

INTRODUCTION TO CORES AND THE OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM



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1 INTRODUCTION TO CORES

1.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW COMPENSATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

1.1.1 The need for change

Prior to the implementation of the Public Service Regulations, 1999 salaries of employees in the Public Service were centrally determined. Factors such as academic qualifications and experience within the public service of employees largely determined the grading of occupations and differences in salaries. These factors effectively discriminated against people who had faced discrimination in education and in access to government jobs.

The previous system attempted to ensure equal pay for equal work by imposing uniform job descriptions by occupation across the public service. This approach blocked the development of new service delivery systems in the following ways:

Departments had to slot all jobs into pre-determined centralised service dispensations known as Personnel Administration Standards (PAS's), rather than re-organising work to meet the demands of new policies.

The PAS's over-emphasised specific formal qualifications and neglected other indicators of competency, such as experience outside the public service, alternative qualifications, or informal training. As a result, they excluded highly competent people from public-service jobs.

Amendments to PAS's had to be negotiated centrally, which clogged up central negotiations and caused delays in reorganising work to implement new policies.

Career paths for lower level workers were absent in PAS's and promotion opportunities for most of these employees were almost non-existent.

1.1.2 The New Regulatory Framework

The 1997 and 1998 amendments to the Public Service Act aimed to overcome the over centralisation of the Public Service. They shifted control of work organisation from the Public Service Commission to executing authorities. The new legislative framework was incompatible with the old Public Service Regulations, the Public Service Staff Code and the PAS's.

New Public Service Regulations were consequently developed, in line with the amended Act, and implemented with effect from 1 July 1999. Matters of mutual interest, including grading for occupations, were left to collective agreements.

In this context, the new compensation management system supplement

the new legislative framework and comprise of the following four components:

(i) *The Public Service Regulations, 1999*

The new Regulations conceptualise the determination of salaries in the Public Service on two levels.

First, the Minister for the Public Service and Administration determines on a centralised level (a) salary scale(s) and allowances for all employees who fall within the ambit of the Labour Relations Act, 1995 in the course of the relevant collective bargaining process.

Second, executing authorities determine the grading of jobs within the framework contained in the Regulations and collective agreements.

The Labour Relations Act (1995) defines the negotiations process required for the determination of salaries in the public service. The sections of the PAS related to grading remain in force as a collective agreement until renegotiated.

(ii) *Job evaluation*

The Regulations implement a job evaluation system to determine the comparative value of jobs. The system aims to entrench the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

A job evaluation system rates jobs according to specified criteria, so that the value of the jobs to the employer can be compared. It does not consider the performance of individuals in the job, or whether the job is appropriately defined.

The job evaluation system known as EQUATE has been customised for the needs and circumstances of our public service. It evaluates jobs on the basis of the following five factors:

- Responsibility
- Thinking Demands
- Knowledge
- Communication and contacts
- Environment.

To evaluate a job, trained personnel conduct an interview of the job holder and complete a questionnaire. They then process the data with a computer software system to allocate a numerical value, known as a job weight, to the post.

During the development of the EQUATE system approximately 1000 posts in the Public Service, representing most large occupational classes, were evaluated. The results of this benchmark study were utilised to link salary ranges (grades) to job weight ranges.

(iii) *Collective agreements*

In terms of the Public Service Laws Amendment Act, 1998 the old Public Service Regulations and Public Service Staff Code are being repealed and

replaced with the new Public Service Regulations. The repealed Public Service Regulations and Public Service Staff Code as well as other associated prescripts regulated issues of mutual interest such as benefits and allowances. As provided in the new Public Service Regulations, collective agreements will regulate matters of mutual interest.

This strategy aims to promote clarity because collective agreements can use relatively direct language and disentangle directives to managers from commitments to employees. Changes or amendments to the collective agreements must be negotiated in the relevant council, either the PSCBC or a sectoral council.

The collective agreement on remuneration, allowances and benefits (resolution 3/99) has two main parts.

- An extensive section replaces provisions on allowances and benefits in the former Public Service Regulations, Staff Code and the PAS.
- A separate section includes an agreement to negotiate grading and promotions in the relevant sectoral or departmental council. It sets guidelines for upgrading and downgrading positions.

This agreement essentially constitutes an agreement to retain existing grading and rank or leg promotions for occupations included in the PAS until they are renegotiated. Negotiations on grading or regrading would then take place in the appropriate council, depending on the location of people in the occupation. Newly defined positions that do not fit an occupation defined by the PAS would be graded using the COREs and EQUATE job-evaluation system, with consultation or negotiation with labour if necessary.

(iv) Codes of Remuneration (COREs)

In the past, departments could use the PAS to define new jobs and set remuneration levels. The COREs aim to provide improved advice with respect to the definition and grading of jobs, without reinstating this prescriptive framework. They also establish a new system for categorising employment, in order to analyse trends in public-service employment.

