



**REPORT ON THE WORKPLACE  
CLIMATE SURVEY IN THE OFFICE OF  
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**MAY 2010**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

World-wide job satisfaction plays a significant role towards the promotion of employees' mental and physical health at the workplace. Therefore, creating a work environment in which employees can be productive is essential to attain the organization's goals. In order to create a motivating work environment, organizations should amongst others ensure that realistic goals are set and work processes are improved to enhance both productivity and job satisfaction. Organisations should also work on improving the aesthetic features of the offices as they give employees a sense of belonging and comfort. Most employees would prefer a working environment that allows them to be creative while it also provides intellectual growth. Jobs that are rich in behavioural elements such as autonomy, task identity, task significance and feedback contribute to an employee's satisfaction<sup>1</sup>. To realize job satisfaction, it is important that organizations conduct climate surveys on a regular basis to understand the needs of their employees.

It is against this background that the Institutional Building and Strategic Operations Specialist Team of the Public Service Commission (PSC) in its meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2009 took a resolution that the Office of Public Service Commission (OPSC) should conduct a Work Place Climate Survey. The survey is the first one in the OPSC and it aims to assist the management of the OPSC in identifying areas which need to be addressed and strengthened to improve the work place environment and employees job satisfaction. In the past, the OPSC had conducted exit interviews to obtain information from the officials leaving the Office on how to improve the work place environment to ensure that the Office was an employer of choice. However, the number of officials who participated in such exit interviews had dramatically gone down during the past years due to the fact that the process is voluntary. To improve on such process, the OPSC has decided to

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<sup>1</sup> William B et al Human Resources and Personnel Management 1989

conduct a formal and more involving work place climate survey to solicit the views of the current employees about the working environment.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE SURVEY**

The following are the objectives of the survey:

- To solicit the views of the employees with regard to the existing morale of employees, job satisfaction levels as well as work culture
- To initiate change through improving satisfaction levels and therefore enhancing performance
- To determine ways to optimise the resources of the OPSC

## **3. SCOPE OF THE SURVEY**

The scope of the survey was the entire staff compliment of the OPSC, both at national Office and regional Offices.

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

### **Sampling**

At the commencement of the survey, OPSC had a total staff complement of 231 employees and all employees were invited to participate in the survey. However, only 61 officials responded to the survey questionnaire.

## **5. DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

Data collection was conducted through the following process:

### **5.1 Literature review**

The process followed in conducting this survey included a literature review of key documents.

## **5.2 Self-administered questionnaires.**

A questionnaire was circulated via e-mail from 15 February to 26 February 2010 to all employees of the OPSC requesting them to anonymously complete and submit the completed questionnaire to the IT section of the OPSC. The following were the key issues on the questionnaire:

- Demographic profile
- Employees' perceptions of the PSC's and the OPSC's image
- Work environment
- Organisational objectives
- Training and development opportunities of employees
- Communication strategies
- Employee Morale
- Employee Wellness
- Work Relations
- Management/Leadership within OPSC
- Flexibility

## **6. DATA ANALYSIS**

The collected data was subjected to statistical analysis using the IT system in the OPSC and the qualitative data was analysed by organising the findings according to themes.

## **7. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The key limitation of the survey was that not all officials responded to the survey and therefore the findings of the survey cannot be generalised.

## **8. FINDINGS**

### **8.1 Employees' perception of PSC's and the OPSC's image**

The majority of the employees (77%) who participated in the survey seem not to be convinced that the OPSC is the employer of choice, while 23% regard the OPSC as an employer of choice. Forty one percent (41%) of the employees who participated in the survey are proud of working for the PSC and 43% of the employees who participated in the survey acknowledged that the OPSC has a good reputation. This finding suggests that while the majority of the employees who participated in the survey seem not to be convinced that OPSC is an employer of choice, there are employees who are of the view that the OPSC has a good reputation and they are proud to be working for the PSC.

## **8.2 Organizational objectives**

Fifty nine percent (59%) of employees who participated in the survey were not sure that they were working towards the accomplishment of goals of the OPSC. This shows that feedback is not given to employees regularly on the progress made in terms of achievement of Office's goals. The majority of the employees (82%) who participated in the survey indicated that supervisors/managers have no clue of the achievements of their subordinates in their respective jobs. The findings also indicate that there were managers/supervisors who seem not to understand the roles and responsibilities of their subordinates. If such findings are true, it should be a cause for concern because supervisors and managers are instrumental in communicating, managing and ensuring achievement of the goals of the Office through those who report to them.

## **8.3 Training or empowerment of employees**

The findings of the survey show that the majority of the employees (92%) who participated in the survey were of the view that they did not have access to development opportunities in the OPSC. However, 8% of the employees who participated in the survey were satisfied with access to development opportunities in the OPSC. This may be viewed as if the OPSC does not value training and development of its employees. This finding suggests that due to budgetary constraints, the OPSC has not provided ample opportunities for employees to access development opportunities. Surely, budgetary constraints should be

communicated to all employees so that there can be a balanced understanding of the challenges facing the organisation. Such understanding is necessary to assist employees to make informed perspectives about the OPSC as an employer.

