



FACE TO FACE WITH THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

The Public Service Commission is currently in its fifth year of existence. Izwi lase OPSC spoke to the Director-General, Mr Mpume Sikhosana in an attempt to reflect on the past five years and the challenges that lie ahead. This is what the DG had to say.

Izwi: The PSC is now in its fifth year of operation. What would you say are the milestones reached during the first five years?

Director-General: Commissioners were appointed to the PSC in January 1999. Being a newly created institution, there were many teething problems. These included the respective roles of the PSC and its Office, project management, work procedures and processes, and the capacity of staff to deliver against the new mandate for a new PSC. Resources are now being more effectively utilized as evident in the improvement in the quality of spending. Much has been achieved in establishing common ground between the PSC and the Office and the institution has grown in stature. This is evident by the majority of reports presented by the OPSC and the acceptance of them by our stakeholders. Further evidence is the increase in the number of requests being made to the OPSC, either for investigations to be conducted or for advice. The PSC has also developed a good rapport within Parliamentary structures, for example, the Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration.

Cabinet entrusted the PSC to perform the Secretariat functions with regard to the Implementation of the Framework for the Evaluation of Heads of Departments (HODs). This was an entirely new concept in the South African public service and needed much developmental work. The process is now fully operational.

The Office has during the past year played a leading role through its involvement with the Interim Management Team (IMT) in the Eastern Cape that was appointed by the President.

The secondment of many of our managers to the Eastern Cape impacted on the extent to which the Office achieved its objectives as set out in its Business Plan for 2003/2004 financial year.

Izwi: What were the most challenging aspects of the first five years of the PSC?

Director-General: Well, setting up a relatively new institution to be able to deliver on its mandate was deemed important. There were numerous vacancies, especially at senior management level, and these had to be filled in order to build capacity for the institution to be able to carry out its functions. The continuing and overriding challenge for the PSC has been supporting Parliament and Executing Authorities by generating evidence that would ensure timeous interventions to improve public administration practices and service delivery. This challenge further necessitated re-tooling by the majority of staff to be able to conduct high quality research and forensic investigations.

continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. FACE TO FACE WITH THE DG
2. 10 YEARS OF FREEDOM
3. BATHO PELE REVITALISATION
4. MONGOLIANS VISIT PSC
5. STATE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE
6. NEW FACES OF THE PSC
7. WHERE IS THE JUICY CARROT?
8. PSC SECURITY TOPS



Izwi: Looking back at the past five years, what would you have done differently?

Director-General: One is always looking out at ways and means of improving procedures and processes so as to increase efficiency and effectiveness. It is against this that the structure has changed to cater more for the demands being made upon the institution. We have reviewed our focus areas within the PSC to Monitoring and Evaluation (M and E) and Investigations. This should assist us in future in consolidating our capacity around these two focus areas.

Izwi: What do you think are the challenges ahead for the organization?

Director-General: The challenges facing our organization include amongst others,

- Monitoring of the implementation of the PSC recommendations and seeking the intervention of the Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration in cases where the recommendations are not being implemented.
- National roll out of the Citizens' Forums after the general elections.
- Incorporation of Local Government into the broader public service will also become an institution building challenge.
- Being able to cope with the increase in requests for investigations.
- The new M and E Framework being developed for implementation in the Public Service. This framework will also be the anchor for the State of the Public Service reports in future.

Izwi: Where do you see the PSC in the next three years?

Director-General: I would like to see the PSC

- Becoming a more visible institution and having a fully operational M and E and the Public Service Anti-Corruption Hotline System.
- Increasing access of its services to all relevant stakeholders.
- Expediting its turn around time for the finalisation of our reports.

Izwi: What is your new years message to all staff?

Director-General: I would firstly like to thank the staff for their untiring efforts in the past. I hope everyone had an enjoyable but at the same time a restful festive season. The demands made on the institution are ever increasing, but I am sure staff will be able to adapt to all situations. The re-deployment in terms of Resolution 7 should assist staff in further self and career development. Whilst our productivity has increased over the past five years, staff must brace themselves for even stricter management of performance at all levels. To those who have been "passengers" within the Office, riding on the backs of dedicated staff, we say "Your time is up!", and we are serious about it. For the next few years we want to make the PSC indispensable to the South African public service.



CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF FREEDOM

Tuesday, 27 April 2004 is a special day to all South Africans. It will be the tenth anniversary of South Africa's first democratic elections. It will be a time to

- End the first decade of freedom and begin the next.
- Recall the action of the South African people in 1994.
- Celebrate; review progress; build a better and more united South Africa; assess challenges in alignment with Nepad, UN Millennium goals, African century and a better world.
- Celebrate constitution; consolidate legitimacy of democratic state
- Consolidate emergence of national identity
- Reinvigorate transformation of solidarity in struggle into partnership for reconstruction and development.