The COREs therefore include three parts:

- A link between salary ranges and job-weight ranges derived from PERSAL.
- A description of normal competencies and indicators of competency by salary level, which effectively defines promotion requirements from level 1 to level 15 in all major occupations.
- An occupational code, which will be included on PERSAL for individual employees.

Consultation in respect of the development of COREs has been achieved by submitting the COREs at strategic stages of the developmental process

on three different occasions to departments to provide them with opportunities for inputs and comments. Two workshops with trade unions and workshops with focus groups of employees were also held.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The COREs seek to support:

- Improved managerial decision making in respect of remuneration and employment by –
 - linking competencies to salary levels by major occupations;
 - identifying key indicators of competencies for occupations; and
 - giving information in an easily accessible format.
- Improved career development in major occupations for employees at all levels, especially by indicating how lower graded workers can progress to major production groups by obtaining new competencies, and by delineating career paths for occupational streams.
- More appropriate work organisation by helping managers to enrich job descriptions.
- The establishment of internationally recognised occupational categories to support analysis of employment trends, so that the public service can track developments and needs.
- The linkage of COREs to a qualifications framework to make it easier for public servants at all levels to obtain evidence of competency to support their career progression.

1.3 OVERVIEW

The complete set of COREs consist of 21 COREs for employees employed in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994 and three COREs for line function personnel in the Department of Safety and Security, Department of Correctional Services and the Department of Defence. The Department of Defence refers to its CORE as a Personnel Management Code (PMC). The 21 COREs for Public Service Act personnel are contained in five volumes. The table below provides an overview.

CORE NUMBER	CORE TITLE	TYPICAL AREAS OF EMPLOYMENT (ALL LEVELS)	WHERE TO FIND IT
1.	Health Associated Sciences and Support Personnel	Housekeeping Food services Chiropody Environmental health Health therapy	Volume I
2.	Nursing and Support Personnel	Nursing services	Volume I
3.	Medical Sciences and Support Personnel	Medical practice Dental practice Pharmacology Medical research	Volume I
4.	Medical Technology and Support Personnel	Medical technology Orthopaedic shoemaking Optometry	Volume I
5.	Social Services and Support Personnel	Social services Probation Child and youth care Community development	Volume I
6.	Administrative Line Function and Support Personnel	Clerical work Administrative customer services Administrative policy formulation Appraising, valuating and related services Foreign affairs and diplomatic services	Volume II
7.	Management and General Support Personnel	Financial support Human resource support Housekeeping and food services Logistical support Security and related services Secretarial services Heads of departments	Volume II
8.	Regulatory and Support Personnel	Inspections Investigations Law enforcement Testing/training	Volume II
9.	Communication and Information Related Personnel	Liaison services Archivalia, libraries and related services History recording Museum services Writing and creative/performing arts	Volume II
10.	Legal and Support Personnel	Legal representations and prosecutions Court interpretation/translation Deeds registration Legal policy development and advice	Volume III
11.	Economic Advisory and Support Personnel	Financial and economic policy development Chartered accounting Mathematical, statistical and related services	Volume III
12.	Human Resource and Support Personnel	Human resource and labour policy development Labour relations Organisational development Human resource development	Volume III
13.	Information Technology and Related Personnel	Information technology and information management services Policy formulation	Volume III

CORE NUMBER	CORE TITLE	TYPICAL AREAS OF EMPLOYMENT (ALL LEVELS)	WHERE TO FIND IT
14.	Artisan and Support Personnel	Handcraft Road works Artisan services Trade testing Works inspections	Volume IV
15.	Engineering Related and Support Personnel	Industrial technical services Architecture Surveying Engineering	Volume IV
16.	Safety and Related Personnel	Safety, health and quality inspection services	Volume IV
17.	Emergency Services and Related Personnel	Fire fighting services Ambulance services Emergency services	Volume IV
18.	Natural Sciences Related and Support Personnel	Industrial technical services Meteorological services Chemical, physical and natural sciences	Volume V
19.	Agricultural Related and Support Personnel	Agricultural research Agricultural development Meat inspections Forestry services	Volume V
20.	Ships' and Support Personnel	Maritime services	Volume V
21.	Aviation Personnel	Air traffic communication Air traffic control Aircraft piloting Air traffic and aviation technical services	Volume V

1.4 FORMAT AND LAYOUT OF CORES

All COREs have been developed within the parameters of a systematic framework. The result of this is consistency and uniformity in respect of the layout of all 24 COREs. The most important aspects of the format of the COREs are described below in more detail.

1.4.1 Cover

(i) Title

The title of each CORE is reflected by the occupational category on the first page of a CORE, e.g. Administrative Line Function and Support Personnel. CORE titles are generic in nature to include all jobs within a particular functional field.

(ii) General scope of service delivery

The general scope of service delivery outlines, in broad terms, the outputs of the employees appointed in accordance with a particular CORE.

(iii) Notes

Provision has been made in the first part of a CORE to flag the following important transverse matters by means of notes:

- Requirements for employment
- Statutory requirements
- Salary codes.

