

3 In 1984, it cost $5 to join APEX. By the early 1990s, fees had increased to $55, still a nominal amount.

4 Unlike unionised employees, Public Service executives are appointed “at pleasure” and dismissal is not regulated by any collective agreement.

5 Of the approximately 3,700 Public Service executives, 75% serve at their departmental or agency headquarters in the national capital area.

6 This event attracts some 750 Public Service executives — the largest annual gathering of this community — and is valued by senior decision-makers as the best venue to deliver strategic messages to the Public Service’s management team. The 2-day conference is forward-looking, outlining and exploring the key challenges the Public Service will face in the next 18-24 months. It attracts high calibre speakers from all sectors — public, private, academia and politics — and is a “not-to-miss” event for senior public servants.

7 The community of Canadian Public Service managers (officer level, but junior to executives) has in the last two years made great strides in identifying a series of shared concerns and objectives. Initial attempts to convince the employer to create a separate employment group to recognize this community of practice have stalled. However, the network created through the community’s efforts is very robust and a series of national conferences contributes to refining understanding of the management and career challenges facing this group.

8 One new initiative this year is the creation of an Executive Support Service, to be housed at APEX but supported financially by Deputy Ministers. It will provide an unbiased ear and a sounding board for executives who find themselves in situations of career-threatening conflict — including being accused of some form of harassment, being unable to resolve a substantive disagreement with a superior or being unsure how to respond to an ethical “gray zone”.

9 Rather than depending on printed newsletters with their somewhat slow turn-around, APEX uses its electronic access to members to send timely, succinct e-communications on issues of importance. These are sent as often as they are needed.

10 Categories include a Leadership Award, a Partnership Award, an award for Career Contribution and a Leadership in Service Innovation Award. More information can be found on the Association’s Web site at www.apex.gc.ca
Red Tape Reduction

First Lessons from Germany’s Experience

Ernst Hustädtt, Manager for the German Development Cooperation (GTZ) Programme for Public Sector Reform, explains the first German experience with a redtape reduction programme. GTZ is supporting a study on international and South African experiences with red tape reduction that is conducted by the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI). The final report will be published in early 2004 by CPSI as the second Future Watch Report.

The number and complexity of government formalities is among the most common sources of complaints from businesses and citizens. Criticism tends to focus on the negative effects of “red tape” on business productivity and innovation. At the same time, government formalities are important tools for supporting public policies in areas such as taxation, safety and environmental protection.

Thus, government efforts to “cut red tape” are promoted in a rather paradoxical political environment. On the one hand, businesses and citizens pressure governments to cut red tape, while on the other, they increasingly demand more accountable, effective, fair and transparent governance which requires more information and regulations.

Everybody would fundamentally probably agree that red tape is obsolete, unnecessary and confusing. It diminishes the state’s economic competitiveness, stands in the way of job creation and wastes taxpayers’ time and money. However, opinions on whether a given piece of legislation is red tape or not can vary.

Reduce legislation!

It should be noticed that Parliament itself is in many cases the most powerful creator of red tape. Since legislation is the most visible outcome — for the public — of the political process, politicians have a tendency to address all social or political issues by tabling new bills in Parliament.

New legislation must be implemented, controlled and checked and the state must provide sufficient resources for the court system to address possible challenges or administrative actions based on the new legislation.

In the past, the federal government had paid particular attention to the problem of reducing bureaucracy and the number of legal provisions in order to reduce the number of statutory prerequisites.

With the amendment of the Joint
Rules of Procedure of the Federal Ministries in March 1996, the federal government undertook to consistently examine the need for and expediency of all draft Bills of the federal government. Each ministry is called upon to only submit draft Bills within its area of responsibility to the Cabinet after having examined them with the aid of a fixed set of checklist questions. A qualified examination of legitimisation and reasons must be carried out for each piece of legislation.

The results of this examination are to be presented in the justification of the Draft Bill.

Key questions are, among others:
- Regulatory action must be justified by a clearly defined problem.
- All realistic alternatives to regulation should be explored beforehand.
- The benefits of regulatory intervention should outweigh the risks or consequences of not regulating.

This approach was in line with an international trend to shift from an exclusively ex-post focus to the recognition of the need to ensure that unnecessary or unreasonable burdens are not implemented in the first place.

Although the initial results showed that the new instruments are having an effect, when public pressures on government to take action increased the number of statutory provisions almost exploded: Last year there were 2 197 laws with about 46 779 single provisions which regulated the life of the citizens. In addition, there are about 3 131 administrative regulations with about 39 000 single provisions.

**International experiences: Reduce red tape as one way to promote growth and employment**

If one checks the current research and discussions one will find an increased trend to discuss “red-tape” on the international scene. The reason for this trend is that with increasing globalisation the ability of countries to isolate a society from international economic realities is limited at best. The process of globalisation of the production and distribution of goods and services has led to the need for competitive government structures which support the work of the private sector.

The OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) Report on Regulatory Reform (1997) indicates that, “regulatory reform that enhances competition and reduces regulatory cost can boost efficiency, bring down prices, stimulate innovation, and help improve the ability of economies to adapt to change and remain competitive.”

Cutting red tape helps get government out of the way of business. It involves changing the role of government from that of controller to facilitator; it involves being open and accommodating and it focuses on reducing the barriers to economic activity and job creation.

In the case of Germany we have to face the fact that my country waited too long to address the demanding issues of reforming the social and political structures which were right for decades but became more and more of an obstacle for growth, employment and efficient government delivery.

In a recent OECD study on barriers for economic competition, bureaucratic obstacles for start-ups and regulative and administrative burdens, Germany was ranked 16th out of a total of 21 countries.

The new coalition government of the Social Democrats and the Green Party agreed on addressing the key issues of reform more seriously. Taxation, the public health and the old-age pensions systems, unemployment administration and benefits as well as the social welfare administration form the basis of this move.

Within this wider context the national government was forced to look at its own structures in order to find a way to get rid of well established government systems which have been working well in the past but are not accurate for the present.

**Germany’s National Master Plan to reduce red tape: Strategic focus and a top-down approach**

The German national cabinet took a decision on 26th February 2003 to develop a master plan for the reduction of red tape. This decision was a fundamental change from the past where a step by step introduction of change on tasks and structures was deemed more effective. This was based on the assumption that many small steps will be a quicker and smoother way of achieving reform than a large-scale reform package.

The step by step, voluntary and participatory approach was ultimately proven to be wrong and leading to nowhere. There were no immediate and constant checks that could effectively force the public service into the right direction. The new approach is robust and effective.

The cabinet decided to look at five strategic areas of intervention:
- Since reduction of unemployment in Germany is the most important issue on the government’s agenda, bureaucratic obstacles for business and startups should be identified.
- Medium-sized companies generate more revenue, employ more people and train more young employees than the big companies. Therefore, a special emphasis should be given to ease legal or regulatory requirements for small and medium sized companies.
- Germany’s economy relies largely on its human capital and its services. Hence, the focus should be on improving conditions for research and technology in Germany.
- A new relationship between the state and civil society should be established in order to reduce areas of state engagement and reduce barriers for
voluntary engagements of citizens.

- The public service as such should be more focused on citizen satisfaction and cost efficiency. Processes and procedures as well as organisational set-ups must be under constant review.

The present government has placed the need to cut red tape at the heart of its agenda. An important part of its approach is to model government processes according to the needs of business, always with an eye to improving the way government works with business.

By removing red tape, government improves customer service, reduces costs, and saves everybody money. At the same time, government improves the business investment climate, helping to create jobs. That is why cutting red tape makes so much sense and continues to be at the center of the government’s economic strategy.

A number of these issues on why it is imperative for government to cut red tape should sound familiar to a South African observer: On June 7, 2003 the South African government, labour and business agreed on the Growth and Development Summit Agreement to establish better conditions for job creation. The Batho Pele White Paper sets up eight principles for a citizen-oriented, cost-effective performing public service.

The approach the federal government took is quite centralised. A steering committee has been established by cabinet comprising the Heads of Departments chaired by the Department for Home Affairs (responsible for the public service in Germany) and Finance, Justice, Economy and Labour as well as the office of the chancellor as permanent members.

Other HoDs of national departments will join the steering committee when and if their areas of competence are concerned. The steering committee is assisted by a support unit which has been established within the Department of Home Affairs. Every national department was asked to:

- establish its own working group on reduction of red tape immediately;
- specify at least three red-tape reduction projects within its own areas of competence within six weeks; and
- report back to the steering committee.

Thereafter the steering committee incorporated the different projects into a master plan for red-tape reduction in Germany. The national cabinet formally endorsed the master plan on the July 9, 2003.

More than 50 single projects were identified. There is a so-called “first wave” of 13 projects, followed by a “second wave” of about 50 identified projects.

Whereas a majority of these projects are already in the implementation phase, national departments are looking for strategic projects for a “third wave”.

The following projects have been identified:

**Strategic focus on reduction of unemployment and support for business start-ups**
- Reduction of administrative burdens for start-ups (lump sum income taxes).
- Reduction of administrative burdens for small enterprises (income taxes on the basis of simplified accounting procedures, no accounting requirements at all for very small enterprises).
- Reform of the skills act for artisans.
- No tests or exam requirements for a number of artisan professions, simplification of registration procedures.
- Reform of the skills development act.

**Strategic focus on raising health and safety requirements at the workplace**
- Regulations with the aim to simplify registration procedures.
- Electronic service/notification of official documents.
- Revision of the statute book to identify over regulation.
- Simplification of court procedures.
- Use of IT systems to accelerate court procedures.
- Reorganisation of the IT support structures of government.

**Concluding remarks**

It is far too early to measure the impact of the programme. Given the strict timelines, the master plan to reduce red tape is well under way. Considering that the cabinet took the decision in February 2003, there were no delays in the process and the momentum is being kept.

But we have to keep in mind that the process has just started and that the public service as an organisation is more open to a “sit and wait” approach than to an attitude that promotes change on a big scale.
The Batho Pele White Paper sets up eight principles for a citizen-orientated, cost-effective performing public service.
When the Classroom goes to the Community

Connie Mbowani, the Vaal based multi-award winning teacher, lives by the dictum: learning doesn’t take place in a social vacuum. For many learners countrywide the road to education is still littered with stumbling blocks — poverty, long distances they have to walk in order to get to school, inadequate facilities and derelict school buildings.

Vaal Triangle schools such as the Motsosi Lower Primary School, where Mbowani is school principal, are not exceptions. Ma-Connie, as she is affectionately addressed in her community and surrounds, tells of how difficult it is to stand in front of a class of hungry children. And how classes are interrupted each time heavy rainstorms flood access roads to the school.

Also, in a region where job losses are becoming frequent, desperate and poverty-stricken communities sometimes look at schools — despite their own poverty — as looting grounds rather than places of learning. Reports of missing school windows, doors or fences are common in such areas.

“As a teacher it is very difficult to stand in front of a class and look at the eyes of suffering pupils. You have to get out of the classroom and lend a helping hand in efforts to build the community,” says Ma-Connie.

Driven by a firm belief that a healthy community creates a conducive learning environment, Ma-Connie has over the years got out of the classroom and set out to facilitate community development processes aimed at enhancing the learning process at her school.

Her first notable project was facilitating the construction of a bridge along the rugged dusty road linking pupils to the school. The bridge, which was funded to the tune of R2 million by the public works department, now stands as a towering example of school and community partnerships in community upliftment.
Over a dozen jobs, which were linked to community skills development, were created during the course of the construction of the bridge. The cherry on top, says Ma-Connie, was the fact that the construction of the bridge was managed by a Vaal-based woman as resident engineer — a rarity in the male-dominated industry.

With the deepening impact of HIV/AIDS in many communities, Ma-Connie is also involved in long-term food security and health awareness projects. Again, with a combination of local unemployed human capital and accessing existing development infrastructure such as the Gauteng Department of Environment and Agriculture Botho Ke Botle (humanity is beauty) schools greening programme, she is continuously spurring community clean-up campaigns and encouraging the creation of green spaces such as peace parks, tree planting and food gardens.

Ma-Connie’s teaching career spans a period of over 30 years. She has experienced, overcome the constraints and endured Bantu education, the basest point of South Africa’s education system. She has lived and educated pupils during the turbulence of June 1976 and the near-total breakdown of the townships schooling in the 1980s and up to the early 1990s. Yet during all that tumult she remained committed to her professional calling.

Says Ma-Connie: “Seeing children struggle against their suffering has always been and remains the biggest motivation for me to continue teaching.”

Around the Vaal and at her Walkerville community everyone knows of Ma-Connie. Her name is associated with her tireless commitment to teaching and community development activism. She has been showered with accolades by people outside the boundaries of the greater Vaal area.