For more information about the celebration, visit www.10years.gov.za

NACF HOSTS REPORT BACK CONFERENCE

The National Anti Corruption Forum (NACF) will be hosting a report back conference on March 18 2004 at the CSIR Conference Centre.

The conference is aimed at providing a strategic overview of:

- The UN Convention against corruption;
- The AU Convention on the combatting and preventing of corruption; and
- The prevention of Corrupt Activities Bill.

For more information on the Conference please call Roderick Davids at X1123.



Batho Pele Change Management Engagement Programme Launched

At last! The Batho Pele Change Management Engagement Programme, commonly known as the Revitalisation of Batho Pele, will be launched by the Minister for the Public Service and Administration, Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, at the Sammy Marks Convention Centre, Pretoria, on Friday, 05 March 2004. The launch is scheduled to start at 08H00 and last until midday.

The launch is part of the internal campaign dubbed: *Together Beating the Drum for Service Delivery*. This campaign is essentially a change management engagement programme whose aim is to continue to further lay the foundation for aligning behaviours and attitudes of public servants to the spirit and practice of Batho Pele.

Talking to Mr Vincent Mabunda, the Project Manager of this launch, Batho Pele "is about having a sense of belonging to one's department and the Public Service in general; Caring for the people who have access to our departments; and Serving them with an understanding that they have a legitimate expectation that you and I will serve them with courtesy at all times".

In addition to speeches by amongst others, Minister Fraser-Moleketi, items on the programme include poetry recitals by the people's poet, Mzwakhe Mbuli; an Industrial Theatre; and Interactive Drumming session. Lucky officials who listen attentively during the launch will win themselves lots of prizes.

The following officials represent the OPSC on the launch preparatory committee and can be called for enquiries: Ms Khathu Nesamari, X1099; Ms Nontobeko Nzimande, X1118 and Mr Manase Makwela, at X1100.

OPSC Staff in Pretoria have been invited to attend this launch.



A PEOPLE UNITED FOR A BETTER SOUTH AFRICA AND A BETTER WORLD

For a while now, the PSC has been serving as a must-visit institution for representatives of foreign governments and independent study groups visiting South Africa, especially on assignments in the field of public administration and governance.

Like a perennial well of knowledge, the PSC has always welcomed visitors who want to learn more on how to monitor public service operations and consequently suggest measures to improve service delivery and accountability. It therefore came as no surprise when a three-person government delegation from Mongolia visited the PSC on Friday, 13 February this year, to learn more on how to contribute towards the smooth running and value adding of the public service.

The Mongolian delegation was led by a Cabinet Minister, Mr U Enkhuvshin, while the PSC's was under the guidance of the Pretoria-based Commissioner, Dr Eddie Bain who was supported by Commissioner Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko. The other two delegates from Mongolia were Dr N Bayartsaikhan, Chairman of Parliament's Budget Standing Committee, and Mr C Munkhbat, the Director of Cabinet Secretariat.

Apart from the PSC overview presentation made by Dr Bain, Ms Lynette Sing did a presentation on Monitoring and Evaluation, while Ms Marie Van Blerk did a presentation on Risk Management.

According to DPSA's Leah Kekana, who was the visit co-ordinator, the week-long visit by the Mongolian delegation saw them visiting other institutions such as: Parliament, the Presidency, DPSA, National Treasury, SAMDI, and SITA.

The "must-visit" status that the PSC is now enjoying, just proves that the PSC is simply the Custodian of Good Governance. Like President Mbeki once said, we need to be united for a better South Africa and a better world. Sharing ideas with Mongolia, like we did with China, Malawi, Botswana, Nigeria, and other countries, will go a long way towards making ours a better world to live in.



A TEN YEAR JOURNEY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE LAID BARE

The Public Service Commission (PSC) released its 2004 version of the *State of the Public Service Report*, at a media breakfast held in Cape Town on Tuesday, 17 February this year. The Report is intended to provide strategic direction by highlighting important themes and trends.

Unlike the two previous *State of the Public Service Reports*, this third edition takes a long view of what has been achieved over the preceding decade by looking specifically at what has changed during the ten years of democracy in South Africa.

The Report identifies a number of challenges confronting the public service and makes the argument for particular interventions and approaches to address them. In particular, the Report argues that a priority challenge facing the State as it confronts poverty is the complex area of performance improvement.