(iv) Overview of career path possibilities

A graphic exposition indicates career path possibilities between major occupational groups covered in a specific CORE. A synopsis of what is needed to progress to another major occupational group is also provided.

(v) Profile of major groups

This part of the CORE contains a concise description of the major occupational groups dealt with in the CORE and a quick reference of where to find the guidelines in respect of typical jobs.

1.4.2 Content

The content of a CORE is presented in tabular form and hinges, holistically seen, on two dimensions i.e. a vertical dimension and a horizontal dimension.

(i) Vertical dimension

The various layers, or levels, of a CORE represents the vertical dimension. All COREs span from salary ranges 1 to 15 with the exception of the CORE for Management and General Support Personnel which also includes salary range 16 to provide for Heads of Department.

The prescripts in a CORE are provided per salary range and are therefore part of the vertical dimension. The prescriptive section contains the following information:

- Salary ranges
- Job Weight Ranges
- Salary codes
- Occupational classification codes.

In order to effect the payment of salaries by means of PERSAL and PERSOL departments will have to utilise both the salary code and the relevant occupational classification code of an employee.

(ii) Horizontal dimension

The horizontal dimension of a CORE contains the guidelines. The information contained in the guidelines of COREs is advice provided by the Department of Public Service and Administration. This information is multi-purpose in nature and should inform decision making in respect of various human resources matters at departmental level. The Public Service Regulations, 1999, indicate that an executing authority may substitute the competencies and requirements in the guidelines of a CORE with its own requirements and competencies. The information is organised and presented per major occupational group. The guidelines consist of the following elements:

(aa) Generic job content

Employees who are on the same salary range in the same CORE often perform divergent jobs but there is something that they have in common, which constitutes the generic aspect of their jobs. The following elements are covered in this column:

- ❑ Capacity in which an employee is utilised
- ❑ Autonomy of an employee in her/his job
- ❑ Responsibilities in respect of financial resources, equipment and machinery, stores, livestock, land and buildings
- ❑ Advice
- ❑ Type of job information utilised by an employee
- ❑ Level on which problems are dealt with
- ❑ Extent of planning expected from an employee
- ❑ Level of decisions that are made
- ❑ Nature of interaction with clients/staff
- ❑ Nature of supervision/management of staff.

Not all these elements are dealt with on each level of a CORE. It is for example not normally required of lower graded employees to provide advice and manage subordinates.

(bb) Job outputs

This section of a CORE gives typical examples of important job outputs expected from employees at each grade.

(cc) Competency profile

The competency profile indicates the competencies required to deliver the job outputs referred to in subparagraph (bb) under the following headings:

- ❑ Knowledge
- ❑ Skills
- ❑ Communication (verbal and non-verbal)
- ❑ Creativity.

(dd) Indicators of competency

This section suggests indicators of competencies typically needed for specific grades in the CORE. The following are covered:

- ❑ Formal qualifications
- ❑ Training (other than formal qualifications)
- ❑ Experience
- ❑ Statutory requirements.

1.4.3 Addenda

Two documents accompany each CORE and should be read with the relevant CORE.

(i) *Dimensions of knowledge*

This document indicates different dimensions of the knowledge referred to in the competency profile.

(ii) *Guide: Transition to CORE*

This document indicates which of the occupations that existed before the introduction of the COREs can be covered by a particular CORE. A breakdown of ranks and post classes per salary range is also given. The document is not an integral part of the CORE and will not be updated and amended in future. It is, however, a key document in creating an initial understanding of the CORE.

1.5 REMUNERATION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

1.5.1 Salary determination and the CORE

The CORE gives the link between salary ranges and job weight ranges. The Public Service Regulations, 1999 stipulate that the commencing salary of an employee should be set at the minimum notch of the salary range attached to the relevant grade, unless the salary is inadequate in terms of the criteria in Part V.C.3 of the Regulations. The sixteen salary ranges with the various salary notches, which are effective from 1 July 1999, are contained in the document at Annexure A.

