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Department of Public Service and Administration

Medium Term Strategic Plan

2006-2011



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Department:
Public Service and Administration
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ex Africa semper aliquid novi .

"Out of Africa there is always something new." These were the words of Pliny the Elder, the Roman historian, scientist and public servant who live nearly 2000 years ago, words which hold valuable lessons for us to today as we face the challenges of building an efficient state machinery that is able play its constitutionally required developmental role in delivering services that enable our nation to achieve its fullest potential.

We must, however, view these words both as an exhortation and a caution. We have, over the past twelve years since the founding of our democratic dispensation, had to look at new ways of doing things that are appropriate to the special circumstances and challenges that face our country. If we are to succeed as a leading nation, we have to ensure that we are able to contribute to the stability and prosperity of our region and continent. We have had to explore ways of doing the business of government that are appropriate to our special circumstances and that enhance development and equity. It has not been enough to adopt a business as usual" approach.

But at the same time, the words of Pliny are also cautionary, for we have learned that we cannot innovate for the sake of innovation. We cannot simply change direction whenever a plan or policy proves more challenging than initially anticipated and as we state in this plan "(I)nnovation must be linked to the developmental agenda and should have a direct discernible impact on the lives of the people who need public services the most, the poor and other vulnerable groups.

As we progress in what must surely be one of the most radical processes of societal and institutional transformation projects that has followed our transition to democracy, our understanding of the complexity of the task has deepened. Developing organizational capacity, creating institutional arrangements for integration of planning and innovation, and balancing decentralisation with effective policy implementation are but some of the challenges that will require consistent and concerted attention.

The capacity of government to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of government policy requires on-going attention and enhancement and the work that has been given by Cabinet relating to capacity assessments of other departments as well as the capacity of Government to implement the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGI-SA) is indicative of the ever-increasing role and challenge that is given the DPSA in the transformation of the South African State.

This Strategic Plan presents a medium term framework for the Department of Public Service and Administration which will serve both as a guide for the Department in meeting the challenges set for it by government in response to the needs of the people of South Africa and as the benchmark by which our stakeholders, the people of South Africa, will hold us to account.

OVERVIEW BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

This Strategic Plan is a guide to our stakeholders regarding the strategic direction and key objectives of the Department in the medium term. It also serves as a guide to the Department for the development of annual Operational Plans and component workplans. The strategic plan includes sections on the medium term context and the Department's strategic orientation, the medium term strategic framework, tables containing outputs and indicators for the medium term, the Department's operational strategy, the framework for accountability and internal control, and human resource and financial matters.

The Department of Public Service and Administration faces many challenges as the custodian of good governance and sound public administration in the public service. As a Department we have been building our capacity to meet these challenges, and have in the last few years established components focusing on Anti-corruption, International and African Affairs, and Monitoring and Evaluation, to respond to an expanding mandate. The Medium Term Expenditure process has recently provided additional funding for the Department's capacity needs.

The Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) and the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) will be assisted to become public entities in the near future.

In addition we have strengthened the component within the Department that is responsible for providing support to other departments and to post-conflict countries within Africa. We have been particularly involved in providing assistance to the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo in conducting a public service census prior to that country's elections, and have hosted delegations from Sudan in initial engagements with public service officials from that country. We have provided support to the KwaZulu-Natal province on service delivery and governance matters, including a year-long deployment of a number of managers and staff.

In October 2004 the President requested the Minister of Public Service and Administration to conduct an assessment of the capacity of the public service to deliver on Government's developmental objectives. Since then the Department has undertaken capacity assessment work, which has been presented to Cabinet Makgotla. The Department is currently implementing the resolutions of the January 2006 Cabinet Lekgotla relating to capacity assessments of the following departments/sectors: Health, Education, Justice and Constitutional Development, Trade and Industry (the dti) and Housing. In addition the Department has been requested to assess the capacity of Government to implement the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGI-SA), and is supporting the Minister in her capacity as member of the Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA).

The capacity work forms a substantial part of the work of the Governance and Administration Cluster, which focuses on capacity and organisation of the state and government systems, and which the Department leads together with the Department of Provincial and Local Government (the dplg). One of the major macro-organisational initiatives the Department is undertaking together with the Department of Provincial and Local Government is the establishment of a Single Public Service consisting of all three spheres of government. A framework has been established and legislation is being drafted. Related work on human resource management issues and conditions of service is simultaneously underway.

