

# ETHICS

The development and maintenance of a high standard of professional ethics remains a major challenge in the transformation of the Public Service. In keeping with this important priority of Government, the Commission devoted a significant proportion of its time and resources to this objective.

## Code of Conduct Workshops

During 1998, the Commission was able to engage public servants in the process of implementing the Code of Conduct, which was launched in 1997.

The Commission conducted two workshops with national departments, with inputs from the Public Protector and the Head of the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI). Furthermore, a workshop programme for Provincial Administrations, which involved Premiers, MECs, Directors-General and Heads of Human Resource components was also implemented. Workshops were conducted in Mpumalanga, the Northern Province, North West Province, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State and the Northern Cape Province.

The primary purpose of the workshops was to inform managers about the contents of the Code of Conduct and to generate practical ideas for its implementation. The workshops were attended by a total of 340 managers, who will in turn cascade the outcomes to all levels of departments and administrations. Evaluation of the workshops found

### Objective:

- To promote a high standard of professional ethics in the Public Service

### Outputs:

- Information and assistance to departments in applying the Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct Workshops
- National Anti-Corruption Initiative

a high level of satisfaction amongst participants with the quality of the workshops.

At each workshop the Commission also surveyed participating departments on progress they had made on the implementation of the Code of Conduct. In terms of the survey, 37% of departments indicated that they had already implemented the Code of Conduct. The majority of departments implement the Code by the following measures:

- General discussion sessions.
- In-service training.
- Distribution of brochures, pamphlets, placards and newsletters.
- Conducting road shows, radio and TV discussions.
- Officials to sign the receipt and acceptance of the Code of Conduct and copies to be placed on personal files.

The Commission also made presentations on the Code of Conduct to individual national departments, namely, Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development; Foreign Affairs; Labour; Land Affairs; and Welfare and Population Development.

In order to popularise the Code of Conduct, the Commission held radio interviews with the following radio stations: Radio Phalaphala, Radio Ligwalagwala, Radio Thohoyandou, SAFM,

Bushbuckridge Community Radio and Ukhozi FM, while television interviews were held with the SABC (Two Way Programme). This enabled the Commission to reach the wider community and to promote the principle of transparency and accessibility to all.

## **National Anti-Corruption Initiative**

During 1998, Cabinet approved a National Anti-Corruption Initiative with the aim of achieving a co-ordinated and sustained response to corruption in the Public Service. The Commission played a key role in the National Anti-Corruption Initiative by organising the National Public Sector Anti-Corruption Conference and preparing for the National Anti-Corruption Summit. The Chairperson was also requested by the Minister of Justice to chair the Executive Committee for the International Anti-Corruption Conference, which is scheduled for October 1999.

The Public Sector Anti-Corruption Conference was held in Parliament from 10 to 11 November 1998. Hosted by the Ministers of Justice; Public Service and Administration; Constitutional Development and Provincial Affairs; and the Portfolio Committee on the Public Service and Administration, the Conference sought to address the need to fight corruption and to evolve strategies for prevention and control. The planning of the Conference was convened by the Chairperson of the Commission, with the Office serving as the Conference Secretariat.

Over 200 delegates representing major public sector stakeholders in the fight against corruption attended the Conference. The Deputy President delivered the keynote address. The Speaker of the National Assembly, Premiers, Ministers, MECs, Directors-General, Local Government Councillors, leaders of organised labour in the public sector and parastatal representatives played an active role in the commissions and panels that formed part of the Conference proceedings. Participation from other bodies included the Auditor-General's Office, the Public Protector, the

Heath Special Investigating Unit, South African Police Services and the National Crime Prevention Strategy.

The Commission shared the following objectives with the various role players in organising the Conference:

- Create a common understanding of all aspects of corruption.
- Obtain commitment from all public sector stakeholders to effectively combat corruption.
- Contribute to more effective co-ordination amongst anti-corruption structures.
- Provide guidelines for an anti-corruption programme.
- Make recommendations for the review of anti-corruption legislation.
- Send a clear message that Government will not tolerate corruption and should respond harshly where it occurs.

A panel of experts from the University of Cape Town, who were invited to evaluate the Conference, noted the excellent organisation, consensus on critical issues, seriousness and a will to act, as well as a high degree of commitment to a common goal.

Various recommendations emanated from the discussions and have been captured in a Conference Statement (see Appendix 2). A report on the Conference will be submitted to Cabinet early in 1999.

The Commission has also played a key role in the planning and organisation of the National Anti-Corruption Summit which is provisionally scheduled for April 1999. The Summit aims to draw together all sectors of South African society to work towards the development of a national strategy to combat corruption. It is also envisaged that the National Campaign Against Corruption will be launched at the Summit.