



the dpsa

Department:
Public Service and Administration
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GUIDELINE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Executive Summary

- ❖ The Minister for the Public Service and Administration (MPSA) is responsible for establishing uniform norms and standards to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Public Service and its service delivery to the public in line with sections 3(1)(f), (g) and (i) of the Public Service Act, 1994 as amended. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) approved and published the National Knowledge Management Strategy Framework (NKMSF) in 2019.
- ❖ Departments are increasingly required to determine, define, develop, and set service delivery targets to meet the needs of their citizens. It is therefore essential for employees to understand the context within which problems arise and identify possible interventions that can be made to resolve these problems.
- ❖ Knowledge Management (KM) focuses on the creation, sharing, and effective use of knowledge within an organisation utilising the KM in processes of capturing, organising, storing, and sharing knowledge and information within an organisation. It aims to make knowledge accessible to everyone who needs it, in a right context at the right time.
- ❖ KM generates critical knowledge resources within a department over time for organisational effectiveness. It facilitates decision-making, enhancement of core business processes and improved efficiency of service delivery within the Public Service, thereby adding public value.
- ❖ As a result, it becomes imperative for government organisations to develop a policy that will outline the KM principle, processes, and responsibilities related to the creation, organisation, sharing, and utilisation of knowledge within the organisation. This will facilitate the institutionalisation of KM within the organisations business processes for improved productivity.
- ❖ The purpose of a KM Policy is to establish guidelines for the dissemination and sharing of existing knowledge within the organisation and promote continuous learning and cultural exchange, enhance operational efficiency through the proper use of intellectual capital and encourage initiatives, procedures and tools that allow for the actual and effective use of this intellectual capital.
- ❖ The guideline specifies the key elements for consideration when planning for the KM policy, structuring the KM Policy, implementing the KM Policy as well as the monitoring and review of the KM Policy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
2. PLANNING FOR THE POLICY	5
3. STRUCTURING THE KM POLICY	5
4. IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY	9
5. MONITOR AND REVIEW THE POLICY	9

GUIDELINE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The guideline is issued in terms of the Determination and Directive on the implementation of knowledge and data management in the public service issued in 2024. The purpose of the guideline is to enable knowledge managers to compile their own knowledge management policy using it as a basis to work from.
- 1.2. The development of a KM Policy involves outlining the principles, processes, and responsibilities related to the creation, organisation, sharing, and utilisation of knowledge within the organisation.
- 1.3. Departments should also take note of recommendations regarding matters that should be addressed in the knowledge management policy contained in the following:
 - NKMSF principles and processes;
 - ISO 30401:2018
 - ISO 9001: 2015;
 - DPSA prescripts on information security
- 1.4. While the focus is often on the KM Strategy, the KM Policy is an extremely important document given the very structured and regulated public service environment. At times these terms are used interchangeably, and some may ask why both are needed. However, the importance of both can be understood when looking at their definitions: According to the Ruschcliffe Borough Council (2005) “a policy is a set of guiding principles or rules intended to influence decisions and actions that reflect agreed practice” while “a strategy is a high-level approach to an issue that is designed to deliver change by implementing policy”.
- 1.5. The KM policy must highlight and clearly explain the alignment between the department’s strategic objectives and the department’s Knowledge Management objectives in relation to the pillars of people, processes, technology, and content.

2. PLANNING FOR THE POLICY

2.1. A Department cannot draft a knowledge management policy if it does not know what the specific knowledge it generates, and service delivery requirements are. For departments to draft a policy that suits the business needs of the organisation, a thorough analysis should be done of the environment within which the Department operates.

2.2. Situational Analysis/ Environmental

2.2.1. PESTAL – for the department

2.2.2. SWOT – for the department

2.2.3. SWOT - for the Knowledge Management business unit

2.2.4. Business context- service delivery improvement plan

2.3. Knowledge Management Strategy Assessment Outcomes

2.3.1. Understanding critical knowledge for the organisation

2.3.2. Understanding the impact of KM Practices and systems on human and financial resources

2.3.3. Alignment of the KM Pillars with the Practice

2.4. Knowledge Management Maturity Assessment (KMMA) outcomes

2.4.1. Current scores across the seven (7) dimensions as assessed.

2.4.2. Desired scores across the seven (7) dimensions, considering the situational analysis (2.1) and the strategy assessment outcomes (2.3).

3. STRUCTURING THE KM POLICY

3.1. Introduction

3.1.1. Explain why Knowledge Management is crucial for the department's success and how it aligns with departmental goals.

3.1.2. Provide a concise definition of Knowledge Management which reflects the department's environment and needs as identified during the Strategy Assessment.