In 2002 the ministry of education bestowed Ma-Connie with the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award. The award was presented by the Deputy Minister of Education, Mosibudi Mangena, and President Thabo Mbeki. In 2003, Ma-Connie was awarded the Shoprite Checkers/SABC Woman of the Year Award.
Black Economic Empowerment
Sharing the
Same Vision,
Speaking
in One Voice

When my Deputy Director-General asked me to come and do this address, my first question was why do an address on BEE to senior Government officials who are by now very familiar with BEE. On second thoughts I then realised how important it is that as senior government managers we should speak in one voice when it comes to a subject such as this one.

Transformation imperative
The basic vision of an economy that meets the needs of the people in a more equitable manner goes back to the Freedom Charter of 1955. This was refined and developed in the contemporary context in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994). Subsequently, government has outlined broad economic strategies to transform the economy by 2014.

These strategies include the Microeconomic Reform Strategy and a range of specific strategies such as the Integrated Manufacturing Strategy and the National Research and Development Strategy.

The economy has become increasingly integrated into global markets and has become a successful exporter of manufactured goods and value-added services. South Africa is now able to position itself as an advanced manufacturing economy. South Africa’s integration into the global economy means that it is exposed to both the positive and negative forces that constitute the process of globalisation.

Globalisation can further entrench existing inequalities and further marginalise those on the periphery. Increased inequality and uneven development is a real danger for all economies, both developing and industrialised. In South Africa, however, inequality and uneven development has an extremely strong racial character and represents a threat to our young democ-
An economic transformation strategy must therefore form part of government’s strategic approach to globalisation to ensure that we benefit from these processes and not suffer its deleterious effects.

**Initiatives since 1994**

Since 1994 government has embarked upon a comprehensive programme to provide a legislative framework for the transformation of our economy. New laws have restored rights to land and tenure; have proscribed unfair discrimination; and introduced specific active measures to overcome the distortions in the labour market as well as provide new economic opportunities to historically disadvantaged persons.

In addition, government has implemented various policies, strategies and programmes aimed at overcoming economic inequalities and underdevelopment including:

- The Integrated Human Resources Development Strategy;
- Urban Renewal Programme;
- Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme;
- The Tourism Transformation Strategy;
- The Strategic Sector Plan for Agriculture; and
- The National Small Business Development Promotion Programme.

**Broad-based black economic empowerment strategy**

The challenge in defining black economic empowerment is to find the appropriate balance between a very broad definition and an overly narrow one. To define BEE too broadly equates BEE with economic development and transformation in general. The strategy is then commensurate with the totality of government’s programme of reconstruction and development.

To define BEE too narrowly limits it to a set of transactions transferring corporate assets from white to black ownership.

Accordingly, government defines BEE as an integrated and coherent socio-economic process that directly contributes to the economic transformation of South Africa and brings about significant increases in the numbers of black people that manage, own and control the country’s economy, as well as significant decreases in income inequalities.

The BEE process will therefore include elements of human resource development, employment equity, enterprise development, preferential procurement, as well as investment, ownership and control of enterprises and economic assets.

**Policy objectives**

The successful implementation of the BEE strategy will be evaluated against the following policy objectives:

- A substantial increase in the number
of black people who have ownership and control of existing and new enterprises.

- A substantial increase in the number of black people who have ownership and control of existing and new enterprises in the priority sectors of the economy that government has identified in its microeconomic reform strategy.

- A significant increase in the number of new black enterprises, black-empowered enterprises and black-engendered enterprises.

- A significant increase in the number of black people in executive and senior management of enterprises.

- An increasing proportion of the ownership and management of economic activities vested in community and broad-based enterprises (such as trade unions, employee trusts, and other collective enterprises) and cooperatives.

- Increased ownership of land and other productive assets, improved access to infrastructure, increased acquisition of skills, and increased participation in productive economic activities in under-developed areas including the 13 nodal areas identified in the Urban Renewal Programme and the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme.

- Accelerated and shared economic growth.

- Increased income levels of black persons and a reduction of income inequalities between and within race groups.

Policy instruments
Government will utilise a number of policy instruments to achieve its objectives in respect of BEE. These include legislation and regulation, preferential procurement, institutional support, financial and other incentive schemes. In addition, government will be seeking partnerships with the private sector to accelerate the BEE process.

Legislation and Regulation
Government has introduced into Parliament a Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Bill to establish an enabling framework for the promotion of BEE in South Africa. In particular, the legislation will allow the Minister of Trade and Industry to issue guidelines and codes of good practice on BEE, as well as establish a BEE Council to advise the President on the implementation of BEE and related matters.

The Balanced Scorecard
Government will use a “balanced scorecard” to measure progress made in achieving BEE by enterprises and sectors. The use of a common scorecard by different stakeholders provides a basic framework against which to benchmark the BEE process in different enterprises and sectors. The scorecard will measure three core elements of BEE:

- Direct empowerment through ownership and control of enterprises and assets.
- Human resource development and employment equity.
- Indirect empowerment through preferential procurement and enterprise development.

The scorecard also allows government departments, state-owned enterprises, and other public agencies, to align their own procurement practices and individual BEE strategies. The scorecard also facilitates the process of setting measurable targets for BEE.

In particular, government will apply BEE criteria, as set out in the scorecard, whenever it:

- grants a licence to engage in a specific regulated economic activity, for example, gambling or mining;
- grants a concession to a private enterprise to operate an asset or enterprise on behalf of the state;
- sells an asset or a state-owned enterprise;
- enters into a public-private partnership; and
- engages in any economic activity.

Restructuring of state-owned enterprises
Initial public offerings of shares in state owned enterprises (SOEs) can be utilised to promote ownership by black people individually, or by community and broad-based enterprises, through setting aside discounted shares. Worker and community ownership and management of SOEs is another option that is available to government to pursue BEE.

In addition, preferential procurement by SOEs, employment equity, sub-contracting, and management development are other means through which the restructuring of SOEs will contribute towards achieving BEE objectives.

Preferential procurement by government
Preferential procurement is an effective instrument to promote BEE in our economy. Government is reviewing its preferential procurement policy in order to enhance its impact on BEE. In addition to increasing the levels of preference to black-owned and black-empowered enterprises, clear targets have been set. A final target will be set once research on existing levels of black procurement has been completed.

The enabling legislation on BEE will provide that all government departments, state-owned enterprises and public agencies must take into account any code of practice issues in terms of the legislation in determining and implementing their preferential procurement policy.

Institutional support and BEE Advisory Council
It is essential that black business is effectively represented on and participates in the various economic advisory bodies and councils that form part of South Africa’s institutions of social dialogue. In particular, a strong black business presence is needed in the National Economic Development and Labour Council, the various Sector Education and Training Councils, and the various Export Councils.
In addition, government will establish BEE Advisory Council to advise on the implementation of the BEE Strategy. The Minister will establish this council to advise the President on BEE and to:

- review progress in achieving BEE;
- provide advice, in the light of experience, on new programmes and instruments to achieve the agreed objectives of BEE;
- promote partnerships to enhance the implementation of BEE;
- advise on sector and enterprise charters; and
- advise on codes of practice and guidelines.

It is envisaged that the Council will comprise 19 members who will hold office for a three-year term. This will include four Cabinet Ministers. The President will appoint the remaining 15 members of the Council.

**Partnerships and Charters**

Government will pursue its BEE objectives through two categories of instruments. The first set of interventions relates to the use of various government instruments to promote BEE, such as procurement, regulation, financing, and institutional support. These have been outlined above. The second set of instruments is the forging of partnerships with the private sector.

Partnerships refer to structured collaboration between government and the private sector for the sustainable achievement of BEE. Government will actively seek the establishment of innovative partnerships with the private sector, built around the specific circumstances of different sectors and enterprises.

Sector- and enterprise-based charters are one of the forms that such partnerships could take. Such charters would need to include specific mechanisms to achieve BEE objectives in that sector or enterprise in a comprehensive and appropriate manner, as well as provide measurement indicators and targets.

It is not expected that every sector and every enterprise will develop empowerment charters. However, those sectors and enterprises that continuously engage government in contracts, or are regulated by government, will be strongly encouraged to develop charters that set specific BEE targets and outline concrete plans to achieve these targets. These Charters will then be registered with Government in terms of the BEE Act.

In other sectors, voluntary compliance with the strategy and in particular the implementation of the scorecard approach will be encouraged, especially in the sectors that government has identified as having significant potential for future growth.

Government will seek to conclude enterprise charters with key corporates in the priority sectors to inject momentum into the BEE process. BEE will only be achieved when enterprises voluntarily develop, as part of their overall corporate strategy, clear plans to achieve BEE.

An important element in this regard is the creation and development of new black-owned enterprises.

**Codes of Good Practice**

Government will issue a Code of Good Practice outlining in detail the core elements that should be incorporated into sector- and enterprise-based charters. Wherever possible, charters should incorporate the following:

- The BEE challenges in that sector/enterprise.
- The sector’s/enterprise’s vision for achieving BEE targets and timetables.
- The specific mechanisms to be used to achieve BEE targets including financing instruments, skills development and employment equity, preferential procurement, and enterprise development, as well as any additional mechanisms appropriate to the specific sector/enterprise.
- An assessment of the financing required to fund BEE transactions.

**Financing BEE**

Government has already proposed setting aside R10 billion over the next five years to support the BEE process. This will in part be financed from the extraordinary proceeds of the exchange control measures announced in the 2003/4 Budget Speech. A new mandate for the National Empowerment Fund, and a review of the roles of other development finance and support institutions, to ensure that these resources are effectively and efficiently employed, will be developed by the DTI and National Treasury.

Financing mechanisms will be varied and will include guarantees, grants, incentive schemes, loan and equity financing. A market making facility is being considered in order to prevent undesirable ring fencing and therefore an illiquid situation for BEE assets. This is likely to be limited to more strategic areas.

Taken together it is clear that we have to ensure the financing of BEE within the parameters of the existing macroeconomic and microeconomic reform strategies. If we do not do this then BEE will only create a small wealthy black elite in a low growth economy that is likely to be less globally competitive. It is quite conceivable to do this effectively if we improve mechanisms of coordination and introduce innovative financing structures.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, to ensure that the benefits of empowerment are shared across society and impact as widely as possible, the strategy aims to mobilise all South Africans to support BEE as an integral component of economic stability and of efforts to increase South Africa and the regions productive capacity. Partner-ship initiatives are thus critical. The reality therefore is that the government has to act to advance Black Economic Empowerment if we are to attain the equitable, non-racial and non-discriminatory society that is embodied in the Constitution.
Broadening Public Access to Government Information Through a Development Communication Approach

In the past five years during which the system of government communication has been in existence, much progress was made in building some valuable institutions. These institutions are meant to address two primary requirements — the information needs of communities across the country including the remotest corners; and fulfilling the communication obligations, requirements and needs of government.

The GCIS is a system of communicators at local, provincial and national level. The GCIS has succeeded in establishing structures and processes to address the constitutional requirements of participatory citizenship and the right to information. Within this context a few unique innovations have been developed:

• The commitment to the establishment of Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) as vehicles for the delivery of government information and services to address real developmental needs of communities.
• The extension of the Imbizo programme prioritising dialogue between government leaders and communities at regular intervals
• The promotion of the principles of improved service delivery through integration and access to government by citizens embodied in the e-Gateway initiative, Batho Pele and the Integrated and Sustainable Rural Development and Urban Renewal Programmes (ISRDP and URPs).
• A commitment to enhance the use of technology for development purposes by broadening the principle of universal access through such initiatives as the roll-out of telecentres in rural communities and the installation of Public Internet Terminals (PITs).
• The establishment of the Media Diversity and Development Agency (MDDA).
• The adoption of an approach to dialogue with citizens which is described as “development communication” — namely the provision of useful and meaningful government information which plays a role in bettering lives.

In this context, the GCIS has remained committed to the promotion and development of communication approaches that bring continuous improvement in

Michael Currin, Director: Local Liaison and Information Management, Government Communications (GCIS) reviews the efficacies of a communication model based on partnerships between government, various communities and, in some specific cases, private sector communicators.
the way we engage citizens. Foremost in this regard is the commitment to expand the use of unmediated communication platforms and methods.

Unmediated communication platforms are communication methods and approaches that strengthen and enhance citizen participation and direct involvement in the transfer of government information. This approach seeks to improve the quality of intermediary channels in the communication process by prioritising active citizen participation and recognising a few key principles:

• democratic traditions in South Africa which speak of active and mass citizen involvement;
• literacy levels;
• strong and powerful cultural and artistic traditions including song, oral traditions, theatre and imagery; and
• the definition of the sphere of government closest to people, namely municipalities, as “developmental local government”. By law citizens are a formal, legal entity in a local municipality, thus requiring active communication processes.

