Assessment of the Human Resource Development Practices in the Public Service
Vision

The Public Service Commission is an independent and impartial body created by the Constitution, 1996, to enhance excellence in governance within the Public Service by promoting a professional and ethical environment and adding value to a public administration that is accountable, equitable, efficient, effective, corruption free and responsive to the needs of the people of South Africa.

Mission

The Public Service Commission aims to promote the constitutionally enshrined democratic principles and values of the Public Service by investigating, monitoring, evaluating, communicating and reporting on public administration. Through research processes, it will ensure the promotion of excellence in governance and the delivery of affordable and sustainable quality services.
Assessment of the Human Resource Development Practices in the Public Service
Foreword

Human resources (employees) are an integral element to the functioning of any organization, yet enjoy a backwater status, and are not taken seriously at all levels. Managing to harness the potential of individuals, each with their own needs, views and opinions, means that one must manage this resource with due sensitivity to providing constant stimulation and satisfaction. This means organizing the work in such a manner that it inspires and promotes intrinsic motivation, rather than work that takes place only when there is supervision or instruction. Such a task of growing, motivating and improving individual skills, training and development needs remains one of the most challenging aspects facing an organization.

Due to such challenges it is critical for organisations to implement credible Human Resource Development (HRD) interventions. To assist departments with training and development the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) developed the initial Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS) for the Public Service (2002 - 2006). However it soon became evident that many challenges in both service delivery and human resource development necessitated a review of the HRDS 2002-2006 and this was undertaken by the DPSA in 2007. The Human Resource Strategic Framework Vision 2015 was launched in 2008 and the revised edition of the strategy aims to transform the Public Service through its people as initially intended in 2002.

Although it has been determined that Skills Development Plans (SDP’s) are in place in most departments and that training is taking place, concerns have continued to be raised about the apparent lack of Human Resource (HR) capacity in the Public Service. It is for this reason that the Public Service Commission (PSC) decided to undertake this study on the “Assessment of HRD Practices in the Public Service”. The aim was to determine how departments formulate their Skills Development Plans (SDP’s), how training opportunities are identified, whether there are any monitoring mechanisms in place to determine the impact of the training and development on performance of employees and what the reasons for non-compliance are, if SDP’s are indeed, in place.

The PSC has found that overall, departments generally comply with the legislative framework in that they have the necessary policy documents in place, training is being undertaken and they generally submit the Workplace Skills Plans (WSP) and Annual Training Reports (ATR) as required, to the Public Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA). Analysis of the
various policy documents and engagement with the HRD practitioners shows that a number of challenges are still being faced with proper implementation of policy and determining the return on training investment. It gives me great pleasure to present the report on this assessment. I trust that you will find this assessment useful.

MS PM TENGENI
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON: PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
# Table of Contents

LIST OF ACRONYMS .......................................................... vi

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ......................................................... VII

1. Introduction ................................................................ vii
2. Objectives of the Study ................................................. vii
3. Scope ............................................................................. vii
4. Methodology ................................................................. vii
5. Main Findings ............................................................... viii
6. Recommendations ......................................................... xi
7. Conclusion .................................................................... xii

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .................................................. 1

1.1 Background .................................................................. 2
1.2 Mandate of the Public Service Commission ....................... 2
1.3 Objectives of the Assessment ......................................... 3
1.4 Scope of the Assessment ............................................. 3
1.5 Methodology ............................................................... 3
1.6 Structure of the Report .................................................. 3

CHAPTER 2: THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ......................... 4

2.1 Introduction .................................................................. 5
2.2 Legislative and Regulatory Framework ............................ 5

CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS .................................... 9

3.1 Introduction .................................................................. 10
3.2 Compliance with Legislation, Strategy and Policy Frameworks 10
3.3 Analysis of Workplace Skills Plan and Skills Audit 12
3.4 HRD Structures and Committees .................................. 16
3.5 Assessment of Training and Development Policies and Programs 17
3.6 Impact Assessment of Training and Development Initiatives 20
3.7 1 % Skills Levy ............................................................. 21
3.8 Management Support .................................................. 21
3.9 Support Provided by PSETA, PALAMA and other Training Academies 22
3.10 Summary .................................................................... 24
CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Recommendations

4.3 Conclusion

APPENDIX A

REFERENCES

LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 1: Strategic and HR Plans, HRD Strategy and Alignment to Strategic Plan
Graph 2: Skills Audit and Workplace Skills Plan
Graph 3: Skills Training and Development Programmes

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: HRD/Skills Committees

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Amount spent on Bursary Programmes

LIST OF DIAGRAMS

Diagram 1: Documents to be consulted to develop WSP
## List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABET</td>
<td>Adult Basic Education and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>APP</td>
<td>Annual Performance Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCEA</td>
<td>Basic Conditions of Employment Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPSA</td>
<td>Department of Public Service and Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>Employment Equity</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOD</td>
<td>Head of Department</td>
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<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
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<td>HRD</td>
<td>Human Resource Development</td>
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<td>HRM</td>
<td>Human Resource Management</td>
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<td>HRP</td>
<td>Human Resource Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDP/PDP</td>
<td>Individual Development Plan / Personal Development Plan</td>
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<td>LRA</td>
<td>Labour Relations Act</td>
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<td>MMS</td>
<td>Middle Management Service</td>
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<td>MTEF</td>
<td>Medium Term Expenditure Framework</td>
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<td>PA</td>
<td>Performance Agreement</td>
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<td>PALAMA</td>
<td>Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy</td>
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<td>PERSAL</td>
<td>Personnel Salary System</td>
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<td>PFMA</td>
<td>Public Finance Management Act</td>
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<td>PMDS</td>
<td>Performance Management and Development System</td>
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<td>PSA</td>
<td>Public Service Act</td>
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<td>Public Service Commission</td>
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<td>Skills Development Act</td>
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<td>Skills Development Levy Act</td>
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<td>SETA</td>
<td>Sector Education and Training Authority</td>
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<td>SMS</td>
<td>Senior Management Service</td>
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<td>Sector Skills Plan</td>
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<td>WSP</td>
<td>Workplace Skills Plan</td>
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Executive Summary

1. INTRODUCTION

The Public Service is a labour intensive employer who is dependent on the quality, skills and performance of its employees. There is a policy framework in place for Human Resource Development (HRD) in the Public Service and it is crucial to monitor its implementation to ensure that its objectives are achieved. It is for this reason that the PSC decided to undertake the study on the Assessment of Human Resource Development Practices in the Public Service in order to determine whether training and development is directed at the core skills that departments need to deliver on their strategic objectives, whether appropriate monitoring mechanisms are in place to ensure that training and development plans are implemented accordingly and whether the impact of such training is assessed.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Through this report the PSC aimed to -

- Assess whether departments have identified the core skills they require in order to achieve their strategic objectives.
- Assess the effectiveness of the process of developing the Skills Development Plans to address capacity shortages.
- Determine the rate of compliance with HRD strategies and policies, the development and implementation of skills development plans and the reasons thereof.
- Identify and propose best practices that can be implemented within the departments to address challenges that are being experienced.