3.2. Glossary of terms

Provide an alphabetical list of technical terms and definitions that are contained in the policy document.

3.3. Policy Statement

Provide a declaration of the intention and plans of the Department with regard to the management of knowledge.

3.4. POLICY OBJECTIVE

- 3.4.1. Explain how the Knowledge Management Policy aims to ensure that the departmental KM governance is compliant with the prescripts contained in the National Knowledge Management Strategic Framework for the Public Service (NKMSF-PS).
- 3.4.2. Explain how the Knowledge Management Policy aims to strengthen aspects of the organisational culture and business processes to support departmental performance.

3.5. Guiding Principles -Include guiding principles that are embedded in your departmental KM Practices (in line with the principles as alluded to in the Determination and Directive on Knowledge and Data Management Implementation in the Public Service) from below:

- 3.5.1. **Business alignment and integration:**
Ensure that KM is integrated into day-to day business processes and policies.
- 3.5.2. **Knowledge exchange and flow**
Define knowledge flow processes to ensure that critical and relevant knowledge is moving throughout the Department as it should.
- 3.5.3. **Knowledge supply and demand:**
Promote collaboration and knowledge sharing among employees and departments and provide guidance for long term maintenance and

revision of co-created documents. Knowledge sharing must seek to match the supply of knowledge to the demand for knowledge in specific areas or topics and at a specific level or degree required.

3.5.4. Knowledge value:

Create value through translating knowledge resources into assets which can be utilised for better decision-making.

3.5.5. Knowledge enablement:

Address / Identify roles, processes, technologies and governance as the key enablers that support knowledge management.

3.5.6. Knowledge assets management

Establish guidelines for storage, classification, security, and accessibility, as well as integrity of key strategic organisational knowledge, in line with accepted prescripts on data, information records management, and security standards.

3.5.7. Organisational learning

Embed recognition of informal knowledge-sharing initiatives that enhance learning and development to promote effectiveness and efficiency.

3.6. LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.6.1. National Legislation (NARS; POPIA; PAIA; PAJA; ECA; PFMA, MISS and the NKMSF) - Explain the relationship/implications to KM.

3.6.2. Provincial legislation (where relevant and specific to a particular province).

3.6.3. Relationship with other internal policies (IT policies on systems usage and security; HR policies on retention and recognition as well as training and development; Change management and Organisational Culture guidelines; Data, Information and Records management).

3.7. KM PROCESSES

3.7.1. Knowledge Creation:

Describe processes and formats for capturing, creating, and documenting knowledge, both explicit and tacit.

3.7.2. Knowledge Organisation:

Establish standards for organizing and categorizing knowledge assets both according to the approved file plan and with the use of metadata fields.

3.7.3. Knowledge Sharing:

Explain the protocols and platforms for sharing knowledge, such as internal communications, collaboration tools, and training programs.

3.7.4. Knowledge Utilisation

Define how knowledge should be applied to support decision-making and problem-solving and how knowledge should be embedded within processes going forward.

3.8. KM TOOLS AND PLATFORMS

3.8.1. Identify the technology and platforms available and how they should be used for knowledge management.

3.8.2. Include a brief outline of the requirements for establishing a Community of Practice (eg Terms of Reference document and notification of the KM unit)

3.9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.9.1. Define the scope of the policy, who and what it applies to.

3.9.2. Knowledge Management Committee (KMC)

3.9.3. Chief Knowledge Officer (CKO)

3.9.4. Knowledge Management practitioners

3.9.5. Senior managers

3.9.6. Knowledge Contributors: Explain the responsibilities of officials in contributing and updating knowledge (these can be included in their performance documents after agreement with HR). Refer to M&E Plan.

3.9.7. Knowledge Users: Explain the responsibilities of officials who utilise knowledge in their daily tasks (these can be included in their performance documents after agreement with HR)

3.10. IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

3.10.1. Describe the procedures for reporting on the implementation of KM in the department both internally and to the DPSA. Include the DPSA Implementation Plan template as an annexure to the Policy.

4. IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

- 4.1.** Change management: develop a change management plan in alignment with the departmental HR change management policies. This must include a communication plan to explain the purpose and benefits of KM implementation.
- 4.2.** Training/ Advocacy: develop a communication and training plan in alignment with the departmental HRD policies to address both KM systems and processes to be implemented.

5. MONITOR AND REVIEW THE POLICY

Measures to monitor and evaluate KM performance should be in line with the departmental knowledge management strategy.

The monitoring and review must be done in accordance with the department's M&E/ Risk Management policies and be aligned with the M&E sections in the NKMSF and the Determination and Directive.



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