A development-communication seminar
In order to highlight the challenges and successes in strengthening the process of direct and unmediated communication, the GCIS recently hosted a seminar on the development-communication approach within the context of government communication. The seminar, the first of its kind within government circles, was well attended by over 70 government communicators from local, provincial and national communication structures.

The seminar aimed to:
• assist in fostering a common understanding of the development-communication approach in government;
• explore further the challenge of disseminating information by using the most effective and efficient methods to reach the majority of people, especially those in rural areas;
• document successful case studies of development-communication campaigns in government;
• create a platform (learning network) that will involve all spheres of government to discuss and share knowledge around the development-communication approach in tandem with existing and similar processes under way in government already; and
• identify some short and medium-term interventions aimed at enhancing the use of development-communication principles in the implementation of government communication campaigns.

A legal imperative
According to Section 32 of the Constitution, every citizen has the right of access to information. Section 2 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 takes this matter further by defining the legal status of a municipality as comprising elected public officials, bureaucrats of the municipality and the communities. Sections 4, 5 and 6 of the same Act describe in great detail how citizens are entitled to active participation in the affairs of the local municipality and have a right to demand feedback and transparent communication.

In addition, even a cursory reading of the 1998 Comtask Report makes it clear that government has a specific mandate,
indeed an obligation, to communicate with its citizens.

Recommendation 4 speaks of the creation of a communication system that will optimise structural arrangements to promote integration and communication within government and between government and citizens.

Recommendation 8 of Comtask calls for government communication that is very close to the level where citizens live and work. This makes the decentralisation of the communication function a necessity. Recommendation 18 calls for consistency between the three spheres of government, thus ensuring that the content of messages received by citizens should be consistent and uniform and that it is useful information consistent with the needs expressed by communities.

Against this background, it is clear that communication processes that are fundamentally democratic and participatory are not political necessities or luxuries. They are constitutional obligations placed upon government. Accordingly every possible response is required to ensure that people are active participants in communication processes aimed at bettering their lives.

A rich tradition in government

At the core of the seminar was the premise that a development-communication approach is not new or unprecedented within the work of government. Indeed, rich experiences were shared from a wide range of government communicators based on campaigns they had run over the past year. What was important, however, was the acknowledgement that while this approach had been adopted by government communicators, very little of this had been documented or formalised. More importantly, as government we lacked a uniform and commonly agreed understanding of this approach and its root in active citizen participation and the ability to impact development through active citizenship and mobilisation.

Presentations by officials from some government departments reflected on a number of the elements underpinning the development-communication approach. Mrs Kedibone Tsolo, Director, Advocacy and Public Participation, Communication Unit, at the Department of Justice presented the case of a national competency with very few communication counterparts within government at local level.

As this approach requires direct, face-to-face communication and a degree of permanence in communities, the challenge arises to develop ongoing presence locally. Issues pertaining to rights and justice also require a more training-oriented approach as opposed to the simple delivery of a message. Mrs Tsolo explained that her unit has been able to foster partnerships with paralegal structures in communities.

These non-governmental bodies act as intermediaries and conduct awareness, advocacy and training programmes in communities in partnership with the Department of Justice. As these agencies are known in communities, a sense of presence and continuity is developed.

Eva Mahlangu from the Inclusive Education Unit in the Department of Education presented a unique case study. The study revealed how the introduction of more inclusive and democratic classrooms was facilitated largely through the extension of the “school community” to include a wider range of role-players than educators, learners and parents.

The concept of an inclusive schooling process addressing the issues of learners with unique learning needs, was not commonly accepted by stakeholders. These needs extend to poverty, disability and domestic violence issues which impact on the ability of a learner to participate meaningfully in the classroom.

Through the creation of networks and inclusive structures, significant buy-in from educators, communities and other stakeholders was achieved.

Such structural arrangements played a leading role in ensuring the success of this process.

Mbulelo Musi, Head of Communication at the Department of Social Development, presented a case study in which he outlined how a partnership with a major commercial media institution developed and served as a catalyst to develop an integrated and co-ordinated partnership around the delivery of social grants in the OR Tambo District Municipality.

He outlined how a participatory and honest approach to shortfalls in public systems on the part of government was able to turn a potentially destructive, reactionary situation into a positive set of actions that has led to strong community participation and uptake of grants.

Outcomes of the seminar

The main aim of the development-communication approach is to make public programmes and policies real, meaningful and sustainable. The seminar made an assessment of the efficacy of this process. While many successes were reported, it was indicated that improvements should be made, especially in terms of greater co-ordination between the various communication clusters and forums at both national and provincial level.

Efforts currently under way to establish a comprehensive system of communication at local government level need to be enhanced.

Efforts should be made to promote the four key elements of the development-communication approach, which, according to delegates to the seminar, are fundamental. These include:

- thorough assessment of local environments before the delivery of an infor-
The study showed clearly how active involvement of community groups and stakeholders was able to radically improve the access of those eligible to various grants.

The study showed that communications in the development context becomes an intervention mechanism around poverty reduction as opposed to a strategy to deliver certain messages.

Delegates to the conference engaged in a prominent discussion on the balance government communicators can and often strike between above and below-the-line communication approaches. Seminar delegates were unanimously agreed that significantly more should be done to balance the use of mass media and advertising campaigns and both print and electronic with more direct approaches.

In this regard, a radical recommendation that will require careful assessment and attention was that government communicators dedicate a specific percentage of their communication budgets to development-communication approaches to promote such direct approaches.

What emerged clearly, however, was that the issue is not about one approach versus another but that an effective balance needs to be made that would be in the form of a rich mix of approaches to do justice to government’s communication mandate.

It was also suggested that achievements in this area could be integrated into the criteria of the Government Communicators Awards that recognise excellence in government communication generally.

The fifth year of the establishment of the GCIS presented an opportunity to review progress, achievements and opportunities in the operation of a communication system as envisaged by Comtask.

The processes unfolding concerning the enhancement of the communication function locally mitigated in favour of such an assessment. It is not simply a matter of assessing the status awarded to direct communication approaches which, in the view of some delegates, needed attention.

The system in its entirety suggests that the time for an assessment is now. In this regard it was recommended that consideration be given to the hosting of a government communication Indaba where progress in the establishment of the system of government communication could be assessed. This could be done within the broad framework of a strategic 10-year review of the first Decade of Freedom.

Finally, consensus prevailed that very little has been done to document successful communication campaigns, especially in terms of capturing lessons and sharing these.

It was agreed that the GCIS, in partnership with provincial and local government communicators, should work with the Department of Public Service and Administration towards the institutionalisation of a learning network in this area, possibly in collaboration with similar networks which have been established.

Conclusion

The development-communication seminar placed squarely at the feet of government communicators the challenge of ensuring that communities across the country are active participants in articulating their communication needs and influencing the way we respond to these needs. It requires consistent evaluation that could be expedited through active citizen engagement.

If we fail to find creative responses to some of these issues, we will be falling short of our political obligations to communicate actively with the people we serve.

Batho Pele! Let’s make this our call in communicating government programmes to every corner of the country.
Sabotaging Service Delivery

The Hidden Hand of Corruption

India is a million miles away for most South African's who are reliant on foot-power, trains and taxis for their travel. Home to a billion people (20 times the SA population) the Indian state has for more than half a century attempted to implement pro-poor development policies while nurturing a culture of democratic governance. Faced with a population ravaged by underdevelopment one can see why Indians, like South Africans are heavily reliant on service delivery by the public sector, particularly in communities where private sector involvement is an unaffordable option.

Both policy-makers and practitioners alert us to the many challenges which they face in service delivery, including capacity and resource constraint. However, corruption is a crosscutting issue which effectively highjacks any positive attempt at “rolling out” basic services. Take the experience of a resident of Rajasthan in Northern India who was recently interviewed by activists in the grassroots NGO The People’s Right to Information (MKSS). A villager standing in front of the large home of a local councillor, built in part using the housing funds meant for a widower and her children, tells a story of endemic corruption.

He explains, “We elect a councillor, but when we complain (about the non-delivery of services and request for bribes), he says what can he do, his superiors demand a bribe to sign-off on anything and so he must pay them ... If ‘we’ oppose this we face thugs with knives ... If we try to lodge a complaint with the police we must pay R160 — for that ‘service’.”

Yet despite this the villager remains
defiant, “The only solution is to combat corruption.” No easy task when according to late Indian Prime Minister Rajeev Gandhi only 15% of the R15 billion annual rural development budget reaches the people it is intended for.

**Greed not need**

Although South Africa faces a unique set of challenges there is much we can learn from other developing countries who have more entrenched democracies about the devastating effects of corruption. The textbook definition of corruption as the abuse of entrusted power for private benefit, spanning both the involvement of public and private sector in an activity which in most instances is based on greed and not on need. This is particularly true in countries where public servants receive a regular salary, sufficient to cover basic living expenses, as is the case for most of the South African public service. Corrupt activity can generally be slotted into two primary categories:

- **Petty Corruption** — Small bribes demanded or offered, often to ensure delivery of a service either “according to rule” (e.g. health care in a public hospital) or “against the rule” (e.g. social service payment to someone who doesn’t qualify).
- **Grand Corruption** — Comparatively large bribes and commissions offered or paid by businesses in their quest for government orders (e.g. Public Procurement Contracts such as building a new hospital).

**South Africa – the victim**

The South African public perception of corruption is shaped by both experience and perceived experience. The latter is often the result of newspaper headlines probing the involvement of senior officials in large government procurement contracts such as the ill-fated multi-billion rand arms deal. A responsible independent media is duty bound to report such matters (particularly corruption in large contracts which could cost the treasury dearly) but if these are left unproven it could have the side effect of negatively shaping public opinion as a result.

Increasingly South Africans rate corruption as a major concern, reflected in a recent survey by Afrobarometer focusing on “South Africans’ assessment of the country’s most pressing problems”. Of the 2 400 respondents surveyed last year, 13% marked corruption as the most pressing issue, placing it at position seven out of the top 10 issues. Importantly corruption, together with unemployment, poverty and HIV/AIDS, is one of the only issues to show an increase in the past four years. This perception-based data is also useful because it points towards the citizens’ concern at the potential pervasive nature of corruption.

These results are also backed up by research by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS), which also exposes a trend in the growth of the actual experience of corruption amongst the survey sample. The rates of victimisation according to the ICVS are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This apparent “growth” in the occurrence of victimisation is often attributed to the democratic nature of governance since 1994 or — in a sinister manner — to the transformation of the public service since the end of apartheid. These accusations need to be tackled head-on.

There are probably a number of reasons which explain why corruption was seldom singled out as a major problem in the apartheid state — primary amongst these is the fact that the state was until 1994 by its very nature largely corrupt, abusing public office largely to the benefit of a minority of the population.

Similarly the values that are enshrined in our Constitution, including accountability and transparency, were never dear to the apartheid era establishment which dealt ruthlessly with its critics such as the media and civil society. In contrast citizens have in the past 10 years become increasingly aware of the nature of corruption — and the level of service they are entitled to from a government they hold to account at the ballot box.

Clearly the public service has also had to face major challenges during the process of transition and integration. The creation of new management structures, procedures and approach has in some instances created opportunities for corruption to creep in largely unchecked.

This is witnessed in a province such as the Eastern Cape which has required the intervention of the Joint Anti-Corruption Task Team to tackle corruption that has reached endemic proportions in some departments.

This “settling-in” period of a “new” administration combined with an added focus on service delivery where huge backlogs exist creates new opportunities for greedy individuals to see how far they can go in exploiting the system, not a uniquely South African problem. Fortunately measures are now being actively undertaken to keep graft in check — these are explored later in this article.

**Counting the cost of corruption: how it hurts**

The transaction between a bribe-payer and the person accepting a bribe has two consequences. A short-term gain for both the corrupt official receiving a bribe and the corrupt individual or corporation who either offers or is requested to pay a bribe.

However, although a corrupt official carries extra money in his/her pocket this gain is eventually wiped out as society is forced to bear the actual cost of corrupt relationships collectively. The negative impact of corruption on a society include:

**Political**
- Corruption undermines democratic gains and eventually results in the erosion of public confidence in the democratic process. This is particularly important in a relatively “fragile” democracy such as South Africa. It
Issues

can also give rise to populists who tap into the support of an otherwise cynical electorate.

- Corruption is an obstacle to the rule of law. It eventually results in the judicial system, police and others acting largely in the interests of those willing to pay bribes. Ultimately the primary beneficiaries of this are those who already posses power and wealth.

Economic

- Creates inefficiencies in markets — it is particularly damaging to small and emerging entrepreneurs who can much less afford the cost of bribes than large corporations who often budget for bribes.
- Corruption creates uncertainty in markets already affected by volatility and is a disincentive to both foreign and, more importantly, local investment, thereby sabotaging opportunities for job creation.