3. SCOPE

The study was conducted within the National and Provincial Departments of Transport, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Treasury. Thus, a total of 30 departments participated in the study. These departments were selected on the basis of the role they play towards efforts to improve rural development and poverty alleviation which were identified as part of the key priority areas of government.

4. METHODOLOGY

The methodology followed in the gathering of data was as follows:

- A desktop study of previous reports produced by the PSC.
- A questionnaire was used during interviews with Managers responsible for the Human Resource Development Practices within the sampled departments.

5. MAIN FINDINGS


It was encouraging to note that 97% of the sampled departments had developed and implemented HR plans. Only 3% did not have HR plans in place. Of the 97% that did have HR plans, only 10% were in draft format, however, they all complied with the requirements necessary for HR plans.

The study also found that only 53% of the sampled departments had HRD strategies in place. Of these, only 63% complied with the basic requirements for an HRD strategy. Seven (7%) of the sampled departments had a training policy in place and 3% had an implementation plan in place, instead of a strategy. 37% of the sampled departments did not have any HRD strategy or policy in place.

5.2 Workplace Skills Plans (WSP) and Skills Audit

The Workplace Skills Plan is an annual plan derived at after consultation between management and employees aimed at addressing the skills shortages identified in a department to enable it to meet its strategic objectives. Of the sampled departments, 97% had WSPs in place, had submitted them to PSETA and analysis of these documents showed 100% compliance with the requirements for drafting WSPs.

A skills audit is the process of measuring and recording the skills of an individual or group. In an organisation, this is done to identify the skills and knowledge that the organisation currently has, in relation to what the organisation needs in order to be effective. Of the sampled departments, 56% indicated that they had conducted skills audits. The frequency of such audits ranged from once a year in some departments, once every three years in others and once every five years to coincide with the strategic plan of the department. Only 13% of these departments had proof of a skills audit being done. At least 43% of the sampled departments admitted that they had never conducted a skills audit, but were looking forward to utilizing HR Connect in future. They largely utilized the Personnel Development Plans of individual employees, to determine training requirements, and in some instances this was done in consultation with line managers. One can thereby conclude that, even though training does take place, the training may not always be directed at the core skills that departments require to deliver on their strategic objectives.
5.3 HRD Structures and Committees

All the sampled departments had Skills Development Facilitators in place. In some larger departments, they were dedicated to the HRD unit, whilst in smaller departments they were located in the Human Resource Management unit under Special Programmes. The breakdown of SDF’s per department was as follows: 38% of the sampled departments had only one SDF, 29% had two, 8% had three, 17% had four, whilst 4% had six and another 4% had nine. The general view was that departments were not adequately resourced with SDFs to make a meaningful contribution towards enhancing skills development in their respective departments.

The objective of a Human Resource Development / Training Committee is to, amongst others, provide inputs to and endorse the WSP; to advise on the implementation of the WSP and to ensure support to both management and employees in implementing skills development in its totality. The frequency of meetings of the HRD / Training committees ranged from 60% of the sampled departments meeting once per quarter, to 4% only planning to meet once per annum. Eight percent (8%) met once a month, another 8% met once every two months and a further 8% met twice a year, whilst 12% indicated that they would meet on an ad-hoc basis, if the need arose. A common challenge across all the sampled departments was that meetings were often postponed and the respondents felt that this was largely due to a lack of commitment, especially from the side of management.

5.4 Assessment of Training and Development Initiatives

Individual Development Plans (IDPs) / Personal Development Plans (PDPs) ought to be attached to each individual employee’s Performance Agreement (PA), as an indication of an area of weakness or development that would enhance performance in a given job. Employees in 100% of the sampled departments included PDPs or IDPs in their PAs; however, the training was mainly identified by individual employees and was not done according to a skills audit or in consultation with the supervisor.

The study found that at least 68% of the sampled departments had Learnership programmes in place, whilst 100% of the sampled departments had Internship programmes in place. The most difficult programme to implement was one of mentorship, due to a lack of time and resources. A lack of funds has also resulted in a decrease in the intake of Interns, whilst a lack of relevant vacant posts makes it difficult for departments to place interns after completion of the Internship programme.

None of the sampled departments had a measurement system in place to assess the relevance and impact of training. This gap is linked to the important finding that departments do not undertake a proper skills audit, and as such, cannot assess whether the training that was ultimately provided, did indeed, meet the needs of the individual and the department in order to achieve the strategic objectives of the department.
5.5 One percent (1%) Skills Levy

All the sampled departments do receive at least 1% of the departmental budget to implement skills training and development. They are of the view that the budgets are not sufficient, as most training and development courses are outsourced to service providers such as tertiary institutions, consultants or other training institutions, whose courses can be very expensive. Of concern was the fact that, in the event of over-expenditure by any programme, the training budget was the first to be used as a supplement. Thus, training and development plans would be put on hold until funds became available, if at all.

5.6 Management Support

One of the main challenges which HRD components said they faced was the lack of management support. During interviews, departments cited that due to lack of support from line managers, HRD components experience difficulties in implementing HRD practices effectively. It was argued that managers have little understanding of the PMDS, do not engage with their employees regarding their PDP’s, do not monitor employees to determine areas of weakness and generally do not view training and development of staff as a key priority. Line managers tend to shift this management responsibility to HRD practitioners. Some managers do not release staff for planned training interventions, which could lead to fruitless and wasteful expenditure if training is already booked and paid for.

5.7 Support provided by the Public Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA), Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) and other Training Academies

(a) PSETA

Respondents from all the sampled departments indicated that they did not find the templates they were required to complete and submit to PSETA user-friendly. However, given that PSETA held a workshop each year where SDFs were taken through the step-by-step process of drafting WSPs and were taken through the steps of completing and submitting the WSPs electronically, they were able to comply with the reporting template. Respondents argued that PSETA only focussed on monitoring compliance in respect to submission deadlines and in accordance with the prescribed templates. Some respondents believed that function SETAs, e.g. TETA, AGRISSETA, Construction SETA, etc. provided better services than PSETA. This can be attributed to the capacity constraints experienced by PSETA as was established by the findings in the PSC’s report¹ on its assessment of PSETA.

(b) PALAMA

During interviews, 90% of the sampled departments indicated that they did not utilise PALAMA to conduct training. The reasons cited were that they believed the courses offered by PALAMA were extremely expensive and budget constraints hampered the departments' ability to procure such training. As such, departments opted to utilise the services of tertiary institutions which they found credible. A major problem experienced by departments, was the delays in receiving invoices from PALAMA or receiving duplicate invoices, resulting in confusion, additional work for HRD units and unnecessary audit queries for the departments. When departments contacted PALAMA they did so via the call centre. This made it extremely difficult to follow up after submission of documentation or to follow up on a query, due to the nature of call centres.

