



**MINISTRY: PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO.: 1242.**

**Mrs A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Public Service and Administration:**

With reference to the report produced by the Public Service Commission, entitled Assessment of the Implementation of Policy Framework on the Appointment of Ministerial Staff in National and Provincial Departments, dated May 2014, what are the details of the action taken to date to address each of the 14 recommendations at the end of the specified report?

NW1390E

**REPLY**

The details of the action taken to date to address each of the 14 Recommendations are attached herewith below as **Annexure A**. These details were compiled by the Public Service Commission, after consultation with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), which is the custodian of the Ministerial Handbook and all Human Resource Management (HRM) prescripts in the Public Service. Furthermore, the National School of Government (NSG) was also consulted.

These details illustrate that the Department of Public Service and Administration has made significant progress towards implementation of the Recommendations made by the Public Service Commission. The National School of Government has made noticeable preparatory work to roll-out implementation of the executive development programme, and plans are also under way to develop other targeted training programmes.

**ANNEXURE A: Progress on implementation of each of the 14 Recommendations made in the Report - Assessment of the Implementation of Policy Framework on the Appointment of Ministerial Staff in National and Provincial Departments**

No.	RECOMMENDATION FROM PSC	PROGRESS REPORT
1	The DPSA should develop a focused policy framework that will regulate the employment practices of persons who provide support and serve in EAs' offices	Amended Public Service Regulations and other prescripts regulate the employment practices of persons appointed in the offices of Executive Authorities. It covers the recruitment process, nature of appointment, allowance payable, termination of services and other employment conditions. According to the
2	All SMS levels in Ministries irrespective of the method of recruitment (headhunting or advertising) must be subjected to proper selection processes (i.e. interviews and competency assessment) and for any identified competency gap, a developmental plan must be put in place to address the gap. This plan must be developed in consultation with the person concerned and be managed by the Director-General or Head of Department.	<p>According to the Public Service Regulations, all members of the SMS appointed in offices of EAs are supposed to be subjected to proper recruitment and selections processes and the performance management and development system for SMS. In addition, the Directive on Compulsory Capacity Development, Mandatory Training Days and Minimum Entry Requirements for SMS, which came into effect on 01 April 2015, also applies to all SMS members in the offices of EAs. SMS members should meet the minimum qualification and experience requirements prior to appointment.</p> <p>The challenge is that there are still many incidences of non-compliance with prescripts, as such, the DPSA has undertaken to conduct targeted support for departments during the 2016/17 financial year.</p>
3.	The Director-General or Head of Department has to provide "primary advisory" support to the EA due to the resources (e.g. research experts, etc.) he/she manages in the department, an administrative	According to the DPSA, this is the current practice as Chiefs of Staff report to their respective Heads of Department on all administrative matters.

**ANNEXURE A: Progress on implementation of each of the 14 Recommendations made in the Report - Assessment of the Implementation of Policy Framework on the Appointment of Ministerial Staff in National and Provincial Departments**

No.	RECOMMENDATION FROM PSC	PROGRESS REPORT
	reporting line to the Director-General or Head of Department must be enforced for the Chief of Staff.	
4	Compulsory induction, orientation/training on the functions performed in Ministries, the relationship between the Ministry and the department, the protocols of being a sessional employee and the benefits thereof and how to support the Minister with political responsibilities should be conducted with staff working in the EAs' offices, either at departmental level or coordinated by the National School of Government (NSG) or the DPSA. The current and/or previous competent and experienced Chief of Staff should be part of the training team and assist in this regard.	<p>It is expected that the orientation of staff working in Ministries would be conducted by respective departments. The extent of implementation for such orientation programmes has not been validated.</p> <p>The generic orientation course for staff in Ministries has not been developed yet. Its development has been prioritised by the NSG. Consultations with relevant stakeholders are expected to commence during the 2016/17 financial year.</p>
5	There should be a dedicated course for Chiefs of Staff and a forum to share experiences and to professionalise this strategic role. There should be a way of career-pathing for experienced Chiefs of Staff.	The course for Chiefs of Staff has not been developed yet. Its development has been prioritised by the NSG. Consultations with relevant stakeholders are expected to commence during the 2016/17 financial year.
6	A Legislation based Compliance Framework for Ministries should be developed by the DPSA.	Government has adopted the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) to track and report on compliance to relevant legislation by departments.