An access strategy, which will be implemented over the medium term, is to be finalised during the 2006/07 financial year. The e-Government Programme Framework, which has been consulted upon with key stakeholders, will also be implemented over the medium term. The Community Development Workers Programme has seen the appointment of over 1000 CDWs to provincial departments of local government, while many more have just completed their learnership and will soon be deployed in the public service. A process is under way to review the CDW curriculum and to recruit 1000 candidates to participate in the learnership. The programme will continue to be rolled out in the medium term.

An initiative to expose Senior Management Service (SMS) members to the coalface of service delivery, called Project Khaedu, will be expanded to provincial departments over the medium term and will include training at local government service delivery sites.

The Public Sector Personnel Expenditure Review is being undertaken this year. Based on our findings we will develop a remuneration policy for the public sector. We will be addressing the conditions of service of professionals and a number of related special focus areas. Cabinet has mandated the implementation of the Management Policy on Incapacity Leave and Ill-health Retirement (PILIR) in all departments in the public service, while the Department will continue to play an oversight role in relation to the Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS).

The Department is leading preparations for the Global Forum V on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity and we will be taking steps to be compliant with United Nations, African Union, South African Development Cooperation and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development anti-corruption instruments. The Department is also providing support to the Minister in her capacity as the Chairperson of the Pan-African Minister's Capacity Building Programme on Governance and Public Administration. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Country Self-assessment Report and Programme of Action will be submitted to the Continental APRM Secretariat and Panel of Eminent Persons by June 2006. Following its adoption by the APRM Forum of Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC), the Programme of Action will be implemented in South Africa.

I trust that the Medium Term Strategic Plan will provide insight for the reader into the challenging work of the Department of Public Service and Administration.

PROF RICHARD LEVIN
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

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1. MEDIUM TERM CONTEXT AND STRATEGIC ORIENTATION

1.1. BACKGROUND

The focus of government after the ten years of democracy shifted from policy development towards implementation and service delivery improvement. Consistent with these developments, the DPSA has implemented a number of programmes and projects that are aimed at improving service delivery and contributing towards poverty alleviation.

Over the last two to three years, the department has responded to requests for assistance from Eastern Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal provinces as well as from neighbouring countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In response to the request from the Premier of KZN, The Ministry of Public Service and Administration (MPSA) deployed 20 officials to conduct a review of all the provincial departments in order to establish whether they have the capacity and capability to deliver on their mandates. The recommendations of the review report are currently being implemented.

In the DRC, DPSA in collaboration with SAMDI have implemented projects such as the "DRC census project" and the "Anti-corruption project". These projects are aimed at stabilizing the country as well as building confidence in the state and developing a new governance framework. Substantial progress has been made on the census project and a sustainability strategy has been developed. An agreement between Sweden and South Africa on development co-operation regarding the public service support in the Democratic Republic of Congo will be concluded in May 2006.

Following a study conducted in 2003 on the creation of a sustainable pool of middle managers that is aimed at accelerating the development of identified middle managers that can be promoted to senior management positions, the department has completed the study and is ready for implementation. A Steering Committee that will oversee the implementation of this project has been appointed. In addition, the flexible remuneration system for middle managers was also implemented in July 2005. A review

of the senior management service (SMS) was conducted and the report is currently being consulted internally.

The communication strategy that was developed to support implementation of the Employee Health and Wellness Programme is currently being rolled out in the electronic and print media. The Department also hosted an Employee Health and Wellness Indaba in October 2005.

In November 2004 Cabinet approved the registration and implementation of a Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS). GEMS is registered as a restricted membership medical aid scheme under the Medical Scheme Act of 1998. It is aimed at providing affordable and health care benefits, while providing options for those employees wishing to purchase additional cover. The scheme is fully operational and membership enrolment started on the 1st of January 2006.

Subsequent to the review of macro-benefits that was undertaken in terms of the PSCBC agreement No.2, a housing allowance that caters for officials who rent accommodation was implemented in July 2005. A Management Policy and Procedure on Incapacity Leave and Ill-health Retirement (PILIR) for Public Service Employees was developed and piloted in three departments. Cabinet approved the rollout of PILIR to the rest of the public service.

The Personnel Expenditure Review (PER) on the public sector has commenced. The findings and recommendations of this review will inform the development of a revised remuneration policy for the public sector, with specific focus on professional and scarce skills occupations.

Following the January 2005 Cabinet Lekgotla, the G&A Cluster was requested to conduct a study into the capacity of government to implement integrated developmental programmes. Subsequent to that the DPSA conducted a rapid appraisal of the implementation of the Sustainable Human Settlement Plan (SHSP) within the context of