(c) OTHER TRAINING ACADEMIES

In four provinces, there are training / learning academies, which departments used to conduct training. The view is that these training academies were efficient and effective. As most of the provincially determined training needs were offered by the academy, and were determined and funded by the Office of the Premier, departments had the option of sending staff to such training and this would not impact on the departments WSP or training budget. An example of such training was “Re-Orientation of Public Servants” conducted by the Western Cape Provincial Training Academy.

The remainder of the training offered by the academies is offered based on the WSPs of departments. The academies ensure block training of specific courses, the training is mainly conducted by permanent training staff of the academy, courses are accredited and the rates are affordable. Should the academy need to procure the services of external service providers, the rates would be negotiated for the Public Service.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below must be implemented with immediate effect:

- All departments need to comply with the legislative and policy frameworks necessary for Human Resource Development by ensuring that they have the necessary strategies and policies in place. The departments must implement their programmes as budgeted for and must be held accountable for the spending of the funds.
- All departments must as a matter of urgency, conduct skills audits to ensure that they are aware of their current skills as well as the skills gap that needs to be addressed by targeted recruitment and/or training interventions. Departments should ensure that skills audits form the basis of the WSP and not an individual’s Performance Development Plan.
• DPSA needs to develop a tool which departments can utilize to assess the relevance and impact of training on the individual as well as on the organization in meeting the needs and expectations of the stakeholders (public and business).

• Performance agreements of top management must include support to HRD components, provide the resources and ensure that monitoring systems are in place to measure the returns on training investments.

• DPSA needs to develop a tool for departments to be more accountable for the 1% Skills levy. Departments need to provide an extensive expenditure report to DPSA or Treasury on the training conducted within their departments for each financial year. Reasons for non-expenditure must be provided.

• PSETA should play a more developmental role within departments and should also monitor whether training as outlined in the WSP is actually conducted by the departments.

7. CONCLUSION

The study was conducted to assess HRD practices in the Public Service. The assessment has looked at the ways in which departments identify their core departmental competencies; develop, implement and report on the WSPs and compliance with skills development legislation. It can be concluded that although there have been HRD strategies and policy frameworks in place and a greater sense of implementation of WSPs by departments, many challenges still remain for HRD managers wanting to make a significant contribution to departmental performance. The interviews provided rich discussions on the complexities involved with HRD practices and assisted the PSC to gain a better understanding of the impediments that must be addressed in order to ensure proper identification of core departmental competencies, appropriate development and implementation of policies and programmes, monitoring and reporting of WSPs and Skills Audits. It is evident that if the challenges that are raised in this assessment are not addressed, government will continue to invest on training and development interventions that are yielding fewer results on the departments’ strategic objectives, thus compromising service delivery.
Chapter One

Introduction
1.1 BACKGROUND

The Public Service is a labour intensive employer dependent on the quality, skills and performance of its employees. Due to the demands on the Public Service for efficient and effective service delivery, there is a need for departments to adopt appropriate Human Resource Development (HRD) practices which ultimately improve performance. Since its establishment, the Public Service Commission (PSC) has produced a series of reports that focus on a wide variety of human resources management practices. The PSC has found from its various studies that significant progress has been made in putting in place the necessary legislative, normative and regulatory framework for HRD. However, it appears that the real challenge is in the implementation of these policy frameworks.

For example, while there are institutions like Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to assist with the training and development of employees and while departments are required to allocate at least 1% of their personnel budgets to support skills development, the return on investment does not always appear to be adequate. With service delivery protests being witnessed and the surrendering of funds meant, among others, for training and development to National Treasury by some departments, especially in the provincial sphere of government, there is a general view that the lack of skilled officials to implement departments’ programmes and to provide the required leadership and management could be one of the causes of slack service delivery. If this is the case, and skills development is not attended to, then an assumption could be made that limited capacity in terms of skills will continue to impact on government’s performance and its ability to realise its developmental objectives.

It is for this reason that the PSC decided to undertake the study on the Assessment of Human Resource Development Practices in the Public Service in order to determine whether training and development is directed at the core skills that departments need to deliver on their strategic objectives and whether there are appropriate monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure that training and development plans are implemented and the impact thereof is assessed.

1.2 MANDATE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In terms of section 196 (4) (b) of the Constitution, 1996, read in conjunction with sections 9 and 10 of the Public Service Commission Act, 1997, the Public Service Commission (PSC) is empowered “to investigate, monitor and evaluate the organization, administration and personnel practices of the Public Service”. According to section 196 (4) (f) (iv) of the Constitution, 1996, the PSC may “of its own accord or on receipt of a complaint, advise all organs of state regarding personnel practices in the Public Service including those relating to the recruitment, appointment, transfer, discharge and other aspects of the careers of employees.”
in the Public Service”. The PSC is therefore mandated to assess the Human Resource Development practices as one of the mechanisms for the improvement of personnel practices in the Public Service.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSESSMENT

The objectives of the study were to:

- Assess whether departments have identified their core skills required to achieve the strategic objectives.
- Assess the effectiveness of the process in the development of the Skills Development Plans to address capacity shortages.
- Determine the rate of compliance/non-compliance with HRD strategies and policies, development and implementation of skills development plans and the reasons thereof.
- Identify and propose best practices that can be implemented within the departments to address challenges that are being experienced.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The study was conducted within the national and provincial Departments of Transport, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Treasury (a total of 30 departments). These departments were selected on the basis of the role they play towards efforts to improve rural development and poverty alleviation which were identified as part of the key priority areas of government.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The following methodology was used:-

- A desktop study of previous reports produced by the PSC.
- A questionnaire was used during interviews with Managers responsible for the Human Resource Development practices within the sampled departments.

1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The rest of the report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2: Presents the applicable legislative framework.
Chapter 3: Presents the analysis of findings of the study.
Chapter 4: Provides recommendations and a conclusion.
Chapter Two

The Legislative Framework
2.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to effectively manage and guide the skills development, training and capacity building of employees within the Public Service, legislation, proper strategies, policies, processes and procedures are necessary. This chapter provides a summary of the legislative and regulatory framework that guides the Human Resource Development practices in the Public Service, and each of these documents directs the activities of the HRD manager in one way or another. These also form the foundation for HRD in the Public Service.

2.2 LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The legislative provisions regulating human resource development activities in the Public Service are stated in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Legislative and Regulatory Framework

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| Skills Development Act (SDA), 1998<sup>4</sup> | The aim of this Act is to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce.