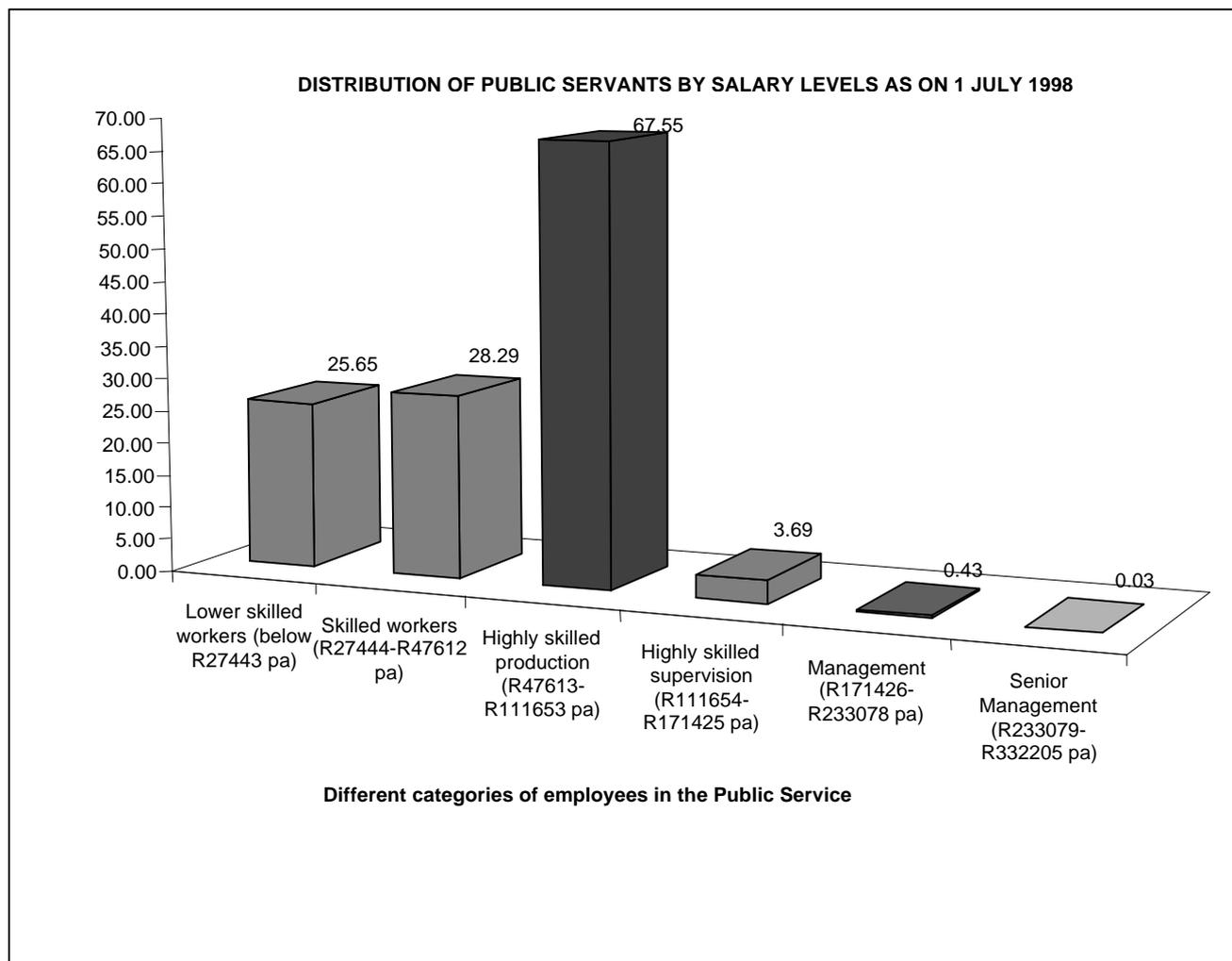
The CORE also provides advice with regard to the generic job content, examples of job outputs, competency profile and learning indicators of typical jobs linked to a specific salary range in a CORE. It should be noted that this part provides only advice. *Where the job contents of a specific post does not correlate with the information contained in a CORE, the result of a job evaluation should always take precedence in determining the salary attached to a particular post.*

1.5.2 The Public Service and the labour market

In determining salaries, the overall labour market and normal incomes in the public service provide an important context.

According to the 1996 census published by Statistics South Africa (SSA), South Africa has a total population of 40 million. The economically active population was 14 million. The Public Service employs 1.1 million people, of whom around three quarters are teachers, health workers, police or defence force employees.

A breakdown of the salaries earned for the following categories of personnel in the Public Service is provided below:



1.6 CORES AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the implementation of the Public Service Regulations career pathing in the Public Service was confined to what the system of PAS's allowed. PAS's contained post class structures which were linked to appointment and promotion requirements and limited career progression to what was possible in terms of the post class structure for a specific occupation of a specific PAS. Many occupational classes were narrowly defined, even though there were an overlap of job content, and this had a detrimental effect on career progression. Lateral career progression possibilities were also not strongly emphasised in the PAS's.

The way in which lower graded workers – around a fifth of all public servants - were classified in PAS's effectively limited their careers to salary

ranges one and two. The PAS's only provided for promotion to first-level supervisory posts, which number about a fifth as many as production posts. Career progression opportunities after that were even smaller, since the ratio of second level supervision posts to first level supervision posts is around 1 to 15.

The majority of other occupational classes had fairly well defined career paths (taking the inherent shortcomings of the previous system into consideration) but once the majority of employees reached salary range 8 they could only progress further if they changed roles from production to middle management.

In contrast to the PAS, a standardised competency based career system like the CORE ensures a common understanding on the requirements for job effectiveness, identifies developmental opportunities and provides a road map for employees to plan their careers using personal development plans. For managers, it should help in planning to fill future vacancies. Once career progression patterns are identified, more systematic forecasting of staffing requirements is possible. Career planning and development can also contribute to meet affirmative action objectives by preparing members of designated groups for career progression.