Environmental

- Corruption results in the rapid depletion of natural resources, effectively endangering sustainable development. This results in job losses (e.g. when over-fishing has taken place or where a potential tourist attraction is destroyed).

Social

- A culture of dishonesty and greed develops with little consideration for ethical norms. International studies show that this deepens the divide between rich and poor and ultimately hits the poor the hardest. A further measurable impact is on public sector service delivery on which all citizens and the poor in particular are reliant upon (See Case studies)

Corruption and service delivery — where it hurts

In July this year Transparency International, an international anti-corruption NGO, presented the results of its Global Corruption Barometer (GCB). This survey conducted amongst citizens in 47 countries included almost 3 000 South African respondents. The survey asked a representative sample of citizens a number of questions (see Table 2)

Firstly it is important to recognise that the GCB is based on the perceived need of respondents and that it did not include key categories of service delivery such as welfare, pensions, labour and housing.

Both the SAPS and political parties fair quite badly, however, the South African respondents are one of only five countries (including Hong Kong, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria and the Palestinian Authority) which rank police corruption higher than their wish to eliminate corruption in political parties. Health care and education in particular also rank relatively highly.

Corruption and service delivery - who it hurts

As has been discussed, corruption ultimately makes an entire society poorer. However, it also has the tendency to target the weakest members of society who lack both political and economic muscle. These are the citizens who are often ill-informed of their rights and unfamiliar with the complaints procedure to deal with graft. They are also more likely to live in fear of reprisal by corrupt individuals or officials when reporting such instances.

Unlike wealthy citizens who purchase everything from their health care at birth to their pensions, it is largely the poor who are most reliant on the public sector for the delivery of basic services. For many of these people withholding a vote is the only recourse they have when falling victim to corrupt officials — an opportunity which only presents itself every five years.

The GCB also asked how corruption affects the personal and family life of respondents. Table 3 provides a breakdown of respondents according to their income bracket. This supports the argument that the poor feel the pinch the most when fat-cats decide to line their pocket.

In the category that earn up to
R3 000 per month, 65.2% felt that corruption affects his/her personal and family life significantly while 13.8% did not feel significantly affected. With some exception we see that the wealthier the respondent the less likely s/he is to feel “very significantly” affected by corruption.

A noticeable exception is the wealthiest category (R25 000+). This sector is likely to come into contact with corruption as a result of their role in the top end of the economy (largely private sector) where they are more likely to be involved in business to business corruption or in the payment of bribes to corrupt officials.

The impact: Case-studies

One of the greatest challenges in detecting corruption is that unlike many other crimes the offenders seldom leave the equivalent of a “dead body” on the scene. It is generally more difficult to detect and measure the effects of graft. However, a number of recent cases of corruption, which directly impact on service delivery, may be instructive to understand the devastating effect that corruption can have and how it manifests itself.

Most instances of corruption listed below were either uncovered by a public sector agency such as the Scorpions, Special Investigating Unit or the SAPS. In some instances they were assisted by whistleblowers and all the cases were reported in the press.

(Disclaimer applies that some of the cases are still under investigation — these are noted as allegations as the matter has not been settled in court yet)

Case Study I:
Housing – The “Great R400 million Gauteng Housing Swindle”

The Gauteng provincial government has handed over what is believed to be irrefutable evidence of fraud and corruption to the police. A housing developer (a former university law professor), who was working in collusion with a Department of Housing official, was awarded tenders to build homes in 17 Soweto neighborhoods. The housing tycoon, with some insider assistance, manipulated government systems of control to enrich himself in the following manner:

- Used fictitious “beneficiaries” to claim subsidies from government (without their knowledge).
- Was overpaid R41.8 million for houses built in Protea Glenn (Soweto). He refused to repay this amount claiming the government had miscalculated its sums.
- Claimed for subsidies on stands where no houses were built.
- Was overpaid on 893 subsidies at a rate of R9 500 when the applicable rate was R5 000.
- Claimed for subsidies (over R1 million) intended for the poor. The land was subsequently rezoned as commercial land and no houses were built (about 162 housing subsidies were “lost” in this manner).
- Claimed subsidies (R9.5 million) then allocated them to the wrong claimants.

Impact: Gauteng government has lost R400 million — enough to build 22 000 low-cost homes

Case Study II:
Education – Three KZN teachers, three million rand

Three Umlazi teachers were arrested in January this year in connection with fraud totaling R2.9 million. The three teachers, assisted by officials of the education department in the Durban South region, set up separate bank accounts and then proceeded to change or have the details of other educators changed to allow for their salaries to be deposited into the (new) account.

• Claimed for subsidies (over R1 million) intended for the poor. The land was subsequently rezoned as commercial land and no houses were built (about 162 housing subsidies were “lost” in this manner).
• Claimed subsidies (R9.5 million) then allocated them to the wrong claimants.

Impact: Total Loss to KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education — R2.9 million

Case Study III:
Welfare – Pension fraud in the Eastern Cape

When government announced that the Joint Anti-Corruption Task Team (JACTT) would be set loose in the Eastern Cape earlier this year many officials in the province, where some departments are now faced with endemic corruption, were no doubt concerned. Although a positive intervention by government it is also a sad incitement of just how “acceptable” graft can become in one of the countries poorest provinces (with the highest unemployment rate) where a large number of citizens are dependent on public sector intervention for survival.

The provincial department of welfare appears to be particularly vulnerable with fraud being suspected of having reached systemic levels.

Following investigations undertaken by the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) there are estimates that up to 70% of staff members responsible for pensions in the department are involved in corruption. The result of this is significant monetary losses, with a conservative estimate placing this at about 10-15% of the amount paid out as social assistance pensions being lost to these fraudulent activities.

In some instances criminal officials have organised themselves in a manner similar to organised criminal groups and have developed sophisticated money laundering schemes to launder pension cheques with the help of “legitimate” businesses.

These activities also result in a breakdown in trust between citizens and public sector with guilt by association developing. This ultimately results in citizens’ unwillingness to co-operate with government, which is the start of a vicious cycle resulting in a type of anarchy benefiting no one.

Corruption ultimately makes an entire society poorer – however, it also has the tendency to target the weakest members of society who lack both political and economic muscle.

There was also possible collusion with a fourth party, which has access to personnel administration computer systems. In this manner the salaries of more than 400 teachers were “diverted” to false bank accounts.

Impact: Total Loss to KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education — R2.9 million
One example of how corruption has impacted on the delivery of pensions: Ten welfare department officials were found guilty in 2001 of defrauding the department of welfare of R11 million and were ultimately jailed for a collective period of 210 years. Between 1994 and 1996 the accused placed their own fingerprints and those of family members on thousands of unpaid payment vouchers, often using toe prints which fingerprint experts eventually discovered.

**Impact:** Overall drain on the fiscus resulting potentially in reduced budget allocation for other essential services such as education or health-care.

**Case Study IV:**

**Welfare — Plundering poverty schemes**

There are probably few examples of corruption that can be compared to the theft of bread out of a hungry woman’s mouth — corruption in poverty alleviation programmes.

In October 2001 the Mail & Guardian published the leaked results of an “Exit strategy report” which alleged that the Gauteng government was closing almost all its poverty relief projects, citing corruption, fraud, mismanagement and a lack of skills.

Gauteng, with its large urban sprawls, is a magnet for people with few opportunities elsewhere. According to the Department of Social Service and Welfare, more than four million people in Gauteng live in poverty, of whom about 2.8 million live in abject poverty. There is therefore a reliance on government intervention to deal with the needs of this large number of people who are effectively marginalised by the mainstream economy.

According to Mulala Nemavhandu, the then-manager of the provincial poverty programme, the department had in fact initiated the investigation and found that the department had spent about R50 million between 1997 and 2002 to fund 336 community projects. The report, however, indicates that 85% of the projects did not reach the achieved departmental objectives because individuals empowered themselves rather than their communities.

**Impact:** Venal “self-empowerment” resulted in about R43 million not reaching the poverty schemes they were intended for. The department did not renew Nemavhandu’s contract after the report was leaked.

**Challenges — Giving effect to anti-corruption strategies**

The aforementioned case studies are disturbing when read individually, but when viewed together they can have the affect of frightening the observer into inaction — if the system is so corrupt what should I do other than join the corruption queue before its too late. Clearly this would be a misguided conclusion.

South Africa has in the past year developed one of the most innovative and sophisticated legislative frameworks for combating corruption. This includes specific legislation allowing for the public to access information (Promotion of Access to Information Act), the protection of whistleblowers (Protected Disclosures Act) and the better regulation of public finances through the Public Finance Management Act.

This has also allowed for the creation of specialised agencies tasked with investigating corruption such as the SIU, the Scorpions and complemented by the independent Chapter Nine institutions such as the Public Protector and Auditor-General.

What is clear is that even with this formidable armoury, it has not proven enough to stop greedy individuals from abusing parts of the system, which are tasked with strengthening the weakest links in our society. Health, Education, Welfare, Housing, Policing, Water — these are only some of the departments in the frontline of service delivery but also some of those most at risk of corrupt activity.

The case studies listed all have one commonality: they deal with large amounts of cash that have attracted the attention of investigators, the media and civil society.

However, unfortunately much more is likely to happen behind closed doors involving small sums of cash which probably have great value to the people who are forced to pay them.

The task of tackling graft is also not exclusively the domain of the public sector but is probably better understood as one involving all sectors of society who both contribute to and benefit from living in this country.

In at least one case-study (Gauteng, housing) the guilty party was a private sector contractor, no doubt a seemingly trustworthy professor who was in fact acting in a manner much more befitting a big-shot gangster. His legacy to the people of Gauteng has been to rob hundreds of families of the opportunity to have a roof over their heads. It is no doubt cases like these which have spurred Parliament on to draft a new Prevention of Corrupt Activities Bill that specifically reinstates the common law crime of bribery.

It also lists specific offences such as corruption in the awarding of tenders and blacklisting of corporations involved in corruption.

However, the Act also seeks to complement exiting attempts to promote ethics training in the public and private sector by placing an onerous, but important element of collective responsibility for rooting out corruption on each one of us — a duty to report corrupt transactions.

Failure to do so could result in a fine or imprisonment or both.

Tough measures such as these may ultimately drive home the point that corruption is a crime of far greater proportions than a hungry man who steals a loaf of bread.

It is the much more of the magnitude of stealing the bakery, effectively sabotaging service delivery and potentially the largest impediment to realising the Public Services vision of Batho Pele!
Strategies to Overcome Corruption

Kariem Hoosain, Corporate Executive Manager in the Office of the Auditor General, suggests strategies that individuals in government can adopt in order to help lay the foundations for an administration that is free, or has minimal remnants, of corruption.

As a nation that is about to celebrate the first decade of our new democracy, we as South Africans need to also ask ourselves: how well are we doing in terms of combating corruption? (For a contextual definition of corruption, see accompanying article “Sabotaging Service Delivery: Corruption’s Hidden Hand”.)

In trying to answer this question South Africans should not try to compare themselves with other countries because each country is unique and therefore should be measured on its own merits — according to a set of criteria. The criteria examined in this article are shared by some academics, but may not necessarily be the only ones. Neither are they the most important ones to measure the progress of our new democracy.

The first relates to the status of South African politics in the context of it being a liberal democracy. This refers to:

• The nature of the relationship between the Legislature and Parliament.
• The health of our institutions supporting democracy (Chapter 9 Institutions).
• Electoral process and the potential threats to stability.
• Free press and open debate. The various current issues and debates that are in the public arena are clear signs of a healthy, vibrant and liberal democracy.

The second relates to South Africa’s status as a vibrant market economy. Most economists locally and internationally bear testimony to the excellent way in which the country’s economy is being managed.

The third relates to whether or not government is successful in creating an environment where society at large feels that they are empowered to fully participate in and enjoy the benefits of an open society. The key elements of this are access to education, health care and a guarantee of safety and security.

There are numerous challenges and failures we face in these areas.

The background has been provided to assess and create the bigger picture to highlight the consequence that failure in this area might and will have on the extension of the benefits of our new democracy. It is not meant to imply that corruption is the only reason why government may not have been as successful as it could have been. However, from the kinds of cases that the AG’s Office has to deal with on a day-to-day basis, it must certainly rank as one of most important inhibitors.

An integrated strategy of dealing with corruption

The first element in what is considered to be an integrated strategy to deal with this problem pertains to the need to create more awareness amongst all of us about the real consequences of not dealing effectively with corruption. Regular fraud and anti-corruption awareness programmes should be conducted to facilitate early detection and reporting.

If government officials and all other partners in transformation keep this at the forefront of their minds, it would serve as a major deterrent to corruption. However, this is not an ideal world and therefore there is always a need to focus on some other strategies.