**“Section 30 - Budget for training by public service employers**

Each public service employer in the national and provincial spheres of government -

(a) must budget for at least 1% of its payroll for the training and education of its employees; and

(b) may contribute funds to a SETA”.

| Skills Development Levies Act (SDLA), 1999<sup>5</sup> | The aim of this Act is to prescribe how employers should contribute to the National Skills Fund (NSF). Public Service employers in the national and provincial sphere of government are exempted from contributing to the NSF.

**“Section 7 - Payment of levy to SETA and refund**

Subject to subsection (2), the Minister may, in consultation with the Minister of Finance and by notice in the Gazette, determine that all employers that fall within the jurisdiction of any SETA specified in that notice, must pay the levy to-that SETA; or a body nominated by the SETA and approved by the Minister to collect the levy on behalf of that SETA”.

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<td>White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>The aim of this White Paper is to establish a policy framework to guide the introduction and implementation of new policies and legislation aimed at transforming the South African Public Service.</td>
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<td><strong>“Section 13.1 - Human Resource Development and Capacity Building”</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>...Accordingly, a coherent strategic framework for human resource development will need to be developed at both the national and provincial levels. Such a framework will have as its purpose the development of an optimal fit between the needs of the employee, the job, the organisation and the environment, so that employees reach their desired level of satisfaction and performance, and the organisation meets its goals”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Paper on Public Service Training and Education&lt;sup&gt;7&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>The aim of this White Paper is to provide a framework for Public Service training and education that is appropriate, adequate and accessible and meets the current and future requirements of public servants, the public service and the public.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Resource Development Strategy; Vision 2015&lt;sup&gt;8&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>The aim of this HRD Strategy framework is to provide guidance on the development of officials in the Public Service. It is informed by all relevant policies and documents that are applicable to HRD in the Public Service.</td>
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<td>Public Service Regulations, 2001 as amended&lt;sup&gt;9&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>Part IX of the PSR states that:</strong></td>
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<td>“Employees should have on-going and equitable access to training geared towards achieving an efficient, non-partisan and representative public service. Training should support work performance and career development. It should become increasingly driven by needs, and link strategically to broader human resource management practices and programmes aimed at enhancing employment equity and representativeness.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>B. Institutional arrangements</strong></td>
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<td><strong>B.1</strong> The Minister may oversee or ensure the participation of the public service in any institution aimed at promoting training in the public service, subject to the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995 (Act No. 58 of 1995).</td>
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</table>

<sup>7</sup> Republic of South Africa, White Paper on Public Service Training and Education.
<sup>8</sup> Republic of South Africa, Department of Public Service and Administration, Human Resource Development Strategy-Vision 2015.
<sup>9</sup> Republic of South Africa, Public Service Regulations, 2001 as amended.
B.2 Subject to the provisions of the Act and these Regulations and State or Provincial Tender Board prescripts, training may be provided internally or externally.

B.3 A supervisor shall provide training opportunities for employees under her or his supervision and control in accordance with the departmental training plan.

B.4 A head of department shall ensure that sufficient funds are available for the training of employees at all grades.

B.5 A member of the SMS shall avail herself or himself to train employees in the public service or to present training.

C. Training directed by the Minister

C.1 The Minister may issue directives regarding the training of employees or categories of employees in the public service.

C.2 The Minister shall, where appropriate, ensure that every institution responsible for training in the public service and the training offered in the public service gains accreditation from the South African Qualifications Authority.

C.3 The department or training institution offering any training directed by the Minister shall issue certificates in respect of such training when completed successfully. All departments shall recognise those certificates.

D. Occupational specific competencies and training

An executing authority shall determine the required competencies of and prescribe training for, various occupational categories or specific employees in her or his department”.

E. Training assistance

E.1 If it will make a contribution to the performance of the work of her or his department, a head of department may grant any financial or other assistance for any study, training or research where-

(a) she or he has asked an employee to undertake the study, training or research; or
(b) the employee has requested any such assistance.
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<tr>
<td>E.2 A head of department may grant any financial or other assistance for part-time or full-time activities at either local or international institutions. She or he may also grant assistance for studies and training through training interventions such as short courses, congresses, symposia, seminars, conferences, workshops, lectures and study tours”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa</td>
<td>The aim of this strategy is to maximise the potential of the people of South Africa, through the acquisition of knowledge and skills, to work productively and competitively in order to achieve a rising quality of life for all, and to set in place an operational plan, together with the necessary institutional arrangements, to achieve this.</td>
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The above-mentioned legislative framework is meant to assist and guide managers in the management of human resource development activities within the Public Service. The onus is on departments to ensure that the managers and human resource development practitioners receive the necessary training in order for the implementation of the legislative framework to be effective. It is also of great importance that line managers have a clear understanding of the legislative framework that governs HRD practices.
Chapter Three

Analysis of Findings
3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the responses received from the participating departments. Human Resource Development Managers and Practitioners responded to the questionnaires which were distributed for their completion, and the interviews that were conducted to further assess the complexities of HRD practices. In addition, an analysis of the findings include information obtained from supporting documentation provided by the departments as evidence.

The following categories of data were used as the basis to determine whether the implementation of HRD legislation, policies, procedures and programmes have made an impact on skills, training and development and capacity building in the Public Service:-

- Compliance with legislation, strategy and the policy framework
- Core Organisational competencies
- Committees and Management involvement in the implementation of HRD practices
- Skills, Training and Development programmes
- Impact Assessment of Training and Development initiatives
- One percent (1%) Skills Levy
- Support provided by Public Sector Education and training Authority (PSETA), Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) and other Training Academies.

3.2 COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION, STRATEGY AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The skills development legislation and the national skills development strategies provide the framework within which departments have to work. They place a legal obligation on all employers to improve the competency levels of the workforce and oblige government departments to allocate a percentage of their budget to skills development. By so doing, this creates an enabling environment for strategic investment in skills development.

For example, in terms of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), departments are required to develop strategic plans in line with the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). Graph 1 on the following page assess the extent to which departments have developed strategic plans which are supported by human resource plans (HRPs), human resource development (HRD) strategies and whether all these documents are aligned to the overall strategy.
According to **Graph 1** above, 29 out of the 30 sampled departments (97%) had a 5 year Strategic Plan in place. The Department of Agriculture in the Northern Cape is the only department which did not have the plan in place, but indicated that it was in the process of formulating such a strategy. The department had to be re-configured following the national and provincial general elections in April 2009, but the process of developing Strategic Plans for the newly formed departments was underway. This is a cause of concern as the implications are that the department did not have a planning document for the attainment of service delivery objectives. It is more concerning in terms of the employee’s functions as their key performance areas have to be informed by the strategic objectives which are stated in the Strategic Plans of the departments.

In addition, the graph indicates that 29 out of the 30 sampled departments (97%) had Human Resource (HR) Plans in place. Only one department, namely the national department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries did not have an HR Plan in place. Of the 29 who did, three of them (10%) were in draft format, however; they all complied with the requirements necessary for drafting HR Plans in that they contained information regarding the overview of the department, the strategic direction of the department, the environmental scan, the workforce analysis, the human resource gap analysis, an action plan and steps to monitor and evaluate the plan.