Career development was a major consideration in the design and development of COREs. All employees, regardless of their level in the hierarchy, who perform a job in one of the 24 demarcated fields of service delivery have been clustered together in a CORE to foster career development. All COREs consequently contain the following categories of employees:

- Support personnel
- Production workers
- Professionals/specialists
- Supervisors/middle management
- Senior Management

This structure ends the disjunction in the career paths of employees in the Public Service.

COREs define outputs and competencies on the various levels, which provides a basis for career pathing. Overall, the linking of salaries to competencies establishes a new paradigm and lays the foundation for the linking of COREs to the National Qualifications Framework.

Because most public servants engage in producing goods and services, there are many more career progression opportunities in production capacities than in supervisory or managerial capacities. Thus, especially for lower-level workers, it is important to target promotion into production jobs for purposes of career pathing. Each CORE contains for this purpose an overview of career progression opportunities between the major occupational groups covered in that particular CORE. A synopsis of what employees need to progress or move to another major occupational group is also provided.

Career paths should represent realistic progression possibilities, whether lateral or upward, without implied “normal” rates of progression or forced technical specialisation. Career paths should furthermore be flexible and responsive to changes in job content, strategic objectives, organisational structures and management needs. The following career path possibilities exist:

a. Between different COREs

COREs should not be regarded as silos and career movement is possible between different COREs. In fact, in view of the nature of COREs it may be necessary for an employee to be linked to more than one CORE in the course of her/his career.

b. Between different occupational groups in the same CORE

The nature of the jobs that are performed within a major occupational group determine to a large extent the possible scope of progression. Elementary workers have for example limited progression possibilities and should be linked to other major occupational groups who perform production jobs.

c. Within a major occupational group in the same CORE

Major occupational groups consist of a myriad of related occupations. Some of these occupations require similar competencies and a hierarchy of jobs within a major occupational group are referred to as an occupational stream. A major occupational group can consist of various occupational streams. Career pathing within an occupational stream requires relatively little additional training since the competencies of jobs are related.

1.7 LINKAGE OF POSTS TO CORES

The Public Service Regulations, 1999 compel executing authorities to link all posts in her or his department to a CORE. In order to expedite the transition of employees from PAS's to COREs the Department of Public Service and Administration have made arrangements with PERSAL and PERSOL to translate approximately 90% of employees centrally. The remaining 10% of employees will have to be dealt with by the various executing authorities.

The authority to link posts to COREs is vested in the executing authorities. If departments need to translate employees to another CORE, they should make the necessary arrangements with Persal/Persol without the intervention of the Department of Public Service and Administration.

A mechanistic approach should not be followed in the linkage of employees to COREs. The circumstances of each employee should be taken into account.

In particular, categories of employees with lesser qualifications, such as cleaners or auxiliary service officers, could be accommodated in a number of different COREs. In these cases, as far as possible the potential for realistic career pathing should determine which CORE should be utilised. In addition, an analysis of the key outputs of an employee could assist in deciding between two or more COREs.

Other factors to take into consideration include:

(a) *Natural association and field of work*

Certain occupations work closely together. An example in this regard is the nursing profession where professional nurses, staff nurses and nursing assistants are dependent on each other.

(b) *Extent to which groups co-operate*

Within the same working environment, groups of personnel co-operate who are not necessarily in the same field of work. Examples in this regard are the cleaners and laundry personnel in hospitals who co-operate with medical staff to provide the outputs required in the health sector.

(c) *Professional requirements*

Certain professions have unique professional requirements applicable to them. Examples in this regard are the registration requirements for medical practitioners at the Health Professionals Council of South Africa.

(d) *Similarity of competencies required*

In certain occupations, the competencies required to perform the outputs expected are to a large extent similar. An example in this regard is personnel in the financial sector. To a large degree they are all in possession of accounting skills.

(e) *Horizontal/vertical mobility*

The ability of persons to move from one occupation to another in the same group or to be promoted to a position normally associated with another occupation is taken into account. Through certain bridging courses a staff nurse can for example register as a professional nurse.

(f) *Uniqueness of certain groups of personnel*

Certain categories of employees are unique as a result of the nature of the work that they perform and the environment in which they have to function e.g. aviation personnel.

2 THE OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

2.1 BACKGROUND

With the implementation of the Public Service Regulations, 1999 the 322 PAS's utilised in the Public Service have been repealed and employees are now classified in 24 COREs. COREs are, however, much more generic in the definition of occupations and it does not provide a sufficient basis to analyse employment in the public service. To capture more detailed information on occupational structure, a new set of occupational categories has been developed.

2.2 THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD CLASSIFICATION OF OCCUPATIONS

The classification system approved by the Minister for the Public Service and Administration is based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88). ISCO-88 was developed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1968 and is continuously updated and renewed.