Strong governance structures

At a macro level this means having in place the appropriate legislation such as the “Whistle Blowers” Act, PFMA, etc. This must be supported by the relevant oversight bodies e.g. SCOPA, the AG’s Office, Public Protector, etc.

South Africa has all of these types of institutions in place. However, in the absence of a visible and comprehensive economic crime risk management strategy, the lack of a coordinated effort is apparent. The role that the crime and national intelligence services should play in this area should not be underestimated. They should provide the requisite background information that guides the overall strategy and can also provide the basic catalyst for criminal prosecutions.

At the micro level this means that each department must have appropriate economic crime prevention policies such as the fraud response policy and codes of conduct. An up to date conflict of interest and gifts declaration register is a must. A gift register needs to be understood within the context of some cultures. In many cultures the exchange of gifts is not regarded as a wrongful act. Therefore a need is to ban all these issues, but to set acceptable parameters up front for all to know and to be conscious of.

This needs to be supported by the appropriate internal structures that promote effective oversight. This will include a properly structured internal audit function with some forensic audit ability and an independent audit committee. Other measures may include an Ethics Officer and an independent tip-off line. The handling of tip-offs in a
structured manner is of vital importance. It should create the confidence in users that information will be treated in confidence and that action will be taken.

However, ineffective follow-up and lack of corrective action often negate these measures. Where corruption has been identified, it is often months, even years before any action is taken. In a number of instances it has emerged that these delays result in cases being dismissed. As a result, the recovery of misappropriated resources becomes impossible. It therefore spreads the message that “you can get away with corruption”.

Financial management practices and sound internal controls
The third element relates to having good financial management practices, executed in a sound internal control environment. The internal control environment needs to be underpinned by good segregation of duties as well as regular rotation of key staff. The enforcement of taking annual leave is also of great importance.

This needs to be supported by good management information systems including well defined performance indicators that allows accounting officers to be alerted timeously to any possible problems.

The highest risk area for potential corruption remains that of procurement. It is therefore imperative that each department or organisation has clearly defined transparent and understandable tendering and procurement practices. Whilst much of this framework exists, it remains the most problematic area for good governance. The underlying reasons for this, is what could be considered to be the fourth and fifth elements of the comprehensive strategy.

Competent workforce
The fourth element relates to having a competent workforce that fully understands their jobs and business environment. Ignorance and incompetence is the happy hunting ground for perpetrators of corruption.

Government contracts are often complex and of a highly technical nature. The lack of appropriate technical competence in evaluating these types of tender contracts allows perpetrators of economic crime a window of opportunity to ply their trade. There are also many instances of basic and easy to detect economic crime indicators that go without being picked up. Some examples are:
- the use of fake VAT numbers;
- the use of fake company registration numbers;
- tenders submitted on the same letterheads with only the name of the company changed; and
- splitting of tender values to bypass more rigorous scrutiny.

These are clear-cut cases that do not need the skills of an auditor to pick them up. All that is required is some basic business competencies and perhaps some common sense. It is therefore important that the required competence be identified and officials be empowered to be able to be alert to some of these basic corrupt practices.

Preventing collusion
Corruption, by its very nature, requires an individual in an influential position in the public service to collude with another person inside or outside the department to be executed successfully. This is the most difficult part of corruption to combat. This aspect relates to the inherent motives that drive behaviour.

According to behavioral scientists, there are four broad levels of happiness or motivation that a person will aspire to in his or her lifetime.

The first level relates to immediate and basic human needs, e.g. the need to eat, have shelter, etc. This is common to all humans and nobody can really deny others this level of happiness.

The second level relates to self-indulgence, e.g. having more than enough to eat, a nice car and house, etc. Most of those who do honest and hard work strive for and achieve this over a lifetime and then enjoy their retirement.

The third level relates to having a community-focused purpose and to enjoy doing something for fellow human beings without looking for compensation.

The fourth level relates trying to achieve a level of greatness that serves to leave a legend in the difference we have made.

Unfortunately there is a number of persons who seek to only satisfy themselves as described in the second level of happiness, in the shortest possible time, and by any means. This issue is therefore closely linked to the first element. Whilst a broad awareness needs to be created, it will be a wasted effort if we as individuals don’t rise above the second level of happiness and pursue the broader interests of our community and country. This does not mean that people are not entitled to fair compensation and the good things in life. What this means is that we achieve this the good old-fashioned and honest way.

For this to happen requires a conscious effort on our part to eliminate corruption. We need to look at the small things we do that create a climate conducive to corruption: the little “perks” we claim for ourselves including the department’s stationery we take home for our kids, the private phone calls we don’t pay for, the excessive S&T claims we submit. These are the seeds for larger corrupt acts that follow, both in the example we set for others and in justifying our future actions.

In conclusion, the various elements of the comprehensive strategy that have been listed in this discussion can only make a supporting contribution to overcoming corruption. The key element remains our individual commitment to not be corrupted.

Remember that if there are no officials in a department that are open to corruption, then there cannot be any corruption! The need to change is an individual responsibility. Nobody can be forced to change. In the same way the need to combat corruption is an individual responsibility before it is a collective one.

There is a saying that goes as follows: “As long as we keep doing what we have always been doing, we will keep getting what we have always been getting.”
Financial Disclosure and Conflict of Interest

The Case for Strengthening and Amending the Current Regulatory Regime

Establishing a professional and systemic approach to the risk of conflict of interest is a fundamental pillar of good governance. In South Africa, several steps have been taken to establish a sound professional ethics infrastructure to minimise the risk of conflict of interest. Financial disclosure has been accepted internationally as the key mechanism to prevent conflict of interest.

Any attempt to conceal acquired assets during a specified period opens up the possibility of breaches of codes of conduct, codes of ethics and/or public service regulations. South Africa has a framework for financial disclosure, obligatory for the Senior Management Service (SMS).

Although since its inception there has been an annual improvement in submission of financial disclosure forms, there is still space for improvement.

The current figures also illustrate a major problem in the system: the forms are not submitted within specified time periods, forcing the Public Service Commission (PSC), the responsible central agency for implementation of the financial disclosure framework, to request the Minister for Public Service and Administration each year to send out reminders to Executing Authorities. This suggests that the current system as managed and regulated is in need of some significant changes.

Director of the New York Conflict of Interests Board, Mark Davies, has stated that government ethics regulations must be "simple, sensible, straightforward and short", and that "the code must be understandable to every official without

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a lawyer.” When regulations are difficult to understand, implementation becomes even more complex. In order to become clearly comprehensible, disclosure regulations should not be riddled with definitions and exceptions. To some extent, the current Public Service Regulations of South Africa (2001 Chapter 3), do not meet these standards. There are certain areas where the regulations may be ambiguously interpreted.

One example can be found in the provisions around acceptance of gifts. C.5.3 stipulates that an employee must not in her/his official capacity solicit gifts or benefits nor accept any benefits or gifts when they are offered as this may be construed as bribes. On the other hand, when they are offered as this may be benefits or gifts. This is clearly a weakness, which is currently being reviewed. In Australia, responsibility lies with the Head of Department.

The key elements of good practice in the management of financial disclosure include: declaration of financial assets and interests, maintenance of a central record, access to the record, monitoring, enforcement and penalties. The paper will consider each of these in turn.

Declaration of Financial Assets and Interests

There can be little argument in principle against the declaration of financial assets and interests, but questions arise around the frequency as well as where the declarations are submitted and managed. The South African system, like many others, requires an annual submission of financial disclosures. The forms are submitted to Ministers and Provincial Members of Executive Councils (MECs), checked and then forwarded to the PSC. The PSC has established a central system for the management and further checking of the forms.

One question which arises relates to the frequency and timing of submission. If the forms are submitted annually only, then declarations involving potential conflicts of interest or impropriety are often only scrutinised long after the fact.

Other questions relate to the most competent authority to scrutinise and check the veracity of the disclosure. Who is responsible and accountable? In Botswana, while there is a central registry at the Directorate for Public Service Management (DPSM), the public official concerned is required to bring to attention of the Permanent Secretary (Head of Department) where there is a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest regarding the official, her/his spouse or minor children. This places the responsibility on all public officials to disclose to their supervisors any conflict or potential conflicts of interest as soon as it arises. This problem of officials waiting for the annual submission deadline before disclosing.

In several countries, including Botswana and the Philippines, all public officials irrespective of their ranking are required to submit disclosures, but in Australia, like in South Africa, only members of the Senior Executive Service are required to disclose.

International good practice shows that South Africa is on track with respect to disclosure, but there are areas where improvement can be considered. These include the submission route. Consideration needs to be given to the precise role of Heads of Department in scrutinising disclosure forms. They are even better placed than Executing Authorities to rigorously analyse disclosures, as they understand the precise roles of all officials concerned.

Currently, the heavy workload of Executing Authorities does cause delays in the submission of forms to the PSC for filing and management.

For this reason, the PSC has recommended that financial disclosure forms, be simultaneously filed with Executing Authorities and the PSC. Realisation of this recommendation would require regulatory changes, however.

Maintenance of a Central Record

In South Africa, the PSC is responsible for implementing the financial disclosure regulations. SMS members are required to submit their confidential annual financial disclosure reports to their Ministers or MECs, not later than 30 April each year. Executing Authorities are in turn required to submit a copy of the report by not later than 31 May. The forms are strictly confidential and only Executing Authorities, staff designated by them for record purposes, Commissioners of the PSC and staff designated by the PSC for effective implementation of the regulations are allowed access to them. Other than these designees, the forms may only be accessed in terms of section 11 of the Access to Information Act, 2000.

There are some arguments that can be offered for the centralisation of the system. Having a centralised point of submission does afford government the opportunity of having a comprehensive picture of the national status quo with respect to financial disclosures. Public Administration is a national competency in terms of South Africa’s constitution. Nevertheless, the country has opted for a decentralisation of key management practices such as recruitment and selection and the management of discipline.

There is still some way to go for some of these management delegations and responsibilities to be successfully implemented. There may also be some arguments for a re-centralisation of some delegations until such time as managers are accredited. However, the same logic that drives decentralisation generally, is applicable in the case of management of a financial disclosure system. If the will of management to eliminate conflict of interest is strong, then certainly managing financial disclosure regulations in situ offers a more effective regime to deal with conflict of interest in the workplace.

Moreover the South African Public Service is large, complex and will potentially grow exponentially in the next few years with the move towards an integrated service, which incorporates local government. International good practice reveals that in most countries there is a tendency to delegate at least some
responsibilities to departments for the management of financial disclosures. This does usually occur with the supervision and monitoring of a central department.

In the United States for example, departments are responsible for ensuring compliance, while the Office of Government Ethics plays a monitoring role. A similar arrangement prevails in the Philippines, where departments ensure compliance and the Civil Service Commission monitors.

In South Africa, delegating full responsibility to a small central agency like the PSC may be overly ambitious. Already the problem of reliance on Executing Authorities by the PSC has been noted. Moreover, the PSC is a constitutional body charged with supporting Parliament’s oversight of the executive. The current ambit of the PSC’s role means that it has both an implementing and oversight role.

In tightening the professional ethics framework, consideration needs to be given to decentralising the process of financial disclosures, with the PSC retaining an oversight role. Clearly, in order to be successful, such an approach will require both the capacity and will of departments. It will also require the establishment of a clear function of “ethics officer” in departments. This may immediately raise concerns with departments who already feel overburdened with statutory compliance requirements under legislation such as the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) Access to Information Act (AIA) and Administrative Justice Act (AJA).

Ethics officers would be responsible for implementation of a range of ethics infrastructure initiatives including the submission of financial disclosures. The advantage of the creation of such a position would, however, be felt in the area of counselling. Clearly there is a place for this, as there is lack of clarity around conflict of interest as well as the giving and receiving of gifts. While the most senior official — the Director General — is likely to be already overburdened with work, it would be prudent to assign the role of ethics officer to a senior official within the SMS.

If a decision to create ethics officers were taken, this would undoubtedly strengthen the regulatory regime of financial disclosure and facilitate a decentralised system with oversight by the PSC.

Access to Financial Disclosures
The question of public access to the financial disclosure records is an area of contestation. International practice tends towards some form of public access, although this is often restricted.

In the United States, there is more or less unrestricted access upon written request to the public. Only the filer’s information is made public, however, and there is no public access to the spouse and minor children's information. In the Philippines, all disclosures are made available for public scrutiny at “reasonable hours”, but individuals requesting copies of statements may only secure these at their own expense, ten working days after filing.