Furthermore, only 53% of the sampled departments had an HRD Strategy in place, and even though they claimed to have utilized the DPSA HRD Strategy Vision 2015 as a guide, only 63% of these complied with the basic requirements for an HRD Strategy. The departments that did comply had included the following elements: capacity development initiatives, organisational support pillar, governance and institutional development initiatives and economic
growth initiatives. Furthermore, the five key objectives of the National Skills Development Strategy, the key priorities of government and the provincial growth and development strategy had been incorporated into the departmental strategies. Analysis of the documents shows that one department (3%) had an implementation plan, which it regarded as an HRD Strategy, and two other departments (7%) had a Training Policy, instead of an HRD Strategy, whilst the remaining departments (37%) did not have any Strategy, Policy or Plan in place.

Departments need to ensure that HR Plans and HRD Strategies are available as these documents give a clear indication of the skills, training, development and capacity needs that are required in order for departmental strategic objectives to be achieved. In addition, these documents outline the way in which departments will acquire and develop such capacity. The absence of such documents could result in the lack of capacity in departments which would have a negative impact on service delivery.

3.3 ANALYSIS OF WORKPLACE SKILLS PLANS AND SKILLS AUDITS

One of the requirements departments must comply with as mentioned in the skills development legislation and in HRD Strategies is to conduct a skill gap analysis, to determine skills development priorities and to align the department’s skills profile with its strategic objectives. This analysis assists the departments to assess the skills level of employees within the departments. Graph 2 below analyses the extent to which departments have been able to conduct skills audits and develop Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) as part of improving organizational competencies.

Graph 2: Skills Audit and Workplace Skills Plan

![Graph 2: Skills Audit and Workplace Skills Plan](image)

Information from Questionnaire attached as Annexure A

According to Graph 2 above, 17 out of the 30 sampled departments (56%) have conducted skills audit exercises in the past three years, with some embarking on this exercise annually, once every three years or once every five years, in line with the strategic plan. Thirteen out of the 30 sampled departments (43%) have never embarked on a skills audit exercise. The departments who have complied provided proof of their skills audits being done by consultants,
but the practice had been abandoned as departments were awaiting the outcome of the HR Connect project which was in its pilot phase. HR Connect is a system developed to help the Public Service apply a uniform skills audit process. It was envisaged that this uniform skills audit process would eliminate duplication and waste of resources within the public service and put in place sustainable and consistent human capital development processes.

Even though the Skills Development Act and the Skills Levies Act makes it mandatory for departments to embark upon skills audits, they fail to do so as there is a general lack of understanding and capacity required to conduct the exercise, hence, there is no systematic plan in place to address the training needs that should inform the WSP. It must be noted that some departments relied on the competency assessments conducted by service providers during recruitment and selection processes for SMS levels. However, the information received from these service providers is not always used to develop the employees as per the identified developmental gaps.

Non-compliance in addressing skills gaps can be detrimental to a department where scarce/critical skills are a necessity in meeting service delivery challenges. This is especially relevant for departments such as the Treasury, Agriculture and Roads and Transport who require Economists, Veterinarians, Engineers and IT specialists, etc. to perform at their optimal potential in order to meet their strategic objectives.

The skills development legislation makes provision for the establishment of Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). SETAs are meant to assist organisations to formulate and implement training plans linked to the organisations’ strategic objectives. In line with the skills development legislation, departments are required to develop and submit approved Workplace Skills Plans (WSPs) to the respective SETAs. The WSP is developed every year at the departmental level and it describes training and development plans that are meant to capacitate employees with skills to assist in the attainment of the overall strategic objectives. The WSP must relate to the key objectives of the Strategic Plan and to the priority training areas as identified in the Sector Skills Plan (SSP). It must be noted that the WSP is a product of consultation between management and employees.

Twenty nine out of the 30 sampled departments (97%) had WSPs in place and only 1 (3%) of the sampled departments, namely, the Department of Agriculture in the Northern Cape did not have a plan in place. This department had not finalized its Workplace Skills Plan due to the organizational re-configuration. An analysis of the WSPs showed that they all complied with the basic requirements for drafting WSPs. The following documentation, where available, informed the content of the WSPs and is aligned to the requirements as per diagram 1 on page 15:

- Personal Development Plans (PDPs)/Individual Development Plans (IDPs)
- Needs analysis

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11 Republic of South Africa. Department of Public Service and Administration. Introduction to HR Connect. 27 November 2009.
The study found that 60% of the sampled departments had managed to implement 100% and in some cases even more, of the planned training interventions. This is attributed to the fact that compulsory training or free training would be offered by certain organizations, like the Office of the Premier. Departments then add that training to the Annual Training Report, which then increases the number of training interventions. Analysis of the WSPs showed that even though departments may have succeeded in conducting the number of training interventions as outlined in the WSPs, training was not always aligned to the planned training set out in the WSP. PSETA did not monitor whether departments were implementing planned training.

From the 40% of the departments that did not manage to conduct their planned training interventions in their totality, four departments managed to implement 70% and above, two departments succeeded in implementing 50% of their planned training interventions, whilst seven departments only implemented below 40% of their planned training interventions. It was perplexing to note that in the Departments of Transport and Agriculture in Kwa-Zulu Natal, and the Mpumalanga Department of Treasury no training was conducted at all. The reasons cited were lack of training funds.

**Diagram 1** on the following page depicts the critical documentation that ought to be consulted when developing the Workplace Skills Plans. The list of critical documentation as shown in **Diagram 1** is not exhaustive, but forms the basis on which the WSP is developed. Departments can also consult other additional documentation when developing their WSPs.
The challenge is that in reporting on training conducted, departments include the courses offered free of charge by the Office of the Premier, Treasury or the Learning Academies. Thus, PSETA assumes that the training is conducted from the 1% skills levy, which may not always be the case. Another challenge is that Personal Development Plans generally inform the content of the WSP, but these are often based on the training needs an individual has identified and not necessarily on a proper skills analysis. Thus the WSPs do not contain the correct skills, training and development needs required to achieve the organizational goals that are contained in the Strategic Plan, HR Plans and APPs and leads to ineffective use of training funds since employees are sent on training that may not be addressing the pressing skills needs of the particular department.
3.4 HRD STRUCTURES AND COMMITTEES

One of the requirements that departments must comply with as per the skills development legislation and HRD Strategies is the formation of a structure such as an HRD/Skills committee. This committee should comprise all stakeholders that deal with training and development matters within the department. Representatives from the Employment Equity Committee (EEC), Employee Health and Wellness and HIV/AIDS committee (EHW), Special programmes as well as other HR committees can also form part of this committee. It is important to have an HRD committee established because it is at its meetings that the WSP, the skills, training and development programmes as well as the bursary applications are recommended for approval in consultation with all stakeholders. This committee also serves as an advisory body to Senior Management on HRD related matters. **Figure 1** below shows the extent to which departments have established HRD/Skills committees.