ISCO-88, which is also utilised by Statistics South Africa (SSA) in South Africa, has the following objectives:

- (i) To serve as a model for countries developing or revising their national occupational classifications.
- (ii) To facilitate international communication about occupations by supplying labour statisticians with a tool to make national and international comparative analysis.
- (iii) To make it possible for national and international occupational data to be produced in a form which can be useful for research.

The framework necessary for designing and constructing the occupational classification system has been based on two main concepts: the concept of the kind of work performed or *job*, and the concept of *skill*.

(i) Jobs

The concept of job is defined as a set of tasks and duties executed, or meant to be executed, by one person. A set of jobs whose main tasks and duties are characterised by a high degree of similarity constitutes an occupation. Persons are classified by occupation through their relationship to a past, present or future job.

(ii) Skills

The concept of skill is defined as the ability to carry out the tasks and duties of a given job. The following two dimensions have been identified in this regard:

- *Skill level* – which is a function of the complexity and range of the tasks and duties involved; and
- *Skill specialisation* – defined by the field of knowledge required, the tools and machinery used, the materials worked on or with, as well as the kinds of goods and services produced.

On the basis of the skill concept thus defined, occupational groups were delineated and aggregated.

Bearing in mind the international character of the classification, only four broad skill levels were defined. They were given operational definitions in terms of the educational categories and levels which appear in the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).

The use of ISCED categories to define the four skill levels does not imply that the skills necessary to perform the tasks and duties of a given job can be acquired only through formal education. The skills may be, and often are, acquired through informal training and experience. In addition, it

should be emphasised that the focus in ISCO-88 is on the skills required to carry out the tasks and duties of an occupation – and not on whether a worker in a particular occupation is more or less skilled than another worker in the same occupation.

Therefore, as a rule, the following operational definitions of the four ISCO-88 skill levels apply where the necessary occupational skills are acquired through formal education or vocational training.

The first ISCO skill level was defined with reference to ISCED category 1, comprising primary education which generally begins at the age of 5, 6 or 7 and lasts about five years.

The second ISCO skill level was defined with reference to ISCED categories 2 and 3, comprising first and second stages of secondary education. The first stage begins at the age of 11 or 12 and lasts about three years, while the second stage begins at the age of 14 or 15 and also lasts about three years. A period of on-the-job training and experience may be necessary, sometimes formalised in apprenticeships. This period may supplement the formal training or replace it partly or in some cases, wholly.

The third ISCO skill level was defined with reference to ISCED category 5, (category 4 in ISCED has been deliberately left without content) comprising education which begins at the age of 17 or 18, lasts about four years, and leads to an award not equivalent to a first university degree.

The fourth ISCO skill level was defined with reference to ISCED categories 6 and 7, comprising education which also begins at the age of 17 or 18, lasts about three, four or more years, and leads to a university or postgraduate university degree, or the equivalent.

2.3 DESIGN AND STRUCTURE OF THE OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE

2.3.1 General approach

The approach followed with the development of an occupational classification system for the Public Service was to align it as close as possible with ISCO-88 to make international comparisons possible. The core principles of the latter system i.e. the nature of jobs and skill levels have consequently been utilised to design a classification system.

The ILO recognises that the national qualification system of countries differs and certain amendments had to be made to reflect the national qualification system in South Africa. This was necessary due to the fact that some occupations like Health Therapists in South Africa have a higher skill level than level 3 as indicated by ISCO-88.

ISCO-88 has furthermore been designed to reflect all possible occupations in the open labour market in a country. Those occupations not employed in the Public Service eg. hawkers, bankers, street vendors etc., have been excluded from the classification system.

In some cases, it was necessary to give a more detailed breakdown for certain occupations in order to meet the information needs of the Public Service.

2.3.2 Structure of the system

The approach adopted with the occupational classification system resulted in a pyramid whose hierarchical structure consists of ten major groups at the top level of aggregation, subdivided into 36 sub-major groups, 96 minor groups, 93 unit groups and 19 sub-unit groups.

MAJOR GROUPS WITH NUMBER OF SUB-GROUPS AND SKILL LEVELS					
MAJOR GROUPS	SUB-MAJOR GROUPS	MINOR GROUPS	UNIT GROUPS	SUB-UNIT GROUPS	SKILL LEVEL
A.Elementary occupations	4	11			1 st
B.Administrative Office Workers:	1	2	9		2 nd – 3 rd
•Clerks and related personnel	1	4			3 rd – 4 th
•Administrative Policy and related personnel					
C.Professionals and Managers	6	23	54	19	4 th
D.Technicians and Associate Professionals	2	6	25		3 rd - 4 th
E.Service Workers	5	8			2 nd
F.Social, Natural, Technical and Medical Sciences Supplementary and Support Personnel	2	5			2 nd
G.Craft and Related Trade Workers	5	20			2 nd - 3 rd
H.Drivers, operators and ships' crew	4	11	5		2 nd - 3 rd
I.National Security Services and custodian personnel	3	3			-
J.Information Technology Personnel	3	3			3 rd

Of the ten major groups, nine have been linked to skill levels – which, as mentioned earlier, were given operational definitions by reference to the educational categories and levels of the International Standard Classification of Education. The concept of skill level was not applied in the case of the Major group, National Security Services and Custodian personnel. The reason for this was that based on information from national sources, skills for executing tasks and duties of occupations belonging to this major group vary to such an extent that it would be impossible to link them with any of the four broad skill levels. In the document at Annexure B a breakdown of all the major groups, sub-major groups, minor groups, unit groups and sub-unit groups with occupational classification codes are provided.