The Report states that Government is not yet as effective as it needs to be and is not achieving the results it could, given its impressive social investment record. The PSC argues that generating timely and credible information about performance, identifying improvement measures and implementing these successfully is a major challenge that must be confronted soon.

'Intergovernmental relations' is identified in the Report, as the second major challenge confronting the public service. In order to drive this issue home, Prof. Richard Levin, DDG: Good Governance and Service Delivery, told the media that "integrating and coordinating services needs better planning as well as monitoring of implementation practices so that the intended policy outcomes are achieved".

The Report is once again structured around the nine Constitutional principles governing public administration. This edition looks at each principle, explaining what it means and how it was addressed or not under the previous regime. The Report then looks at what has been done in the past ten years to promote compliance with each principle and makes suggestions for the future.

The first of these principles is the **promotion and maintenance of a high standard of professional ethics**. The Report argues that the former government did not explicitly address corruption nor was it mentioned as part of public policy. Since 1994 corruption has become a major concern and is addressed through a number of institutions and collective initiatives.

However, the Report argues that the approach is not as effective as it needs to be and in response, the PSC suggests that

- A clearer link between the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and anti-corruption efforts by departments needs to be forged.

- Departments must be encouraged to ensure the required minimum anti-corruption capacity is created and to report on the required areas.

- It should be a requirement that all public service managers are trained in ethics management.

The second principle considered is that of the **promotion of efficient, economic and effective use of resources**. The Report argues that prior to 1994 the actual utilization of resources was obscured and opportunities for the continued implementation of ineffective and inappropriate activities with vague outcomes was created. Government has since 1994 adopted a modern strategic planning and budgeting approach that is in keeping with best practice internationally.

The Report further argues that the Public Service could be achieving more with the resources it uses.

The Report notes that unlike under the apartheid regime where delivery was characterized by blatant injustices, since 1994 the institution of initiatives to promote the **unbiased, impartial, fair, and equitable provision of services** is a reflection of the intention to ensure justice in the provision of services to the Citizens.

With regard to **accountability in the public service**, the Report argues that a profound lack of accountability was one of the most distinctive features of the apartheid system. Today, the Auditor-General is the key institution promoting accountability in South Africa's public sector. In addition, Parliament and its various Committees, as well as Provincial Legislatures, ensure accountability in the Public Service.

The Report notes that there is still a problem where responsibilities are shifted to lower levels, for example, decentralizing responsibilities to departments before they are ready. The PSC suggests that a specialist turnaround unit should be established to undertake thorough problem analyses, design appropriate solutions and support project implementation in order to assist departments that have difficulties.

Addressing the media, the Chairperson of the Public Service Commission, Prof. Stan Sangweni said, "The ten-year journey has been an intense one fraught with pitfalls, leaving the Public Service fatigued and stressed". Prof. Sangweni was quick to point out that the lessons learnt should come in handy as South Africa faces another decade of public service reform.

The Report received wide coverage on both the electronic and print media. A full report in which all constitutional principles are covered, can be accessed on the PSC website: www.psc.gov.za



THE NEW FACES OF PSC

A few of the PSC Commissioners finished their term at the end of last year and we wish them good luck in their future endeavours. We would like to extend our congratulations to Commissioners who have been re-appointed. Also we would like to extend a warm welcome to the new Commissioners. Here is a brief history sketch of two of our new Commissioners.



COMMISSIONER PHELELE TENGENI

Ms Phelele Marilyn Tengeneni, took over from Commissioner Henri Zondi as Commissioner based in KwaZulu Natal.

Commissioner Tengeneni, was a senior lecturer at the University of Zululand before she took up her post with the Commission in January this year.

However, Ms Tengeneni is not a stranger to the Commission - She has been a Human Resources Development Officer for the PSC in the then KwaZulu government from 1982 to 1987 and then again from 1988 to 1990 before she was appointed as a lecturer at the University of Zululand in 1990.

She also worked as a Human Resources Development Officer for Harmony Gold Mine from 1987 to 1988.

Ms Tengeneni holds a BA Hons degree (Political Science cum laude) from the University of Zululand as well as a Masters Degree in Social Policy from the University of Durban Westville. On the international front, she was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at Radford University in the USA, amongst others.

Awards received by Ms Tengeneni includes the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence, the University of Zululand Certificate of Merit, a UDW Merit Award for Best MA Student as well as an award from the Institute for International Education.

Proficient in several languages, Commissioner Tengeneni's research interests includes Policy Research, Women and Development and Nationalism.