**Figure 1: HRD/Skills Committee**

Information from Questionnaire attached as Annexure A

According to **Figure 1** above, 29 out of the 30 sampled departments (97%) had a HRD/Skills Committee in place (except for the Department of Agriculture in the Northern Cape). The department was in the process of establishing such a committee following changes resulting from re-configuration. In the case of those departments that had committees, frequency of their meetings ranged from once per quarter (60%), once a month (8%), once every two months (8%) twice a year (8%), once a year (4%) and on an ad-hoc basis if the need arose (12%).
It has also been noted that the functions of these committees differ amongst departments, ranging from developing and monitoring the implementation of WSPs, assessment of bursary applications, formulation of HRD policies, providing recommendations/advisory services on HRD matters to Heads of Department (HoDs) for approval purposes, assessing the training needs, dealing with PMDS matters, skills audits, special programmes, EE issues and other HR related issues. In the majority of the sampled departments, these committees were chaired by SMS members.

During the interviews conducted with most of the HRD managers of the sampled departments, one of the greatest challenges faced by these committees was the postponement of meetings due to failure to quorate. This was specifically related to SMS stakeholders that were members of the HRD committee who could not attend as a result of other commitments.

Skills Development Facilitators (SDFs) play a vital role in promoting a learning culture in an organization, they co-ordinate planned education, training and development in the organization, advise the alignment of skills development objectives and practices with strategic objectives, advise the establishment and implementation of a quality management system for skills development practices, assist the employer and employees to develop a workplace skills plan which complies with the training requirement of the SETA (including a training/HRD committee) and serve as a resource with regard to all aspects of skills development and SETA initiatives.

All the sampled departments did have skills development facilitators (SDFs) in place, however, the number of trained SDFs differed. Thirty eight percent (38%) of the sampled departments only had one SDF, whilst 29% had two, and 4% had as many as nine SDFs. Most departments were of the view that the number of their SDFs was inadequate. For example, it was indicated that some departments with a staff establishment of 4000 had 4 or 2 skills development facilitators in place.

### 3.5 ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

In 2002 Cabinet took a decision that over a five year period, the number of young people involved in Internships and Learnership programmes should reach 5% of the establishment of government departments, with the appointment of interns not being less than 2.5% of the total staff establishment. Furthermore, the Human Resource Strategic Framework Vision 2015 in 2008 emphasised the need for Internship, Learnership, and Mentorship programmes as well as Bursary and Retention policies to be implemented within departments.

The Internship/Learnership framework seeks to establish an effective and efficient training and development programme aimed at bridging the gap between academic study and competent performance in the workplace by offering structured training opportunities to unemployed youths that will enable them to gain a practical work experience. Taking into consideration the fact that the youth constitute the largest segment as compared to other population groups,
it is important that capacity within this sector is strengthened. **Graph 3** below provides an analysis of whether the sampled departments had learnership, internship and mentorship programmes in place.

**Graph 3: Skills Training and Development Programmes**

![Graph 3](image)

*Information from the Questionnaire attached as Annexure A*

According to **Graph 3** above, 18 out of the 30 sampled departments (60%) had Learnership policies and programmes in place. Twelve departments (40%) did not have such a policy or programme. Whilst the majority of departments had Learnership Programmes, these have not all been implemented due to a lack of funds.

Twenty seven out of the 30 sampled departments (90%) had Internship policies and programmes in place. The implementation of the Internship Programme within departments has been the most successful, as shown in **graph 3** above. This is a positive sign given the fact that South Africa is faced with higher rates of unemployment especially among youth. While jobs are not being created as quickly as desired, the problem of unemployment is worsened by lack of skills and formal work experience and since Internship programmes are functioning efficiently and effectively in the majority of the departments this would contribute to youth capacity development and reducing unemployment.

Eleven out of the 30 sampled departments (37%) had Mentorship policies and programmes in place. Of the three programmes, namely mentorship, internship and learnership programmes, departments found the implementation of the mentorship programme to be the most difficult. Reasons for non-compliance was the lack of understanding on how to establish such a programme, the lack of participation by staff as mentors (especially senior managers), financial constraints, unavailability of time for coaching and mentoring.
Prior to 1994, Retention and Bursary policies were key policies that were put in place as tools to skill, train, develop and build the capacity of employees within the Public Service and to date have become a mandatory necessity within Government. The aim was to create a more skilled and capacitated workforce in order to meet service delivery demands effectively and efficiently. These policies are also a means to retain staff specifically in the scarce and critical fields where the Public Service is lacking and to also ensure that the public see the Public Service as an Employer of Choice. Even though 58% of the sampled departments did have retention policies in place, none of them actually implement the principles outlined in the policies. It is also pleasing to note that 83% of the sampled departments had a bursary policy in place and that the bursary program was being implemented. The remaining 13% were using either a draft policy or the Provincial Strategy, but implemented the program nonetheless. Some departments provided bursaries for internal as well as external candidates specifically in the scarce/critical fields such as Engineering, Veterinarians, Economists, Architects and Information Technology. Most of these bursaries were funded by donors or from the respective components that required such skills and they did not form part of the 1% HRD, training and development budget. In terms of the awarding of internal bursaries the PSC has observed that most of the bursaries that were awarded focused mainly on two fields, viz. public administration and human resource management. There is a need to focus on other fields, for example, finance, project management, monitoring and evaluation, etc. which are also needed for the implementation of programmes of government.

It must be noted that bursaries are awarded to both internal (employee in the department) and external (not an employee in the department, i.e. a student) candidates, in some departments. In the Free State Province, the administration of external bursaries has been centralized and is co-ordinated by the Department of Education. Departments do a needs analysis regarding the type of external bursaries specifically relating to scarce/critical skills that are required, and the application is then forwarded to the Department of Education for processing. The funding of the bursaries, however, remains the responsibility of the departments.

**Table 1** below shows the amount of money spent on bursaries, per department, from the 2007/08 financial year through to the 2010/11 financial year. Thirty percent (30%) of the sampled departments reflected an increase in the amount of money spent on bursaries when compared over a two to three year period, whilst 20% reflected a decrease. Respondents cited budget constraints as the reason for the decrease in the amount of money allocated for bursaries.

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- Reflects that the department did not indicate any amount on the WSP.

Source: WSPs submitted to and audited by PSETA.

### 3.6 IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Evaluating training and development initiatives by measuring the effectiveness both in terms of realising the components outputs and the departments’ strategic objectives as well as measuring the improvement of an employee’s competence is crucial in an organisation. To assess the improvement of employee competence, departments needs to perform “before and after” assessments of employee skills as well as job performance evaluation and productivity of the component.