2.3.3 Summary of major groups

The following briefly outlines the major groups and is meant to facilitate the interpretation of the classification. The information given here should not be regarded as a substitute for the more detailed descriptions of occupational groups.

(i) Elementary occupations

Elementary occupations are normally responsible for routine, often manual, tasks. With few exceptions only limited personal initiative and judgement are required. The main tasks consist of the delivery of messages/goods, cleaning, washing, pressing, property watching and working as labourers. Most occupations in this group require skills at the first ISCO skill level.

(ii) Administrative Office Workers

This group comprises two clusters of occupations. The first cluster is referred to as clerks and related personnel and includes occupations whose main tasks require the knowledge and experience necessary to organise, store, compare and retrieve information. The main tasks consist of performing secretarial duties, operating word processors and other office machines, recording and computing numerical data and performing a number of customer-oriented clerical duties. Most occupations in this category require skills varying between the second and third ISCO skill level.

The second cluster is referred to as administrative policy and related personnel and includes occupations whose main tasks are to formulate and advise on government policies of an administrative nature, formulate/administer laws, rules and regulations directly associated with the policies and legislation of the employing institution. Employees in this category are also responsible for inspections to ensure that regulations are complied with. Most occupations in this group require skills varying between the third and fourth ISCO skill level.

(iii) Professionals and Managers

This group includes occupations whose main tasks require a high level of professional knowledge and experience in the fields of physical and life sciences, or social sciences and humanities. The main tasks consist of increasing the existing stock of knowledge, applying scientific and artistic concepts and theories to the solution of problems, about the foregoing in a systematic manner.

This group also includes various levels of managers. The lowest level of managers' main tasks usually includes planning, directing and co-ordinating activities of components in a department, directing daily operations, overseeing the selection, training and performance of staff, liaising with managers of other components and in other departments and representing the department in its dealings with other parts of the organisation or with outside bodies. The second level of managers' main tasks usually include determining and formulating policies, planning,

directing and co-ordinating the general functioning of directorates/chief directorates (or the equivalent thereof) with the help of other managers under her/his control. The highest level of managers in this major group are heads of departments/provincial departments who are accountable for the effective and efficient management of departments/provincial departments/organisational components indicated in schedule 1, 2 and 3 of the Public Service Act, 1994. Most occupations in this major group require skills at the fourth ISCO skill level.

(iv) Technicians and Associated Professionals

This group includes occupations whose main tasks require technical knowledge and experience in one or more fields of physical and life sciences, or social sciences and humanities. The main tasks consist of carrying out technical work connected with the application of concepts and operational methods in the above-mentioned fields. Most occupations in this major group require skills at either the third or fourth ISCO skill level.

(v) Service Workers

Service workers provide personal and protective services related to housekeeping, catering, personal care, social auxiliary services, protection against fire and unlawful acts, etc. Tasks performed include housekeeping, food preparation, child care, care for persons at homes or institutions, personal care, protection of individuals and property against fire and unlawful acts. Most of the occupations included in this group require skills at the second ISCO skill level.

(vi) Social, Natural, Technical and Medical Sciences Supplementary and Support Personnel

Personnel in this major group normally apply their knowledge and skills as part of supplementary and support functions directly associated with Professionals and Technicians. They assist with supporting services like operating specialised equipment/make preparations for specialised tasks to be performed by Professionals/Technicians. They may also render supplementary functions in e.g. the social services fields. Most occupations in this group require skills at the second ISCO level.

(vii) Craft and Related Trades Workers

Craft and related trades workers apply their knowledge and skills in the fields of construction, working with metals, erecting structures, maintaining and repairing machinery, printing work and producing handicraft goods. The work is carried out by using equipment/tools to reduce the physical effort and time required for specific tasks, as well as to improve the quality of the products. An understanding of the various stages of the production processes, the materials and tools used and the nature and purpose of the final product is required. Most occupations in this group will normally require skills at the second or third ISCO skill level.

(viii) Drivers, Operators and Ships' Crew

Personnel in this major group operate and monitor machinery and equipment and execute deck duties on board vessels. They can also be responsible for the driving of vehicles. The work mainly requires experience and understanding of machinery, equipment, vehicles and

vessels. Supervision of other workers may be required. Most occupations in this major group require skills at the second or third ISCO skill level.