COMMISSIONER NOZIPHO MXAKATO-DISEKO

Commissioner Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko has seen it all and done it all, with regard to holding esteemed public office. Commissioner Mxakato-Diseko may be a new face at Commission House, but the Commissioner is a veteran of the South African and international public service. In December 2003, she finished her term as Chairperson of the Board on Trade and Tariffs / International Trade Commission, a position she assumed after spending a year as Vice-Chairperson of the Board of the National Nuclear Regulator Authority.

Commissioner Mxakato-Diseko has served South Africa with distinction internationally. From 1996 to 2000 she served as South Africa Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Vienna. During the same period she was also a Permanent Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and an Alternate South African Governor to the Governing Board of the IAEA. During February 1996 to July 2000 she was also South Africa's ambassador to Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia and the Republic of Austria. She has also headed various UN Delegations and Commissions such as the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Convention on Anti-Corruption and Fraud and many such institutions.

There is no doubt that the PSC will gain a lot from Commissioner Mxakato-Diseko's expertise. She holds a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Politics from Oxford University. Prior to that she graduated from Warwick University in the UK with a Masters Degree in International Relations. Commissioner Mxakato-Diseko enjoys reading historical novels, cycling and blanket making and is fluent in six South African languages.

*** IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF IZWI WE WILL BE PROFILING THE NEWCOMMISSIONER BASED IN FREE STATE.**





Marcus Mokgopa(left) and Winsley Lebotse congratulating each other on a job well done, while Snr Security Admin Officer, Sibusiso Mngomezulu, looks on.

PSC SECURITY SAVES THE DAY

Vigilant, quick thinking and swift action saved Commission House from being burnt to the ground recently.

One of the offices at Commission House caught fire on 16 December 2003, due to an electrical fault on the light fittings. Apparently the light ignited fire, which resulted in the plastic cover burning down.

The fireballs dropped and spread to the table. Fortunately, before it could spread to the carpet, two of our security officers who were on patrol, Mr Marcus Mokgopa and Mr Winsley Lebotse, quickly opened the office and extinguished the fire. Izwi lase OPSC spoke to the Director of Corporate Services, Mr Alfred Maluleke, about the incident.

"The PSC moved to this building in March 1997. The fact that our lights are always switched on 24 hours a day might have caused the electrical fault," Mr Maluleke said.

He said they have since requested the Department of Public Works to request the owner of the building to submit a compliance certificate with regard to the electrical wiring of the building. "We do not want a repeat of 16 December 2003", added Mr Maluleke.

Security audit conducted by the National Intelligence Agency last year revealed security areas that need immediate attention and are currently being addressed through a security upgrade worth about R500 000.

"When it comes to security, we do not compromise", Mr Maluleke concluded.

Izwi Lase OPSC is a bi-monthly internal newsletter published by Directorate: Communication and Information Services.

For comment on this issue of Izwi, please write to the editor at Noleend@opsc.gov.za

Input for the next issue should reach us by 20 April 2004.

WHERE IS THE JUICY CARROT????

Do you still remember the challenge that the Director-General, Mr Mpume Sikhosana made to OPSC managers at the Strategic Planning session last year, to come up with a "catch phrase that explains the core business of the OPSC"??

For those who did not attend the strategic planning, what the DG wanted was a phrase that would be punchy, attractive, interesting, and most of all, clearly define what our core business is.

Creative juices started flowing and before we knew it, there were a handful of the catch phrases the DG asked for. But as is the case with competitions, only one winner would emerge. Okay, first things first. After giving us an assignment, the DG dangled a 'juicy carrot' before us, promising "something very nice to the winner". However, as it would be expected, the CFO, Mr Ndabo Khoza, did not want the DG to reveal what the juicy carrot would be before checking "how the finances stand".

You see, a lot of things have happened since then. Amongst others, the issue of the catch phrase was discussed at the highest management meeting and a verdict was reached. The winning phrase was chosen as "**Custodian of Good Governance**" – devised by Directorate: Communications and Information Services.

This phrase will soon appear on O/PSC stationery, publications, and promotional material.

Now only one question remains; where exactly is that juicy carrot?

EVENTS

March

Launch of Batho Pele Revitalisation	5
International Women's Day	8
Commonwealth Day	8
Awards for Consumer Champions	15
Human Rights Day	21
National Library Week	17-22
Earth Day	20
International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	21
World Water Day	22
SA Games	22-28
World Meteorological Day	23
World TB Day	24

April

National Blood Donor Month	
World Health Day	7
SA National Elections	14
World Hemophilia Day	17
World Book and Copyright Day	23
Africa Malaria Day	25
Freedom Day	27

The Office will be celebrating Human Rights Day on the 19 March 2004. Details will be posted on the intranet soon.