Of the sampled departments, none of them (100%) had a system in place to assess the relevance and impact of training and development initiatives. Departments said they did not know how to conduct such assessments, and unfortunately, there is no tool provided for in the public service, which departments can utilise to achieve such measurement. Lack of capacity in HRD components leaves little time to do research on and to initiate any program in this regard. Departments resort to relying on the information contained in IDPs/PDPs to assess
relevance of training in relation to employee performance. In light of the quality challenges of IDPs/PDPs, using the IDPs/PDPs as a tool to assess relevance of training to employees' work is not sufficient. Impact assessment of training provided to achieve the strategic objectives of the departments and meeting the needs and expectations of stakeholders was thus not conducted.

In some instances, service providers assessed the overall success of training by allowing the recipients of that training to complete an assessment questionnaire. As the questionnaires may mainly be subjective, with no actual on-the-job assessment of any improvement in the skills or the ability of the employee to do the work after such training, very little value can be attached to such assessments.

### 3.7 1% SKILLS LEVY

Most departments did receive the 1 percentage and more from the budget for skills training and development. HRD units were of the view that although budgets were allocated, the money was never enough. The fact that most training and development courses had to be outsourced placed a strain on the budget as in most instances the courses offered by the service providers used such as Tertiary institutions, Consultants and other training institutions were expensive.

Departments also stated that the HRD budget was the first budget to be used to supplement other components in the event of shortages. Thus training and development plans would often be put on hold until funds were available. The other concern that was raised specifically in the Department of Transport in Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) was that managers were allocated funds for training and development in their components. However, no training and development took place amongst the employees. When some of the components where questioned, they cited the lack of funds as a reason. When the HRD unit requested feedback on the funds allocated for training, the managers would often not be in a position to account for the money that was spent.

### 3.8 MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

One of the main challenges which HRD practitioners said they faced in implementing HRD initiatives was the lack of management support. Many departments cited that due to the lack of support of line managers, HRD units found it difficult to implement the practices effectively. They said managers generally did not understand the PMDS, they do not engage with their employees regarding their PDPs, they do not monitor their employees to determine the areas of weakness and in general they do not regard training and development as one of the key priority areas within their components. Line managers also tend to expect the HRD units within the departments to take on the role of determining the training needs as they are of the opinion that this is the function of the HRM/D manager. They also do not budget for
training and development as their core functions take precedence over HRD matters. This therefore results in financial constraints as the monies initially allocated for training is utilized for other functions. This is of great concern because if this behavior continues to persist the lack of skilled employees will always remain a challenge within the Public Service.

Respondents also indicated that managers sometimes do not release their subordinates for training interventions while some of them would also require their employees to attend to work during training sessions. This behavior of managers is costly as training costs which are not refundable would have already been incurred by the department. The lack of commitment from SMS members is of concern as SMS are the strategic leaders of a department. In order to ensure that the strategic objectives are met they need to determine the skills and competencies they require in their departments to carry out these objectives therefore such lack of commitment on skills, training and development and capacity building will impact on the competency of their department in meeting service delivery goals.

The interviews conducted with HRD managers showed that managers in departments were not always interested in the training and development of their subordinates. During the performance reviews of managers this area of responsibility was not fairly assessed as most managers are assessed positively in the CMC on people management and development and yet not all managers were dealing with development adequately.

3.9 SUPPORT PROVIDED BY THE PUBLIC SECTOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING AUTHORITY (PSETA), PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ACADEMY (PALAMA) AND OTHER TRAINING ACADEMIES

(a) PSETA

Respondents from all the sampled departments indicated that they experienced challenges with regards to the numerous templates that they were required to complete when they needed to report on the implementation of the WSPs. They did not find the templates user-friendly, despite the fact that PSETA presented a workshop in this regard each year. Respondents said that they did not receive any support or feedback on the WSP reports once they were submitted to PSETA, as PSETA only focused on monitoring compliance in respect of submission deadlines and in accordance with the prescribed templates. Departments with line functions SETAs (e.g. TETA, AGRISETA, Construction SETA, etc.) were of the view that such SETAs provided better services than PSETA. The PSC conducted a study on the assessment of PSETA’s contribution towards the development of skills and career progression prospects in the public service in August 2009. The study reported, amongst other things, that PSETA lacked the requisite capacity to fulfill its obligations regarding skills development in the Public Service. It was also determined that the PSETA board should be autonomous and be formally institutionalised into a 3A entity in line with the legislative framework which provides for its
independence. Given that PSETA only became independent on 1 April 2011, and has since filled most of its posts, one can assume that the capacity challenges will now be addressed and that PSETA can play a more meaningful role in assisting departments to address their skills development needs.

(b) PALAMA

From the sampled departments 90 % of the respondents indicated that they did not utilize PALAMA when they required training to be conducted. The main reasons they cited for non-utilisation were that the courses that PALAMA offered were extremely expensive and budget constraints hampered the departments' ability to procure such training. Departments opted to utilise the services of tertiary institutions as they found them to be credible; their courses were accredited and tertiary institutions ensured feedback from course attendees in that they provided evaluation questionnaires for completion at the end of each course. Respondents said that they had experienced delays in receiving invoices from PALAMA, and in some instances had even received duplicate invoices for payments of courses attended. This had caused confusion and extra work for the HRD units in departments, as well as unnecessary audit queries for departments. Respondents admitted though, that the situation had improved over time. Respondents made contact with PALAMA via the call centre, and they found this problematic in that each time they phoned, they would be assisted by a different consultant, which made following up on documents that had been submitted, or a query, very difficult.

(c) TRAINING ACADEMIES

The study has established that within some provinces there are training/learning academies that some of the departments have used to conduct training within their organizations. In the following provinces the training/learning academies are:

• Free State: Free State Training and Development Institute.
• KwaZulu-Natal: KZN Provincial Training Academy
• Gauteng: Gauteng City Region Academy
• Western Cape: Provincial Training Academy

The sampled departments within these Provinces indicated that they had used the services of these academies and had found them to be efficient and effective. Respondents shared that some of the courses that were offered were free and if there was a cost involved, the fees were affordable. They found that the courses were informative and were also accredited. The reason for affordability was due to the fact that these academies fall under the umbrella of the Offices of the Premiers in the said Provinces and courses were presented by permanent training staff employed by the Offices of the Premier. In the event that these academies had to make use of the services of an external service provider to conduct training in certain areas, the price would be negotiated for the Public Service.
3.10 SUMMARY

