

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Affirmative Action commenced in the Public Service in 1994, under special provisions contained in the Public Service Staff Code. This was intended as an interim measure until the introduction of the White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service in May 1998. The White Paper provides a comprehensive framework within which each department and provincial administration will develop their own affirmative action programmes and will be held accountable for achieving results.
- 1.2 The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service supported by the White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service provides guidelines to departments in terms of race, gender and disability for achievement by the end of 1999. The requirements for the attainment of representativeness in the Public Service is that within four years from 1995 all departments establishments must endeavour to be at least 50% black at management level. During the same period at least 30% of new recruits to the middle and senior management echelons should be women. Within ten years, people with disabilities should comprise at least 2% of public service personnel. In light of the targets set in the White Papers and as a first step in monitoring the transformation of the Public Service, the Commission deemed it expedient to initiate a project with regard to the evaluation of affirmative action targets to be achieved by the end of 1999.
- 1.3 The monitoring of numeric targets on the part of the Commission is only one facet of a process that complements the entire transformation process. The evaluation of the extent of transformation in relation to employment and personnel practices and the level of empowerment that has been achieved will be a further step in the process of establishing the overall state of transformation in the Public Service. In terms of the requirements of the White Paper on Affirmative Action, the Commission will also be specifying its reporting requirements to departments with regard to their affirmative action programmes and employment equity plans.

2. FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

- 2.1 Tables 1 to 5 as contained on pages 12 to 21 reflect the distribution of persons employed at national level, the distribution of persons employed at provincial level, the summary of distribution of persons per salary level in national departments, summary of distribution of persons per salary level in the provincial administrations and the summary of the distribution of persons per salary level in both the national departments and the provincial administrations respectively.

3. OBSERVATIONS

- 3.1 Some of the observations made during the evaluation are of concern as they bring out the limitations of the evaluation when compared against the objectives. Whilst these concerns could not be addressed immediately, the proposals made address some of the concerns.
- 3.2 The following are the observations:

- 3.2.1 Complete information in respect of distribution per salary levels is not available in most instances. In this regard departments have not totally updated such information onto PERSAL. This could be attributed to either the departments not taking seriously the issue of updating the information on PERSAL or lack of training/capacity in this regard.
- 3.2.2 The information extracted from PERSAL has been accepted per se. Departments have not been requested to analyse the information for authenticity. The issue, however, will soon be addressed when the Public Service Commission embarks on its next project in the monitoring process of specifying its reporting requirements to departments in terms of their affirmative action programmes and employment equity plans.
- 3.2.3 The conducting of interviews with heads of departments to establish reasons, where applicable, as to why representativeness in terms of the White Papers has not been achieved in their respective institutions is deemed not feasible at this stage. This is seen in the light of the information not being available to correctly categorise the distribution of personnel to the respective salary levels.

Notwithstanding the above the following observations are made on the state of representativeness in the Public Service, with the information at hand:

- 3.2.3.1 In the management level, 1264 of the 2319 personnel are black. This represents 54,50 % and is above the requirement of 50%.
- 3.2.3.2 Insofar as women are concerned, 424 of the 2319 (18,28%) are in the middle management and senior management echelons.
- 3.2.3.3 Out of the total work force of 1 034245, 915 officials are persons with disabilities. This represents 0,1% (rounded off from 0,09%) and falls short of the target of 2% to be achieved by the end of the year 2005 for this target group.

4. PROPOSALS

The incomplete information maintained on the PERSAL system has impeded the evaluation of the state of representativeness in the Public Service. Although it was intended that PERSAL would facilitate the extraction of information for purposes of the evaluation, it is obvious that this did not materialise. The following proposals are made:

- 4.1 The information gleaned from PERSAL was to have been analysed by the Public Service Commission with the view to identifying those departments that have not achieved their targets. Although this has not been achieved through this evaluation, the issue is to be addressed in the short term. In this regard the Commission is embarking upon another project, namely, specifying to departments its requirements for affirmative action programmes and employment equity plans and will request the information required.
- 4.2 Departments are reminded that the information available on PERSAL can only be correct to the extent that such information is updated continuously by the departments. Departments must immediately update the necessary information maintained by the system in terms of race, gender, disability and distribution of its personnel across the various salary levels. To this end PERSAL, through its system, should also request departments to update all information maintained thereon.
- 4.3 Departments that have not achieved the targets laid down, especially in respect of persons with disabilities must vigorously embark upon a recruitment programme for this target group. Significant improvement needs to be made in this regard if the target of 2% is to be achieved by 2005.

- 4.4 The Public Service Commission will continue to monitor progress in the attainment of, inter alia, numeric targets as part of the broad transformation process of the Public Service, either through feedback from the departments or via the PERSAL system.

5. CONCLUSION

The monitoring of numeric targets by the Public Service Commission is only one facet of the process that complements the entire transformation process. The monitoring of transformation will be a continuous process and will also include the Commission specifying its reporting requirements in terms of the affirmative action programmes of departments and their employment equity plans.

Whilst shortcomings were evident in the use of PERSAL for the purpose of this evaluation, it is the view that the proposals made will address the shortcomings. The onus lies with departments to update all the information maintained by PERSAL so that accurate information is available at all times.

Despite these so called shortcomings, it is the view that this report is crucial for future evaluations to be made on the attainment of numeric targets in the Public Service.

The transformation process in the Public Service, which is a priority of Government, will feature prominently in the monitoring and evaluation process of the Commission.