#### **8.4 Communication**

The findings show that generally communication within the OPSC is a challenge. Managers need to take an active role in communicating the vision of the OPSC, strategic plans, policies, and any other matters that concern the work and the well-being of the employees. There should be directorate/component and branch discussions on issues such as project proposals.

#### **8.5 Employee Morale**

The findings of the survey show that the morale is low among the employees in the OPSC. Fifty four percent (54%) of the employees who participated in the survey are of the view that lack of training opportunities, lack of team spirit and guidance from management are key drivers of the low and negative morale among the employees.

#### **8.6 Employee Wellness**

Eighty five percent (85%) of the employees who participated in the survey perceived the employer as not considerate to work-life balance needs of its employees. The finding suggests that there are no activities that allow the employees to be able to engage in and interact with each other at social level. However, the OPSC has the Employee Wellness Program that is outsourced to ICAS so that employees can get expert help in dealing with stress related issues at work and at home.

#### **8.7 Work Relations**

The findings show that the majority of employees (75%) who participated in the survey were of the view that employees have no respect for each other. Twenty five percent (25%) of employees who participated in the survey indicated that employees have respect for each other. With regards to the issue of approachability of



managers, the findings show that management is approachable. However, they are not attending to the work related matters raised by employees with them as desired.

### **8.8 Management or Leadership within OPSC**

The findings of the survey indicate lack of strategic and operational direction from management, lack of communication, lack of innovation, poor performance by some managers. This finding suggests that some members of the management are not providing the needed leadership in their respective components.

### **8.9 Flexibility**

Thirty four percent (34%) of the employees who participated in the survey indicated that flexibility is not allowed when performing their functions. Set procedures are given as reasons by management for not allowing employees the flexibility when performing their functions. It must be noted that where flexibility is allowed, and employees' inputs are considered and included in the management of the OPSC and its activities; employees are likely to feel valued and as a result experience a sense of belonging to the OPSC.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following are recommendations from the survey:

- Leadership and culture which have effect on strategy and human resources must be improved in the OPSC. To this end, an in-house workshop facilitated by experts in the field of leadership, human resource management and organisational behaviour should be considered,
- The OPSC should consider adopting a corporate image<sup>2</sup>,

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<sup>2</sup> **Corporate Image** – consisting of two components; functional and emotional. Functional relates to tangible characteristics (presentation and conduct of employees, office space- how walls look like, use of graphics to interpret what we stand for, reception and offices having same look and feel, etc.) while the emotional component is associated with psychological dimensions that are manifested by feelings and attitudes towards a company. Or it can be described as a profile or sum of impressions and expectations of that organisation, built up in the minds of individuals who comprise its publics.

- Branches must have regular feedback sessions to provide employees with the progress made towards OPSC's goals and also use these sessions to get employees' inputs on management of the OPSC and its activities,
- Development of all employees through mentorship, coaching and generic and functional training. To this end, a customised training for officials who are involved in research should be funded and made compulsory to be attended by such officials in the OPSC,
- A system to capacitate incompetent managers should be put in place to improve their management styles,
- The employer should consider adding flexible time; employees are either allowed to start work early in the morning so they can leave early or they start late and stay longer, and
- Top-down and bottom-up approaches should be applied to ensure effective communication in the Office.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. BACKGROUND

World-wide job satisfaction plays a significant role towards the promotion of employees' mental and physical health. Therefore, creating a work environment in which employees can be productive is essential to attain the organization's goals. In order to create a motivating work environment, organizations should amongst others ensure that realistic goals are set and work processes are improved to enhance both productivity and satisfaction. Organisations should also work on improving the aesthetic features of the offices as they give employees a sense of belonging. Most employees would prefer a working environment that allows them to be creative while it also provides intellectual growth. Jobs that are rich in behavioural elements such as autonomy, task identity, task significance and feedback contribute to an employee's satisfaction<sup>3</sup>. To realize job satisfaction, it is important that organizations conduct climate surveys on a regular basis to understand the needs of their employees.

Retention of the staff, especially the best performing employees is a key challenge in many organizations, including the OPSC. When staff turnover is increasing, its impact may over time affect the organizational success adversely, as this is likely to decrease the existing intellectual capital. Understanding the prevailing culture of an organization, including its dominant system of beliefs and practices is a useful base for initiating effective change. It is important to identify different cultural perceptions of the organization across staff groups regularly. Furthermore, it is important to understand the factors that motivate employees in any organisation.

It is against this background that the Institutional Building and Strategic Operations Specialist Team of the Public Service Commission (PSC) in its meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2009 took a resolution that the Office of the Public Service

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<sup>3</sup> William B et al Human Resources and Personnel Management 1989

Commission (OPSC) should conduct a Work Place Climate Survey. The survey is the first one in the OPSC and it aims to assist the management of the OPSC in identifying areas which need to be addressed and strengthened to improve the work place environment and job satisfaction, which will result in the OPSC being referred to as employer of choice. In the past, the OPSC had conducted exit interviews to obtain information from officials leaving the Office on how to improve the work place environment to ensure that the OPSC was an employer of choice. However, the number of officials who participated in such exit interviews had dramatically gone down during the past years due to the fact that the process is voluntary. To improve on such process, the OPSC has decided to conduct a formal and more involving work place climate survey to solicit the views of the current employees about the working environment.

