



Business Plan for the
**PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION**

2007/8-2009/10

May 2006



Business Plan for the
Portfolio Committee on Education
May 2006

CONTENTS	Page
1. Mission of Parliament	3
2. Core Objectives of Parliament	3
3. Strategic Overview of Parliament	5
4. Key Issues for Parliament	5
5. Vision for Parliament	6
6. Strategic Objectives of Parliament	7
7. Values of Parliament	8
8. Policies	8
9. Main tasks for the Portfolio Committee	10
10. Key objectives for the Portfolio Committee	15

1. Mission

The mandate of Parliament determines its reason for existence. It is the origin of the institution, and is based on the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, establishing Parliament and setting out the functions it performs.

Parliament is elected to represent the people and to ensure government by the people under the Constitution, and to represent the provinces in the national sphere of government.

Parliament fulfils its mandate by performing the following functions:

Function 1: Pass legislation (laws)

Function 2: Scrutinise and oversee executive action (keep oversight of the executive and organs of state)

Function 3: Facilitate public participation and involvement in the legislative and other processes

Function 4: Facilitate co-operative government

Function 5: Facilitate international participation (participate in regional, continental and international bodies)

The demand for support services is derived from the need for services by members of Parliament, as they perform their functions outlined in the Constitution. The mission indicates the purpose of Parliament, its reason for existence as outlined in the mandate.

The mission is:

As the freely elected representatives of the people of South Africa, our mission is to represent, and act as a voice of the people, in fulfilling our Constitutional functions of passing laws and overseeing executive action.

Our mission indicates our core business as described in the Core Objectives.

2. Core Objectives

The Core Objectives of Parliament are to pass legislation (laws), to scrutinise and oversee executive action (keep oversight of the executive and organs of state), to facilitate public participation and involvement in the legislative and other processes, to facilitate co-operative government and to facilitate international participation (participate in regional, continental and international bodies).

The outputs for the Core Objectives include Bills passed, questions put to the executive, annual reports tabled and scrutinised, public participation facilitated, participated in international forums and organisations, approved international agreements, appointed public office bearers, and discharged statutory functions.

The Core Objectives of Parliament indicate our main business. They are:

Core Objective 1: To pass laws (Legislation)

Bills are introduced in Parliament by the executive or initiated by Parliament itself. Bills are classified in terms of the Constitution as section 74 Bills (Constitutional amendments), section 75 Bills (ordinary Bills not affecting provinces), section 76 Bills (ordinary Bills affecting provinces), and section 77 Bills (money Bills).

Core Objective 2: To oversee and scrutinise executive action (Oversight)

As part of the oversight function of Parliament, members put questions to the executive for oral or written reply. Questions may be put to the President, Deputy President or Ministers. In addition to questions and replies, the oversight function includes the tabling of reports in Parliament by institutions accounting to it. Annual reports are tabled by national departments, state institutions supporting constitutional democracy, public entities, and sector education and training authorities. Further oversight activities include site visits, reports and briefings to committees, and the budget process.

Core Objective 3: To facilitate public participation and involvement

The participation of the public in the processes of Parliament, their access to the institution and its members, and information provided to the public remain a vital focus of Parliament. Public participation activities include public hearings, outreach programmes, radio programmes and broadcasts, television broadcasts, publications, newsletters, promotional material, the website, the people's assembly, and Parliament to the People campaign.

Core Objective 4: To facilitate co-operative government

Parliament plays a major part in facilitating co-operative government by approving international agreements, the appointment of public office bearers, and the discharge of certain statutory functions as prescribed in legislation.

Core Objective 5: To facilitate international participation

Parliament facilitates and participates in several international forums and organisations. These include the Pan-African Parliament, SADC Parliamentary Forum, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the African, Caribbean, Pacific-European Union forum. Several incoming visits and outgoing visits are facilitated annually.

3. Strategic overview and developments in the environment

Building a democratic Parliament, that is transparent and responsive to the electorate, and that develops and follows a legislative agenda aimed at accelerating the transformation of South African society, has been Parliament's overriding policy and strategic objective since 1994. Recent years have seen a sharper focus being placed on Parliament's function of exercising oversight and of participating in international organisations, events and forums. At the same time, a renewed emphasis is being placed on public participation and involvement in parliamentary processes.

In 2004, the third democratic Parliament was ushered in. Shortly after the election results were made official, new members of the third Parliament were called to the first sittings of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. Almost a third of the members of the third Parliament are new.

In early January 2003 Parliament started to articulate a new vision, facilitated by the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. In July 2004 Parliament was presented with the draft vision. The vision was adopted by both Houses of Parliament on 22 February 2005. The new vision sets the new direction for Parliament, and acknowledges the challenges and key issues facing the institution.