In Botswana, access is not clear-cut; rather this constitutes a grey area in the system. The media is not granted access, but NGOs are granted access. In India, filers’ records are confidential, but in Australia, access can be obtained under certain conditions. In line with its decentralised system, each department is expected to develop procedures and guidelines to deal with requests for access to public officials disclosure statements. Under the Freedom of Information Act of 1982, members of the public may apply for access. Statements are also usually made available to ministers upon request, and the public official is informed if this is the case.

In South Africa, access to the financial disclosures of public servants is restricted, but possible in terms of Section 11 of the AIA, where members of the public may gain access to a financial disclosure form through a court order. In the case of the South African Parliamentary disclosure regime, however, the disclosure form provides for a confidential section and public disclosure section.

The logic of more or less unrestricted access in the United States is that it is extremely difficult for agencies to identify conflicts or potential conflicts of interest on their own.

Monitoring
There are two levels at which monitoring is required. The first relates to basic compliance, and therefore entails the actual submission of the forms. The second is at the level of conflict of interest, i.e. once the forms are submitted, they need to be checked to ensure that there are no conflicts or potential conflicts of interest contained within the forms.

Basic compliance, i.e. the submission of the form clearly needs to be strengthened, given the submission record to date. One way of strengthening compliance would be to link the submission of forms to the submission of performance agreements and to salary adjustments. Moreover, a field could be created within salary adjustments approved by the Minister for Public Service and Administration, could then be linked to submission and verification of financial disclosure requirements.

Improved monitoring will partly be dependent on the development of an electronic system. At one level the forms could be submitted electronically. At another level, auditing firms have developed software programmes to red-flag potential conflicts of interest or other unusual features of disclosure forms. The success of such an approach depends on the availability of the information, i.e. the submission of the forms.

Currently, the PSC monitors submission as well as content of the forms, but is grossly understaffed to thoroughly undertake the latter task. The PSC advocates the electronic submission of forms, but this will require regulatory changes, as they will have to simultaneously be submitted to the PSC and Executing Authorities.

Monitoring the integrity and accuracy of the submissions under the current regime means that the PSC must oversee the submission of some 4 300 financial disclosure forms emanating from approximately 135 departments. If this is to be done more thoroughly, then the staff capacity of the PSC needs to be strengthened accordingly.

Enforcement and Penalties
A key challenge confronting the South
African disclosure system is strengthening enforcement through identifying relevant sanctions. Presently, those who do not comply have nothing to fear, because nothing happens to them. This situation needs to be reversed through the identification of appropriate penalties.

In the United States, several penalties are in place to deal with non-compliance with financial disclosure regulations. Basic non-compliance may lead to prison terms of one year or more, while wilful offenders may receive prison terms for up to five years or a fine. The Attorney General may also institute civil action against an offender, and upon proof of misconduct, the offender may be subject to a civil penalty of over $50,000.

The Philippines regime is also harsh on non-compliance and offenders. Violation of the relevant legislation, Section 11 of the Republic Act No. 6713, is punishable with a jail term of not more than five years, or a fine not exceeding P5,000, or both. Moreover, at the discretion of the court of competent jurisdiction, offenders may be disqualified from holding further public office.

The legislation also provides for removal or dismissal of a public official or employee from office through administrative proceedings. In addition, the law also stipulates that private individuals who participate in a “conspiracy as co-principals, accomplices or accessories” in violation of the Act are liable to the same penalties as public officials or employees and are tried jointly with them.

Apart from these foregoing penalties, each department of state is responsible for ensuring that its employees comply with the requirements of ethics law. The equivalent of the PSC, the Civil Service Commission, conducts regular inspections and audits of each government department. In Botswana, offenders are reprimanded and may be transferred within or expelled from the public service. In Australia, transgressions are dealt with through the imposition of disciplinary action.

In South Africa, clear penalties must be set out. At the same time this requires some serious work in order to avoid impinging on the current contractual regime or any collectively bargained agreements or protocols. It is important not to establish a parallel system of justice running via the Public Service Regulations alongside the system of negotiated disciplinary codes and procedures.

Nevertheless, consideration needs to be given to implementing a fine for the first offence and a second breach, if serious, could lead to harsher sanctions including dismissal.

**Conclusion**

The foregoing discussion has unearthed a number of recommendations that could lead to the strengthening of the current system of financial disclosures. The first recommendation is for the appointment of Ethics Officers. It may be argued that many senior public officials and departments are suffering from “transformation fatigue” induced by the large number of statutory regulations and requirements, and that the appointment of Ethics Officers merely adds another layer. Nevertheless, the professional ethics infrastructure that has been established (including financial disclosure) does require levels of administration, enforcement, advice and counselling that are presently unavailable in departments. As argued earlier, this is not envisaged as a full time job, but needs to be added to the responsibilities of a senior manager identified by the Director General.

The other strength of the appointment of Ethics Officers is that this can strengthen the case for decentralisation. As has been argued, line managers are better placed to identify specific conflicts of interest than an outside agency and hence ensure that they do not contaminate decision-making processes of government.

Whether centralised or decentralised, the efficiency of the system would be strengthened through electronic submission of the forms. The advantages of this would include more simpler updating by officials, enhanced monitoring and less human capacity required for overall management of the system.

The most senior managers and the Director General in particular, must add their weight to the system of financial disclosure through direct support and involvement. The responsibilities of enforcement and monitoring should be added to performance agreements of SMS officials, while compliance with the Code of Conduct should become a contractual obligation.

Strong penalties for non-compliance and wilful breaches need to be contemplated. Nevertheless, as argued above, this will require advice from labour law specialist in order to avoid an conflict with current agreements that have been negotiated.

The paper has also addressed other issues such as wider access to the disclosures. This is a controversial issue, but international good practice from both the developed and developing world indicates that there may well be room for broader public access to the disclosure statements. The advantages include greater legitimacy of the system, more honesty in compliance and improved enforcement mechanism, given the time and resources that outside agencies including the media have for thorough monitoring of the disclosures. Serious consideration therefore needs to be given to the benefits deriving from greater public openness in relation to competing concerns relating to the rights of privacy of public servants.

Finally, it should be noted that implementation of most of these recommendations would require a review and amendment of current regulations pertaining to the submission of financial disclosures.


1. Mark Davies, Ethics in Government and the Issue of Conflict of Interests in Fostering Transparency and Preventing Corruption in Jamaica, (Carter Centre 2002).
2. Public Service Regulations, Gazette no. 21951, Regulation Gazette 1, (5 January 2001)
3. Botswana Public Service General orders, Section 39.7 (1966)
4. The Anti-Corruption Coordinating Committee in South Africa has recommended that officials involved in procurement processes also be required to submit financial disclosure forms.
5. Guidelines on Official Conduct of Commonwealth Public Servants, Chapter 13, Public Service Commission, (Canberra 1995)
6. Republic of Philippines, Republic Act No. 6713, Section 11 (C)
As the festive season approaches, it makes sense to sit down with your personal financial adviser to draw up a will, if you haven’t done so already.

“It is important to ensure your wishes are reflected after your death by having a valid will,” says Charles Moonilal of Old Mutual Personal Financial Advice. “If your personal circumstances have changed in any way — for instance, you may have started a family — you should update your will. You should also ensure that your spouse and children know where it is located.”

Moonilal has compiled ten reasons why it is important to have a valid will.

1. **Intestacy can be avoided.**
   If someone dies intestate (i.e. with no valid will), the Law of Intestacy sets out who will inherit and in what proportions. One’s intestate heirs include: surviving spouse (legally married), children, adopted children, illegitimate children, parents and blood relatives. It is worth noting that relatives by marriage are not blood relatives and cannot inherit on intestacy. In other words, your in-laws cannot inherit from your estate if you die intestate.

Dying intestate can cause complications such as legal battles and your belongings being allocated contrary to your wishes.

2. **Assets will be distributed according to Testator’s wishes.**
3. **One’s own unique circumstances can be provided for.**
4. **Testamentary Trusts can be created.**
5. **Guardians can be nominated.**
6. **Delays in the administration of an estate can be avoided.**
7. **By planning your estate effectively, you and your beneficiaries will be able to enjoy the maximum from the estate during your lifetime and thereafter.**
8. **The opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to your favourite public benefit organisation.**
9. **Family disputes may be avoided.**
10. **Peace of mind.**
The North West province has a shortage of infrastructure, particularly in the remote rural areas and as a result is unable to compete in major markets. Poverty and illiteracy are rampant and the province has one of the highest unemployment rates as most people lack the necessary skills to compete in the labour market.

In addition to the high crime rate, the province also faces a major challenge as a result of the high HIV/AIDS infection rate.

The province can scarcely attract investments. Its net economic performance remains unacceptably low. As a result in the first provincial growth and development plan, (North West 2001), the province was caught up in the so-called "Poverty Trap".

Lack of discipline amongst departments often results in poorly compiled and unclear qualitative and quantitative service delivery targets (inputs-process-outputs) and outcome targets.

This case study outlines the strategy that was used by the North West provincial government to deal with these challenges.

**Problem statement**

The traditional budget system did not make provision for the medium to longer term promotion of integrated and sustainable growth and development goals and policies. The budget was negotiated on an annual incremental basis. There was more emphasis on expenditure processes and systems within cost item provisions rather than value for money considerations. The next figure shows departmental budget estimates with targeted functions and expenditure trends from the previous year without specified target outcomes and outputs.

In this case study, the North West Province takes us through crucial steps of turning a scary scenario into a self-sustaining process using project management techniques.
As illustrated at right the recurrent funding stream kept taking up an increasing proportion of the budget while the funding streams on maintenance of public assets and new public investments kept on decreasing. Less than 1% of the budget for North West Province, (R207 million) was allocated towards capital investment while actual expenditure on those projects was less than 50% (R97 million). This led the Cabinet in December 2001 to declare the capital investment in the North West as a matter of concern. Finding the public investment targets of the provincial growth and development plan under such conditions is almost impossible.

In addition to this, the province has to contend with the following:
• a deteriorating proportional allocation towards maintenance and new investment in the provincial budget;
• the increasing gap of finding the investment funding to fulfil the provincial mandate, obligation and commitment towards sustainable development and growth;
• capacity and systems challenges in motivating and stating clear qualitative and quantitative system delivery targets (inputs- process-outputs) and outcome targets; and
• inefficient and ineffective expenditure that is incurred annually to desperately spend budgets before the financial year comes to an end and when accountability for expenditure is not linked to targeted programme and project deliverables and outcomes.

According to the new North West 2012 Plan, for the province to escape the “poverty trap” and catch up on backlogs in job creation, service delivery and skills development, its economic should grow at an average of 8% per annum for the period 2002 to 2012. The minimum public investment requirement to realise this average economic growth is estimated at approximately R1.2 billion per annum in real terms provided that another R4.8 billion investment is leveraged from the private sector per annum.

The decision by National Treasury to offer conditional grants on a departmental programme, project and expenditure basis, confirmed that this is the correct road to follow.

**Policy Interventions and Tools**

To achieve integrated planning, programming and budgeting, North West had to come up with policy interventions since 1994 which included:
• almost every single facet of sustainable development was reviewed and new policies, white papers and legislation were introduced;
• transformation and restructuring of the public sector took place to bring government closer to the people and make the public sector more representative of the community within which it operates;
• frameworks and systems were introduced to focus government attention and energy on specially identified directions;
• special funding arrangements were designed and implemented to channel funds into priority streams and localities; and
• in 2000 government adopted a cluster approach that was designed to take departments out of their “pigeon holes” and challenge them to adopt a more integrated and macro approach towards growth and development.

An assessment of performances achieved with the implementation of North West 2001 confirmed the need to add the following policy interventions:
• The development of a common policy, planning and delivery framework for integrated and sustainable development and growth in the province, to facilitate improved and focused delivery through the three spheres of government and other partners in development.
• The introduction of plan management, Cluster-/Programme management and Project management systems and structures to ensure that the province delivers on its mandate.

**Descriptive overview**

**Establishing a Framework for Integrated and Sustainable growth and Development.**

When the formulation of the new 10-year growth and development plan was conceptualised in 2001, it was agreed that planning and delivery in the North West should be aligned with:
• the Framework and Programme for sustainable development that was recently reconfirmed in the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development;
• the Strategic Pillars of the National Strategic Vision that was placed in operation in 1995 and the Cluster approach adopted for the North West Province in 2002;
• the Cluster approach and structure that provides for intensive consultations and deliberations that also fully incorporate the contents of municipal integrated development plans and intensive consultations with a variety of stakeholders; and
• the municipal integrated planning methodology.

The figure on the following page illustrates how the three cluster committees in the province take responsibility for elements of the North West 2012 plan and how this is supported and guided by the environmental resource base and management plan. The framework is aligned with the International framework on sustainable development, but also gives recognition to the national strategic pillars and “Good Governance” as another key intervention in the South African context.