The unpredictability of change is a key characteristic of the environment of public servants, and therefore it is the task of Human Resource Management/Development to ensure that the employees within the Public Service are competent to understand and respond successfully to their ever-changing environment. It is for this reason that DPSA has formulated various HRD legislation and practices to assist departments in providing their employees with the necessary skills and training so that they can be capacitated to execute their functions to the best of their ability. It is therefore imperative that departments implement the various policies and programmes so that service delivery demands are carried out effectively and efficiently. This chapter dealt with the extent of the implementation process of departments with regards to the various policies and programmes and to a certain degree most departments have complied. However the implementation process has not always been successful as various challenges still persist, as indicated in this chapter.
Chapter Four

Recommendations and Conclusions
4.1 INTRODUCTION

The PSC has made a number of findings with regards to the Human Resource Development Practices in the sampled departments. What emerged from analysis of information collated through the questionnaires and the interviews was that even though departments have the necessary policies and practices in place they still face many challenges in implementing them in departments. In some instances, policies and practices are formulated but are not implemented. In some cases where they are implemented, the implementation is compliance-driven. The interviews provided rich insights on the complexities involved with Human Resource Development. These insights can serve as a meaningful basis for understanding the impediments that must be addressed in order to ensure effective implementation. The findings have guided the process on the recommendations and conclusion provided by the PSC in this chapter.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall conclusion is that most of the sampled departments do have their HRD practices in place and the relevant HRD policies and procedures are adequate but due to the lack of finances and management support as well as human capacity, skills training, training and development and capacity building will remain a challenge within the Public Service.

The following are specific recommendations that should be implemented with immediate effect:

4.2.1 All departments need to comply with the legislative and policy frameworks necessary for Human Resource Development by ensuring that they have the necessary strategies and policies in place. The departments must implement their programmes as budgeted for and must be held accountable for the spending of the funds.

4.2.2 All departments must as a matter of urgency, conduct skills audits to ensure that they are aware of their current skills as well as the skills gap that needs to be addressed by targeted recruitment and/or training interventions. Departments should ensure that skills audits form the basis of the WSP and not an individual’s Performance Development Plan.

4.2.3 DPSA needs to develop a tool which departments can utilize to assess the relevance and impact of training on the individual as well as on the organization in meeting the needs and expectations of the stakeholders (public and business).

4.2.4 Performance agreements of top management must provide for assessment of the extent to which they support HRD and provide resources and insure the Monitoring and Evaluation systems are in place to measure the returns on training investments.
4.2.5 DPSA needs to develop a tool for departments to be more accountable for the 1% Skills levy. Departments need to provide an extensive expenditure report to DPSA or Treasury on the training conducted within their departments for each financial year. Reasons for non-expenditure must be provided.

4.2.6 PSETA should play a more developmental role within departments and should also monitor whether training as outlined in the WSP is actually conducted by the departments.

4.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion the study was conducted to assess HRD practices in the Public Service. The assessment has looked at the ways in which departments identify their core departmental competencies, develop, implement and report on the WSPs and compliance with skills development legislation. It can be concluded that although there have been HRD strategies and policy frameworks in place and a greater sense of implementation of WSPs by departments, many challenges still remain for HRD managers who want to make a significant contribution to departmental performance.

The interviews provided rich discussions on the complexities involved with HRD practices and assisted the PSC to gain a better understanding of the impediments that must be addressed in order to ensure proper identification of core departmental competencies, appropriate development and implementation of policies and programmes, monitoring and reporting of WSPs and Skills Audits. It is evident that if the challenges that are raised in this assessment are not addressed, government will continue to invest on training and development interventions that are yielding fewer results on the departments’ strategic objectives and leading to service delivery being compromised. It is imperative for management to constantly be capacitated for purposes of improving implementation of departments programs and people management and development for the benefit of the departments.
Appendix A

Questionnaire

Questionnaire on the Assessment of the Human Resource Development Practices in the Public Service
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<tr>
<th>Name of HRD official</th>
<th>Department Sphere</th>
<th>Designation</th>
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<tr>
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<td>(Please tick below which Province)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact details of HRD official</td>
<td>Tel</td>
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<td>KwaZulu-Natal</td>
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1. Does your department have a five year Strategic Plan?
   - Yes ☐ ☐ No ☐ ☐

2. Does your department have a Human Resource Plan?
   - Yes ☐ ☐ No ☐ ☐

3. Does your department have a Human Resource Development Strategy and Policy?
   - Yes ☐ ☐ No ☐ ☐

4. Is the Human Resource Plan and HRD strategy aligned to the five year Strategic Plan?
   - Yes ☐ ☐ No ☐ ☐

5. Has your department embarked on a Skills Audit? *(If yes, please provide a copy of report)*
   - Yes ☐ ☐ No ☐ ☐ and year ...........

6. How frequently does your department conduct a skills audit?
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7. What methodology was followed when conducting the skills audit?
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8. Does your department have an approved Workplace Skills Plan (WSP)? *(if yes, please provide a copy)*

   Yes □    No □

9. If no, what is the reason for not having an approved WSP?

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10. If yes, what informs the content of the WSP?

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11. How far is your department with the implementation of the WSP? *(provide proof of training that took place and number of employees that have been trained versus the number planned to be trained)*

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12. Which fora participate in the prioritization of training in your department?

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13. When last (date) did the forum(s) meet to prioritise training? *(provide attendance register and agenda)*

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14. Does your department have a skills development planning/training committee? *(provide supporting document)*

   Yes □    No □

15. What are the functions of this committee?

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16. How frequently does the committee meet?
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17. When last did the committee convene? (provide attendance register and agenda)
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18. What rank/salary level is the chairperson of the committee?
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19. How does your department assess the relevance of training to the work of the employees? (provide evidence)
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20. How does your department conduct impact assessment of the training provided? (provide evidence)
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21. How many employees within your HRD unit have been trained as skills development facilitators?
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22. Does your department have the following policies/programmes in place?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Learnership</td>
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**DOCUMENTS REQUESTED**

a. Copy of Strategic Plan, HRD strategy and Human Resource Plan.
b. Copy of report on Skills Audit conducted by the department.
c. Copy of the approved WSP.
d. Provide proof of training that took place (Quarterly Monitoring Report and Annual Training Report)
e. Forum(s) participating in skills development planning (*provide attendance register and agenda of last meeting*)
f. Copies of the policies/programme mentioned in question 22 above.

**Thank you for your participation**
Annexure B

REFERENCES

Republic of South Africa, White Paper on Public Service Training and Education,
Republic of South Africa, Department of Public Service and Administration, Human Resource
Republic of South Africa, Public Service Act, 1994 as amended
Republic of South Africa, Public Service Regulations, 2001 as amended
Republic of South Africa, National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) 2005-2010
Republic of South Africa, Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa,
projects”. Brussels.
Notes

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<th>Free State</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91 Alexandra Road</td>
<td>62 Fedsure Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King William's Town, 5601</td>
<td>3rd Floor, St Andrew Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel: (043) 643-4704</td>
<td>Tel: (051) 448-8696</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Tel: (013) 755-4070</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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