4. Key Issues

Key Issues are the aspects that Parliament needs to attend to if services are to be provided at an acceptable level. These are derived from the Environmental Analysis – an analysis of all external and internal aspects likely to influence Parliament.

The Key Issues facing Parliament are:

- a. A growing demand for services emanating from parliamentary processes, including:
 - i. Developments in the oversight process
 - ii. Increased international participation (including African Union structures such as the Pan-African Parliament; SADC Parliament)
 - iii. The need for improved public participation and involvement
 - iv. Developments in co-operative government processes
- b. The further development and implementation of institutional policies to guide implementation, including:
 - i. Institutional governance (processes, roles and responsibilities, accountability and reporting)
 - ii. Parliamentary policies
 - iii. Divisional policies



- c. The development and implementation of modern institutional systems allowing for delivery, especially:
- i. Management systems
 - ii. Functional systems
- d. The organisational structure and human resource capacity to deliver the Core Objectives as identified, focusing specifically on:
- i. The organisational structure
 - ii. Improved human resource capacity
 - iii. Training and development
- e. Institutional culture and communication supporting implementation, focusing on:
- i. The creation of a culture for Parliament supporting the delivery of effective and efficient services
 - ii. Improvement of internal and external communication
- f. Providing a working environment enabling the delivery of services, including:
- i. Working space and accommodation
 - ii. Facilities and equipment

5. Vision

The vision for Parliament is the future dream and ambition. It is within sight, but out of reach. The new vision is:

To build an effective people's Parliament that is responsive to the needs of the people and that is driven by the ideal of realising a better quality of life for all the people of South Africa.

This means:

- A people's Parliament to transform an entire society. Establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.
- A people's Parliament of freely elected representatives building on the foundation of a democratic and open society based on the will of the people, their participation and access to Parliament.
- A people's Parliament providing a national forum for public consideration of issues, which includes educating, informing and involving the people of South Africa in its processes and acting as a voice of the people.
- A people's Parliament co-operating with other spheres of government as it deepens and entrenches our democratic values.
- A people's Parliament working with continental and international bodies to create a new democratic and participatory world order.
- A people's Parliament passing good laws, and scrutinising and overseeing executive action, as it moves to improve the quality of life of the people of South Africa, building a united and democratic South Africa.

The vision will be reached through the implementation of Strategic Objectives.

6. Strategic Objectives

In order to reach the desired vision the following strategic objectives will be met:

1. Build a quality process of scrutinising and overseeing government's action.

Objective:

Build an oversight process that ensures a quality process of scrutinising and overseeing government's action, and that is driven by the ideal of realising a better quality of life for the people of South Africa.

Areas:

Quality oversight and accountability process, best practices, international practices, oversight model, legislation and procedure, systems and human resource capacity.

2. Further build a people's Parliament that is responsive to the needs of all the people of South Africa.

Objective:

Further build a people's Parliament that is responsive to the needs of all the people of South Africa, deepening public participation and involvement, and being people-centred.

Areas:

People-centred, deepen democracy, responsive to people's needs, education and information, voice of the people, include people on the periphery, access to Parliament, Parliament to the People, setting up parliamentary information offices (pilot project).

3. Build an effective and efficient institution (service delivery improvement programme).

Objective:

Build an effective and efficient institution through the Service Delivery Improvement Programme.

Areas:

Improve institutional governance and policy, implement modern systems and technologies, improve human resource capacity, moral regeneration (of culture) and improved communication, provision of space, accommodation and facilities.

7. Values

Our values are the set of beliefs that guide the management of Parliament. This is the foundation of our policies that provides guidance in the implementation of services and projects.

We keenly believe in the following:

Constitutionality

We subscribe to social justice, fundamental human rights and the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom as listed in the Bill of Rights, a cornerstone of democracy in South Africa.

People-centredness

We respect all our people, honour our integrity and are committed to service delivery.

Co-operative government

We co-operate with other spheres of government.

Professionalism and good institutional governance

We are accountable and transparent, provide value for money, are customer-focused and strive for the highest service quality.

8. Policies

The parliamentary policies seek to guide and regulate the daily implementation of services and projects. These cover:

- Presiding Officers
- Parliamentary Service
- Top management
- Parliamentary Service Management Board
- Parliamentary Service staff
- Affirmative action
- Termination of service
- Inefficiency and misconduct
- Termination of service based on operational requirements
- Remuneration of staff
- Hours of duty
- Performance management
- Career-pathing
- Leave of absence
- Official accommodation and traveling
- Training and development of staff
- International participation by staff
- Home-owners subsidy and rental assistance
- Uniforms, protective wear and footwear
- Miscellaneous service conditions
- Medical examinations in connection with labour practices
- Remunerative work outside employment in service