**The Project Management framework**

The project management framework is essentially a funding incentive to departments to start a system of pro-
Case Study

gramme and project registration, motivation, planning, programming and implementation. Its aim is to provide promote objectives, policies and priorities as provided for in the Provincial Development and Growth Plan (North West 2012) and its supporting and integrated Municipal Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).

As illustrated in the figure below right, this initiative does not replace the existing funding stream that recognises the importance of normal functional and regulatory activities. It is a complementary approach to ensure that there is sufficient and balanced provision for essential maintenance and replacement of existing public assets as well as new investments to remove backlogs and promote growth and development.

As illustrated in the figure, there is an added advantage and incentive from a host of other funding sources that can be exploited if the province can present programme and project plans that meet these terms and conditions.

The challenge is thus to introduce a project management system and structure that meets the specifications qualify for funding support from these funding institutions.

Typically the good practice arrangement of activities within organisations originates as suggested in the figure on the opposite page.

Whilst both functional and project activities are present in most organisations, the nature of activities determines a suitable approach in any particular circumstance. It further determines the shape of the institutions to drive that approach. Project activities are thus not inherently incompatible with “normal” operations but the mix of the two creates operational and institutional tensions that are a central preoccupations of project management in organisations.

The traditional administrative functionally-based bureaucratic organisational form is the most popular approach in government in general and in the North West Province in particular. In pursuing outcomes-oriented governance and enhancing outcomes-based accountability, the North West Provincial Administration agreed to discard its current approach in favour of a more appropriate project and programme management configuration in key areas.

At the project level:
- an individually accountable and suitably empowered project manager must be designated within the sponsor department for each and every project;
- project managers must be engaged in all matters affecting their projects;
- project management responsibilities must not be an “add-on”. They should be institutionalised in the job descriptions of those officials performing them;
- the principles and practices of project management must be applied in the definition and design of projects to determine specific management models applicable to individual projects or classes of projects; and
- the role of project management specialists to support project managers in the planning, organisation, implementation and control of projects must be institutionalised.

At the programme level:
- programme managers must be desig-
nated per programme with the initial responsibility and authority to coordinate project activities within the context of programmes; and
- the role of programme management specialists to support programme managers and the provincial policy cycle must be institutionalised.

At the cluster and inter-cluster level:
- the cluster system must be enhanced as a vehicle for achieving improved outcomes-focused governance in the North West Province; and
- as a provincial master plan involving activities across governance clusters, the North West 2012 Plan must be elevated to the inter-cluster level and managed from within the Office of the Premier.

Methodology and Process

Stakeholder analysis
Public Entities in all three spheres of governance are important stakeholders. A strategic decision was taken to introduce a Provincial Project Register that captures essential information on all projects in the province irrespective of whether these projects are implemented or funded by institutions in any of the other spheres of government. This is done to:
- have a complete perspective of most development initiatives that are taking place and thereby monitor the complete state of development and growth in the province;
- avoid possible duplications and conflicts that may result because of not knowing what the other party is doing;
- maximise synergies that could result from an integrated approach and economies of scale;
- fully integrate the provincial effort with the local government integrated development planning process and the infrastructure delivery and supply by the bulk supply authorities; and
- fully incorporate national government interventions regarding housing delivery, land reform and skills training within the provincial growth and development framework.

This information is gathered from alignment with existing project management systems in operation and also the IDP Nerve Centre project that is presently being implemented in the North West province.

The introduction of project management is not limited to the provincial public sector.

Resolutions were formulated at Provincial Intergovernmental Forums level that the Local Authorities are also eager to introduce project management and align with the provincial government system.

The primary clients are communities and people living in the province who demand the fulfilment of basic socio-economic rights, are, the creation of job opportunities and the development of human resource capacity to improve skills and competitiveness.

Negotiating a balance between competing demands
The revised and updated findings and conclusions of North West 2012 are debated at an annual Planning “Lekgotla” to find an optimal balance between competing demands. The primary issue to be resolved first is to find a compromise between funds required to continue normal operational responsibilities, funds required for essential maintenance and replacements and funds earmarked for development purposes.

Treasuries are confronted annually with very convincing arguments about why it is essential and contractually binding to find the money for increased operational expenditure. It is however equally true that much operational expenditure items can with little additional effort be transformed into project proposals with deliverables that can be motivated and targeted within a project management context and that allows for more effective and efficient expenditure control and output accountability.

It is further essential that ways and means must be found to secure necessary maintenance and meet new development and growth challenges in a sustainable society.

Although it has been found that governments are restricted in their ability to cut budgets for the immediate future, the three year planning horizon of the MTEF is allowing reasonable flexibility to give firmer budget directives for the second and third years of operations.

Whatever the outcome a firm decision on an indicative provision for each of these competing demands is a key performance indicator for project Management

Indicative provisions in terms of Provincial Growth Targets
Essentially, the provincial growth and development plans within certain poli-
ency, strategy and priority directives should conclude with firm calculations based on clear assumptions and conditions about the kind of desired investment pattern of the province. The ideal is for these calculations to depart from realistic assumptions and be objective, cluster and spatially focused.

Once again the provisions, targets and assumptions underlying the formulation of North West 2012 form the basis of policy reviews and debates at the planning “Lekgotla”. The important focus is on reaching some level of consensus regarding the best proportional mix between competing objectives and programmes on the one hand and the spatial dispensation of the province. Usually the total indicative provision is proportionally divided in accordance with planning directives derived from the North West 2012 proposals. However, other divisions can also be introduced at the discretion of the Executive Council.

This outcome is indicative only and merely serves as guideline and directive to departments on what the relative priority of programmes and spatial areas are. Departments and municipalities must first register project plans that confirms that these indicative amounts can be put to good use before a final allocation is approved by the Executive Council.

Reaching consensus in terms of the provincial plan and indicative provisions in an objectives, cluster and spatial matrix is another key performance indicator for project management.

Keeping of the Provincial Project Register

In terms of the MTEF and the MTSF, projects can be registered and planned for at least four years ahead of the implementation schedule. Projects that are registered in the project cycle for consideration of provincial funds form an important record and data base in support of the process of negotiating sufficient indicative provisions at the planning “Lekgotla”.

It follows that the motivation of indicative provisions for programmes and municipality areas could be substantially influenced by the number, values, motivations, target deliverables, localities and project cycle status of projects in the Project Register.

If sufficient projects are not yet registered in the project cycle at the time of the annual Planning Lekgotla, the chances are small that the shortfall can still be made up for the next financial year. This could lead to a decision that the indicative overprovision can be scaled down and/or be reallocated to another more deserving programme/spatial locality.

The project cycle is also a key performance indicator for project management.

Managing the Project Cycle

Negotiating an indicative funding provision at the Planning Lekgotla is not the final decision. It is merely an indication of intent on behalf of government and an opportunity and incentive to departments and municipalities to finalise their programme and project business plans and submit them for final consideration and approval. This is achieved by ensuring that a programme/project plan is prepared and motivated that deserves a funding allocation in the budget.

In the North West this is achieved by taking the project systematically through the phases of the project cycle as depicted in the figure above.

The Independent Development Trust (IDT) has been active in establishing project management systems, formulating procedural manuals and formats, conducting project management training and providing counselling and support to departments. To date this entails directives for project registration, preparation, appraisal and prioritisation.

An important innovation through assistance of the DBSA has been the design of project planning compliance criteria; the introduction of seven categories of appraisal and prioritisation criteria; the identification of six questions to be asked for each criterion and three possible ratings for each answer given. An independent Project Appraisal Team (PAT) has been appointed to perform the appraisal and prioritisation of programme/project plans received and inform the cluster committees accordingly.

The project cycle is a key performance indicator for project management.

The MTEF Lekgotla

The Planning Lekgotla that takes place in July/August is scheduled to be followed by a MTEF Lekgotla towards late October/November each year. This Lekgotla represents the final opportunity for departments to finalise and confirm their MTEF estimates of expenditure for the next three years and the Executive Council to introduce final directives and decisions. (It is also at this Lekgotla that new strategic issues are discussed and processed for consideration of the Cabinet Lekgotla in January every year.)

The indicative budget provisions as per the matrix developed at the Planning Lekgotla are finally reviewed at this MTEF Lekgotla. In terms of a directive of the Executive Council only projects that have reached the Project Pipeline phase of the project cycle, (i.e. project plans have been received and assessed by PAT) can be considered for incorporation into the budget provision for the next financial year. The argument is that projects that have not at least reached this phase of the project cycle carry the risk that they will not be ready for implementation in the new financial year and should better be phased out for implementation in another year.

The Executive Council formulates a final position in terms of projects that have reached the pipeline and the budget provisions per programme/spatial area for the next year. They are guided in this process by the outcome of the PAT priority ratings and recommendations formulated by the Cluster Committees.

The MTEF Lekgotla is another key performance indicator for the project cycle.

Project Monitoring

Project monitoring takes place from the Project Registration, prioritisation and monitoring model as and when required. The information is available to all departments and can be accessed through the internet by HODs, MECs and project managers. Every institution takes responsibility for the upkeep of the project register and progress
achieved. Expenditure records are aligned with the financial accounting system in the province and physical and financial accountability is applied on a project-by-project basis by project managers and accounting officers.

Project monitoring is also a key performance indicator of project management.

**Achievements**

Within three months of the Exco resolution to adopt a Project Management approach, Departmental Infrastructure plans for roads, health facilities, school facilities and rural development amounting to R2.488.218.000 for the MTEF: 2002/05 period were submitted. In May 2003 this plan covering 523 projects was approved and ready for implementation. Performances around these projects improved to a level where in the May 2003 it was reported to Cabinet that:

- The allocation towards development projects in North West improved to 9.8% of the total budget (R1034 million in 2002/03).
- For future years the allocation towards development has improved to approximately 8-10% of the total provision for these years.
- Actual expenditure on these projects Improved to more than 90% of the budget in 2002/03 (R943 million).

Contrary to the 2001 report when there was very little project information available to substantiate the figures presented there is now a Provincial Project Register in place. Although not yet 100% complete and correct, this register contains base date on 2,273 projects. In this table the projects have been allocated per cluster, department, project cycle phase and targeted MTEF year. As the information base improves it should give information regarding sector, sub-sector, category, type, locality, targeted deliverables and indicators, targeted cost estimates and target start and completion dates.

With the implementation of the IDP Nerve Centre project the IDP should be reached soon where there is credible alignment between the provincial and the Municipal IDPs. It is also hoped that towards the end of this financial year the province will be able to also fully incorporate national systems such as CMIP, the Housing Programme, Water Supply Programme and Electricity Programme on the Provincial Project Register.

Actual expenditure and performance records per individual project is an exciting reality of the new system and should in future improve effectiveness and efficiency of projects and a stronger outcome/output base than ever before. The bottom line for success is however full commitment and support from departments for correct data capturing in the register.

The contribution of the Project Registration towards improved decision making was evident in the outcome from the monthly status reports produced in 2002/03 and the annual report to the Executive Council that evaluated all performances and risks.

**Lessons of Experience and Risk assessment**

The greatest lesson was that although most departments were supportive of the concept and improvements that it holds for effective and efficient management, they were actually hoping that the project management approach will not succeed and that it will gradually disappear from the scene. The reason for this is the very definite accountability for project delivery and project expenditure that is instilled on departments. Added to this is the responsibility on project managers to keep the project management information system updated and correct knowing that they could be held accountable for the information entered at any stage by any superior.

The initial design and implementation of the system took time as some procedures and systems had to be reviewed and adjusted to make them suitable for all circumstances. In addition, there was an element of resistance and scepticism from many project managers to leave their old individual project management systems and data basis in favour of the new system.

The active support of all national and provincial departments for this very important project in the North West is essential. This includes technical and financial support and assistance to make sure that this very important initiative does not fail. Problems experienced must be resolved as they appear. It is important that a very good initiative such as this does not fail because of a lack of capacity and commitment.

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Service Delivery Enhancement

The GJ Crookes Hospital Experience

Sister TG Mkhize, a Chief Professional Nurse at the hospital, tracks the journey that has been travelled by staff at this small rural hospital in gallant efforts to extend services to one of the neediest sectors of South African society.

GJ Crookes Hospital was founded in 1939 and officially opened on 16 December that same year. The hospital was built on land that was donated by the late Mr George Joseph Crookes on the Natal coast 70km from Durban and 2km from the Indian Ocean. The hospital is situated in the Ugu North Health sub district which is part of Ugu District 21 covering three municipalities: Umdoni, Vulamehlo and part of Mzumbe. Based on figures from Census 2001, the hospital is estimated to be serving a population of approximately 290 259. The total staff compliment is 552 posts and 420 employed in the hospital and 153 employed in Primary Health Care.