**ANNEXURE A: Progress on implementation of each of the 14 Recommendations made in the Report - Assessment of the Implementation of Policy Framework on the Appointment of Ministerial Staff in National and Provincial Departments**

No.	RECOMMENDATION FROM PSC	PROGRESS REPORT
7	<p>The DPSA should review the organisational structures of Ministries according to the size and responsibility of the Ministry.</p>	<p>The DPSA has developed a revised generic organisational structure for Offices of EAs and Deputy Ministers as part of the process of amending the Ministerial Handbook.</p> <p>The concern is that the revised Ministerial Handbook has not been approved by Cabinet, as such, the generic organisational structures are not implemented.</p> <p>It is therefore important for the Minister for Public Service and Administration to fast-track the approval of the revised Ministerial Handbook.</p>
8	<p>Uniform job profiles and descriptions should be enforced for Chiefs of Staff across the Public Service. Key competencies and minimum qualifications for the position of Chief of Staff must be well-defined. This will help to guide the selection and appointment process and Ministers must be informed of and adhere to this guide. Uniform job profiles should be developed for the rest of the staff in EAs' offices.</p>	<p>The DPSA has developed, as part of the generic organisational structures, clearly defined purpose and functions per post in the offices of EAs.</p> <p>However, the extent of implementation of the uniform job description remains questionable due to the non-approval of the revised Ministerial Handbook.</p> <p>With respect to SMS positions in ministerial Office, the DPSA through the Directive on Compulsory Capacity Development, Mandatory Training days and Minimum entry requirements for SMS has set the minimum qualification and experience requirement for appointment in the office of the EA at an SMS</p>

**ANNEXURE A: Progress on implementation of each of the 14 Recommendations made in the Report - Assessment of the Implementation of Policy Framework on the Appointment of Ministerial Staff in National and Provincial Departments**

No.	RECOMMENDATION FROM PSC	PROGRESS REPORT
		<p>level.</p> <p>The challenge is that there are still many incidences of non-compliance with prescripts and compliance with the Directive has not been assessed.</p>
9	<p>80% of the positions in Ministries should be permanent and be part of organograms of departments.</p>	<p>The DPSA proposed uniform organisational structures for Ministerial Offices does recommend that a percentage of posts in the Offices of EAs should be permanent. These are all the administrative positions, which turn to be in the majority</p> <p>Implementation of this will be assessed once the revised Ministerial Handbook has been approved and is being implemented by departments.</p>
10	<p>An orientation and support programme for Cabinet Ministers/Premiers/Members of Executive Council (MECs) and Directors-General/Heads of Department should be developed and it must be compulsory for new EAs and DGs/HoDs to attend at the beginning of every term of government and when a need arises due to reshuffling. There must be a separate session for EAs and DGs first and thereafter a joint session. Also the advisors need to have an orientation programme.</p>	<p>At the start of each term of administration, the Presidency organizes an orientation programme for Executive Authorities (EAs) and the DPSA is invited to make presentations on the Roles and Responsibilities of the EA in relation to the Public Service Act and Regulations, and also presents on the Ministerial Handbook. However, there is no targeted training provided after reshuffling.</p>

**ANNEXURE A: Progress on implementation of each of the 14 Recommendations made in the Report - Assessment of the Implementation of Policy Framework on the Appointment of Ministerial Staff in National and Provincial Departments**

No.	RECOMMENDATION FROM PSC	PROGRESS REPORT
11	<p>There should be a probation period for staff appointed in Ministries and that period should take into consideration the nature of Ministries and the limited time available to follow the probation period regulations that are cumbersome to release a person who is not performing or fitting in the culture of the Ministry.</p>	<p>In terms of the Public Service Regulations, all appointments, longer than 12 months, are subject to a probationary period. This requirement includes appointments in Ministries</p> <p>However, there are instances of non-compliance — the magnitude of which has not been established. Hence implementation of the revised Ministerial Handbook will also serve as an instrument to address such incidences.</p>
12	<p>The DPSA should continue to give guidance and assistance in the development and implementation of turnaround strategies and restructuring processes.</p>	<p>The DPSA continues to play this role, based on requests received from departments.</p> <p>It must however be stated that Executive Authorities have the power to decide on their turnaround strategies and organisational structures. All what the DPSA can do is to provide guidance.</p>
13	<p>The DPSA should develop a database of employees with working experience in Ministries who could not be absorbed by departments for purposes of redeployment.</p>	<p>All permanently employed employees are accommodated in the relevant department upon exit of the EA.</p> <p>There is no provision within the Public Service to absorb employees employed in Ministries linked to the term of office of EAs. Where employees who are linked to the EAs term of office are transferred to or absorbed by the department, this practice will considered to be irregular and should as such be corrected in line</p>

**ANNEXURE A: Progress on implementation of each of the 14 Recommendations made in the Report - Assessment of the Implementation of Policy Framework on the Appointment of Ministerial Staff in National and Provincial Departments**

No.	RECOMMENDATION FROM PSC	PROGRESS REPORT
		with the applicable prescripts.
14	The DPSA should enforce the developed benchmark job descriptions and evaluations for posts in EAs' offices to ensure consistency throughout the Public Service.	<p>In developing the draft generic organisational structures for Ministries, all posts were job evaluated with clearly defined job purpose and functions</p> <p>Once approved, implementation of these job descriptions, alongside the revised generic organizational structures will ensure consistency.</p>