(ix) National Security Services and Custodian Personnel

Included in this major group are members of the army, navy, airforce, police and correctional services. No specific skill level has been linked to this major group.

(x) Information Technology Personnel

Information Technology Personnel conduct research, plan, develop and improve computer based information systems, software and related concepts as well as maintain management systems such as databases to ensure integrity and security of data. They also provide assistance to users of micro-computers and standard software packages, control and operate computers and peripheral equipment and carry out programming tasks (complexity may vary) related with the installation and maintenance of computer hardware and software. In some cases they may also receive guidance from managers. Most occupations in this group will usually require skills at the third ISCO skill level.

2.3.4 Occupations with a broad range of tasks and duties

Differences in the range of tasks and duties belonging to the same occupation are, at national level, mostly determined by the size of the establishment. For instance, in a small establishment typing and filing may be combined with the duties of a receptionist into one single job, while in a bigger enterprise they may constitute two or three separate jobs. Occupational classifications – national as well as international – define occupations, and occupational groups, by reference to the most common combinations of tasks and duties, and therefore face a problem when, in the case of some occupations, the range of tasks and duties does not correspond to those specified in the classification.

In such cases ISCO-88 suggests application of the following rules:

- (i) In cases where the tasks and duties performed require skills usually obtained through different levels of training and experience, jobs should be classified in accordance with those tasks and duties which require the highest level of skills.
- (ii) In cases where the tasks and duties are connected with different stages of the production and distribution of goods process, tasks and duties related to the production stage should take priority over associated ones unless one of these tasks and duties predominates.

2.3.5 Notes on particular occupations

Supervising occupations, as well as those of a forewoman or man and team leaders, which are mainly concerned with the control of the professional or technical quality of the work done, are classified together

with the jobs whose tasks they supervise. However, if the main tasks and duties of a job consist of planning, organising, controlling and directing the daily work activities of a group of subordinate workers, the occupation should be considered as a managerial occupation and classified in the major group Professionals and Managers.

Coaching occupations primarily concerned with training by continuous observation, assessment and guidance are classified with the occupations whose workers they instruct, in particular trade, craft or machine-operating tasks.

Occupations concerned with research and development are classified according to the field of specialisation in Professionals and Managers.

Apprentices and trainees are not classified according to the tasks and activities actually performed but according to their future occupation. In the case of those occupational classes in the Administrative Cadre where provision was made for Pupil ranks e.g. Pupil Personnel Practitioner, they were classified in terms of the tasks they perform. The reason is that the rank was mainly created with a view to enable a person to obtain a formal qualification to address recruitment problems that were encountered. It can not be seen as a natural part of a career as e.g. apprentice in the artisan environment.

2.4 LINKING POSTS TO THE OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The Public Service Regulations, 1999 require executing authorities to link all posts in their departments with an occupation from the occupational classification system as well as with a CORE. Each CORE will give various occupational classification codes for each salary range. The latter codes are alpha-numeric and consist of 8 characters. These codes should be used in combination with the salary codes provided for that particular salary range.

In order to effect pay an employee's salary via Persal, departments will have to utilise both the salary codes and the occupational classification codes.

If new jobs are created, or if existing jobs are regraded, it may happen that the occupational classification code provided in a CORE for a particular level will not accurately reflect the nature of the relevant job. In such cases the most appropriate available occupational classification code should be utilised as an interim arrangement and the Department of Public Service and Administration should be provided with the necessary information to update the occupational classification system and the relevant CORE.

3 WAY FORWARD

The development of COREs is an evolutionary process. Due to the magnitude of the task the development of COREs is dealt with in three phases.

The objective with the first phase was to develop baseline COREs to fill the void created by the repeal of PAS's and to comply with the requirements of the Public Service Regulations, 1999. This has been achieved with the official introduction of COREs with effect from 1 July 1999.

The COREs developed thus far will be used as a springboard for the second phase development. During this phase the content of the baseline COREs will be scrutinised, validated and expanded by means of a series of workshops/focus groups. The concept of career pathing will receive particular attention and will be further expanded. In view thereof that the COREs are voluminous consideration will be given to computerise COREs and to make it available on an electronic medium, in addition to the paper based system. A consultative approach will be followed and all stakeholders and roleplayers will be approached to participate in this process.

The objective with the third phase is to link the COREs to the work of the Public Service Education and Training Authority and ultimately the National Qualifications Framework.

The Occupational Classification System defines and classifies employees in the Public Service in a new way. The relevant system introduce new dimensions which have not been tested in the Public Service before and it will consequently be necessary to establish a review process to deal with exceptions. In view thereof that the COREs and the Occupational Classification System are inextricably entwined the classification of employees will be reviewed during the workshops/focus groups refer to in the second phase development of COREs.

The COREs and the Occupational Classification System are issued by the Minister for the Public Service and Administration in terms of the Public Service Regulations, 1999. The responsibility to develop, renew and maintain these systems is with Department of the Public Service and Administration.

Inputs, comments and enquiries in this regard can be directed to the following address:

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