**Services offered at the institution**
The hospital currently offers the following services: Primary Health Care — Adult and Pediatric; Outpatients and Casualty; Physiotherapy; Pharmacy; Communicable diseases (Drop in Centre); Medical impatient; Surgical impatient; Obstetrics and gynae; Pediatric impatient; Radiography; Laboratory; Siyanakekela Crisis Centre (Rape and abuse); Operating theatres; 13 Fixed Clinics; and four mobile clinic services.

**Our journey to quality service delivery through Batho Pele**
The Batho Pele concept was introduced to GJ Crookes Hospital in 2000. The challenge for the hospital was to improve district services for the 290 000 people. A provincial trainer was assigned to GJ Crookes Hospital to conduct oneday workshops for all staff in
the institution. Approximately 99% of all staff participated in these workshops. Thereafter a huge colourful function attended by 250 community members to launch Batho Pele was held in December 2000. Most of the sponsorship for that function came from Sappi Saiccor company, one of the largest industries in the area.

The process

1. Making people aware of Batho Pele
This was initiated by the Provincial Trainer. This gave the staff some insight into what Batho Pele is all about. The training that was given was insufficient as it targeted too many people in a short space of time.

   There was no time to clarify issues in light of the fact that a new concept was introduced that was hitherto unknown to staff.

   This was followed by workshops by SAMDI (South African Management Development Institute). These workshops began in May 2001 and targeted the frontline personnel, middle managers and senior managers. The frontline personnel were targeted first with the belief that being in direct contact with customers, they are the people at the coalface of delivery.

   By June 2002, 80% of the staff were trained. This number could have changed now due to resignations and new recruits.

2. Formation of Batho Pele Task Team
After the Batho Pele launch in 2000 there was a period of uncertainty at GJ Crookes Hospital. No one knew what to do next. A group of concerned persons came together to discuss how the hospital would handle the implementation process.

   Meetings were held with almost everyone to try and find our feet. Some of the meetings were a success while others were unsuccessful because of lack of guidance.

   It was only when we had established a relationship with SAMDI, through training and support that progress began to emerge.

   The Batho Pele Task Team was formed. Its main functions were to:
   • drive the implementation process and ensure sustainability;
   • support the Batho Pele Executives;
   • support fundraising projects;
   • report to management regularly, and
   • monitor progress.
3. Batho Pele Executives
A decision was then reached to appoint Batho Pele executives. These are representatives in each unit that work with the Batho Pele task team in effecting changes and ensuring that the Batho Pele principles are adhered to. In short, they are change agents who work hand in hand with their unit managers.

4. Internal and external climate survey
This was conducted in October 2003 in order to establish customers’ needs and expectations in line with our implementation strategy. The Batho Pele Task Team and Senior Management are currently working on the current service baseline to establish the existing gaps in relation to the expectations of customers.

5. Support structures
To further strengthen our efforts and ensure continual support to the process, the following constitute our support pillars:

1. The interim Public Relations Officer (PRO)
2. Management Support
3. SAMDI — Training
4. Task Team
5. Batho Pele Executives

Results

Patient waiting time
A survey was conducted in 2000 with the aim of improving time spent by patients in the hospital — especially outpatients.

The results of the survey proved that some of the patients waited as long as eight hours — something that is not very favourable to the community we are serving.

The results of that survey saw the birth of our Gateway Clinic. This was to try and eliminate the long queues of patients waiting to see the doctors. The staff allocated to this clinic are all trained in Primary Health Care, where they examine and give medication accordingly.

Batho Pele Executives
Training and inauguration of Batho Pele Executives was conducted by SAMDI in June 2002 to ensure that the representatives in each unit are on the same wavelength of information. Guidance was given and their roles and responsibilities clarified to them. Inauguration was done on the final day of the workshop and each was given a colourful badge to wear at all times. The badge indicates where the person is allocated.

Introduction of quality circles (cross functional teams)
This was introduced after the training of the Batho Pele executives. It is a function shared by the executives and members of the task team. Members of management join if they are not very busy. A structured format was compiled on how to assess implementation in each unit. Quality circles are conducted quarterly.

Complaints handling committee
This committee meets every second Thursday of the month to deal with complaints from the suggestion boxes that are situated in all units. Responses are sent to all complaints and suggestions that have names and address attached. Compliments are also addressed in the same manner, and staff complimented by the public are given an additional compliment letter signed by the Hospital Manager.

Recognising service excellence
This was a Task Team initiative to recognise employees that demonstrate excellent performance and are prepared to go the extra mile. The divisions involved are: Nursing; Administration and Ancillary; General Service Workers; and Medical.

Each winner receives a floating trophy and a certificate of recognition signed by the Hospital Manager.

Increasing openness and transparency
All round the hospital there are notice boards with photographs of unit managers, Batho Pele executives, Health and Safety representatives, a copy of Hospital Mission statement and Batho Pele principles.

Baby-friendly hospital status
This was an award that was received for promoting breastfeeding in our maternity section. Mothers are discouraged from using formula feeding because of all associated problems.

Birth companionship
Birth companionship was a nursing management initiative. The structure of the labour ward was altered so as to accommodate single units to allow husbands or a family member to support the woman in labour. It also allows optimum privacy for the woman during delivery. This initiative was welcomed by members of the community.

Quarterly newsletter
The hospital newsletter was started in September 2001. A competition was run for staff to come up with a name, which aroused a lot of interest. The final name adopted was Asikhulume — “Lets Talk” — and way before the TV talk show which came shortly after. Issues of interest and new developments in the institution are communicated in this newsletter.

Changing the image of the hospital
Nursing personnel, who constitute approximately two-thirds of the staff establishment, are a very important component in projecting the image of the hospital. The nursing management made a request to the nursing staff to standardise their uniform. A uniform committee was elected and they conducted a survey to establish the nurses’ preferences in terms of colour and pattern. The decisions taken thereafter saw a change of image for the hospital and nursing staff looking smarter and more professional than ever before.

Challenges encountered
The change process in the hospital was characterised by a number of challenges, some of which included negative attitude of staff in relating to clients and colleagues. There was also poor commitment to any new concept introduced as these were viewed as additional workload and a waste of time. There were also conflicts between departments and this related to poor communication, lack of understanding of each others role in the organisation, lack of buy-in and general resistance from staff members.

We also encountered the problem of lack of adequate funds for training and other needs, and staff shortages especial-
ly in the nursing division. There was a continuous rotation of nursing staff (Batho Pele Executives). The physical layout of the hospital in itself posed a major challenge.

One other challenge we encountered was signage to the hospital. There is poor access because of lack of direction signs, especially on the national road. This is currently being attended to by management.

Poor cooperation from supervisors was also a major challenge. Initially, some supervisors viewed Batho Pele Executives as a threat. This was corrected through discussions and meetings with the unit managers to clarify the roles of the executives and to stress the importance of sharing responsibilities with them.

**Threats**

Despite the successes of the initiative, threats still exist in our journey towards improved service delivery in the hospital. These include the high attrition rate and the impact on staff morale and motivation.

Staff retention will remain the biggest challenge. Importantly, the sustainability of the project also remains the biggest threat to the progress we have made. Above all, the hospital faces a major financial hurdle as training funds are drying out.

**Strengths**

Despite the challenges we have encountered and the imminent threats we face, we can confidently say we can attribute our success to a number of pillars that have been our strengths. These are:
- dedicated staff;
- supportive management;
- support from SAMDI;
- quality assurance pre-accreditation status — quality improvement projects;
- support from local business sector;
- supportive Hospital Board; and
- support from local community.

**Lessons learned**

We have learned a number of lessons in this process. One of the important lessons is: “Do it properly or don’t do it at all”. We have realised that superficial training does not work.

SAMDI training was very informative and insightful, aroused a lot of interest, and focused directly on service delivery. Training is an integral part to service delivery improvement.

Staff involvement is crucial. We have come out of this process having learnt to never underestimate people’s potential. Management support cannot be over emphasised. Related to these issues is the need for commitment from all stakeholders.

Crucially, our experience has taught us that not all improvements need money, and that continuous improvements are manageable. There is no need to reinvent the wheel.

We also learned that partnerships were pivotal to the success of the initiative. We have realised that it is important to get local business on board as they have played a crucial role thus far.
Banker to the Poor: The Story of the Grameen Bank
By Muhammad Yunus

Reviewed by Bongani Matomela

This book is a narration of the story about the bank of poor women called the Grameen (village) Bank. It is a moving account of the trials and tribulations encountered by Muhammad Yunus, a Professor of Economics at Chittagong University in Bangladesh, who single-handedly started the micro-credit institution from scratch. The model for this institution has been replicated the world over from the remote mountain communities in Nepal to Chicago’s inner city.

It all started with the 1974 famine in Bangladesh. From humble beginnings, driven by his quest to understand the day-to-day realities of poverty and its economics in Jobra, a small Bangladesh village, he started a women’s farming project to help villagers grow more food. With most of the women, either widowed, divorced or abandoned with children to feed, landless and assetless, too poor to even be sharecroppers and totally hopeless, he struggled to convince conventional banks to lend them money against their claims that the poor had no collateral.

Grameen is the soundest financial institution today. More than 22 years after its inception, $42.3 million has been lent to 2.3 million families. Through the Grameen Trust, 59 countries in the world are replicating the Grameen experience and 63 programmes have already been established in several countries around the world.

This book shows how micro-credit for income-generating projects and housing for the poor can go a long way towards improving people’s lives. Grameen managed to provide loans to the poor with sound commercial principles. More importantly, the impressive repayment rate the Bank has experienced also disproves the myth that poor people cannot repay loans.

In Bangladesh today out of 2.1 million borrowers, 94% are women. The author says about the success of the project, “We have worked with the poorest people in one of the poorest countries on earth, Bangladesh village women who have no land and who have never touched money before in their lives, women who cannot read and write … working with these people we maintained a recovery record of over 98%."

Yunus and his team did not know anything about how to run a bank for the poor, so they had to learn from scratch. In one world summit on micro-credit, Yunus found himself thinking of how his first group of borrowers radically changed him from a bird-eye-view economist to being a worm-eye-view practitioner helping to effect real and lasting change in people’s lives.

This is a model of community development and how institutionalised financial assistance can help. It is a very useful book for people working on poverty issues and community development for the poor.

Batho Pele Handbook

The Batho Pele Handbook follows on from a number of other similar initiatives by DPSA to assist public service managers with practical guidelines aimed primarily at addressing the twin challenges of managerial incapacity and service delivery improvement.

For its part, the Handbook is a rich tapestry of good practice management guides answering to the three fundamental phases of the service delivery model: planning, implementation and monitoring. In this sense the Handbook is a comprehensive toolkit that is sufficiently broad to enable managers to face service delivery challenges with relative ease.

The blend of simple writing and illustrative diagrams makes it a pleasure to read. However, the success of the Handbook depends on the commitment by public service managers to implement the ideas it pronounces.

The book comprises 10 chapters, all of which are a must-read. The first chapter outlines the context issues regarding public service delivery, that is the legislative framework, and government priorities on service delivery and further articulates their linkages to the machinery of Government and Batho Pele. The latter is highlighted not as a mere government pronouncement on service delivery but a critical policy thrust which every public service official should seek to apply in improving service delivery to customers.

The rest of the chapters are issue-based and provide step-by-step guidelines in terms of implementation. The issues covered range from translating strategic objectives into operational plans, delegating, handling complaints and consulting to name but a few.

Users of the Handbook are requested to give feedback to DPSA. This feedback is intended for, among others, updating the contents of the Handbook and, more importantly, guiding the development of similar initiatives in future.

The Batho Pele Handbook is available on the DPSA website and hard copies that have already been distributed to national and provincial departments.
SA in YOUR HANDS!

To order your copy of the South Africa Yearbook or the Pocket Guide to South Africa (Available in early 2004) please contact Bronwyn Silva on:
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A mother and a baby camel were lazily around, and suddenly the baby camel asked, “Mother, mother, may I ask you some questions?”

Mother: “Sure! Why son, is there something bothering you?”

Baby: “Why do camels have humps?”

Mother: “Well son, we are desert animals, we need the humps to store water and we are known to survive without water.”

Baby: “Okay, then why are our legs long and our feet rounded?”

Mother: “Son, obviously they are meant for walking in the desert. You know with these legs I can move around the desert better than anyone does!”

Baby: “Okay, then why are our eyelashes long? Sometimes it bothers my sight.”

“My son, those long thick eyelashes are your protective cover. They help to protect your eyes from the desert sand and wind,” said mother camel with eyes rimming with pride.

At 4am the next morning, Scotland Yard and local county police showed up and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologised to the old man and left. That same day the old man received another letter from his son. “Dear Papa, Go ahead and plant the vegetables now. That’s the best I could do under the circumstances. Love, Clemence.”
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