## **1.2. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- Institutional Building and Strategic Operations Specialist Team in its meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2009 took a resolution that the OPSC should conduct a Work Place Climate Survey
- A task team of five people was assembled to undertake the task of conducting the survey, analyse results and produce a draft report

## **1.3. OBJECTIVE OF THE SURVEY**

The overall objective of the survey was to establish the general atmosphere within the OPSC, looking at the perceptions of employees in relation to the OPSC, factors that affect satisfaction, morale, performance and work culture such as communication, team spirit and ethics. The OPSC through the survey aims to:

- To solicit the views of the employees with regard to the existing morale of employees, job satisfaction levels and work culture
- To initiate change through improving satisfaction levels and therefore enhancing performance

- To determine ways to optimise the resources of the OPSC

#### **1.4. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

The report is structured as follows:

**Chapter Two:** Presents the research methodology applied

**Chapter Three:** Presents the key findings of the survey

**Chapter Four:** Presents recommendations and conclusion

## **CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the research methodology that was applied during the survey. A survey of this nature required a combination of data collection methods. Central to this chapter is the scope of the survey, data collection process followed, data analysis and limitations of the survey.

### **2.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The scope of the survey was the staff complement of the OPSC, both national and regional.

### **2.3 METHODOLOGY**

#### **2.3.1 Sampling**

At the commencement of the survey, the OPSC had a total staff complement of 231 officials and all employees were invited to participate in the survey. However, only 61 officials responded to the survey questionnaire.

### **2.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

#### **2.4.1 Literature review**

The process followed in conducting this survey included a literature review of key documents.

#### **2.4.2 Self-administered questionnaires.**

A self-administered questionnaire was circulated via e-mail from 15 February to 26 February 2010 to all employees of the OPSC to anonymously complete and submit

the completed questionnaire to the IT section of the Office. The following were key issues on the questionnaire:

- Demographic profile
- Employees' perceptions of the PSC's and the OPSC's image
- Work environment
- Organisational objectives
- Training and development opportunities of employees
- Communication strategies
- Employee Morale
- Employee Wellness
- Work Relations
- Management/Leadership within OPSC
- Flexibility

## **2.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

The collected data was subjected to statistical analysis using the IT system in the OPSC and qualitative data was analysed by organizing the findings according to themes.

## **2.6 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

Not all officials responded to the survey and therefore the findings of the survey cannot be generalised.

## **CHAPTER 3: KEY FINDINGS**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the findings of the workplace climate survey. The findings are presented according to the themes, which were derived from the objectives of the survey. The themes are demographic profile, employees' perceptions of the PSC and the OPSC's image, work environment, organisational objectives, training and development opportunities for employees, communication strategies, employee morale, employee wellness, work relations, flexibility and management/leadership within the OPSC.

### **3.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

Sixty one (61) responses were received from a total of 231 employees of the OPSC. The findings show that 61% of those who responded to the survey were female and 39% were male. Thirty six (36%) of those who participated in the survey were between the ages of 36 and 45, while a further 33% were between the ages of 26 and 35. Twenty seven percent (27%) of respondents were 46 years and older with the remaining 4% being 25 years and younger. With regard to race, 75% were African, 18% White, 5% Indian and 2% Coloured. Fifty percent (50%) of the respondents have been in the employ of the Public Service for eleven years and longer, 25% for between 6 and 10 years and another 25% for between a year and five years.

With regard to the number of years working in the OPSC, (57%) have been working in the OPSC for between 1 and 5 years, 16% for between 6 and 10 years, 13% between 11 and 15 years, 10% over 20 years and the remaining 4% for over 16 years but less than 20 years. With regard to salary levels, 48% of the respondents were on level 9-12 (Assistant Director to Deputy Director), 28% on level 1-8 and 24% on level 13-16.

### **3.3 EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION OF THE PSC AND THE OPSC's IMAGE**



The survey sought to determine the perception of employees with regard to the image of the PSC and OPSC. Regarding whether they think the OPSC is an employer of choice, 77% of those who participated in the survey seem not to be convinced that the OPSC is the employer of choice, whilst 23% regard the OPSC as an employer of choice.

The responses of employees in terms of their perceptions of the reputation of the OPSC and pride associated with working for PSC indicate that 43% of the employees who participated in the study think that the OPSC has a good reputation and 41% indicated that they were proud to work for the PSC, whilst 16% said no. This finding suggests that whilst the majority of the employees who participated in the survey seem not to be convinced that OPSC is an employer of choice, there are some of them whose view is that the Office has a good reputation and they are proud to be working for the OPSC. The pride that employees seem to have about the PSC might be attributed to the oversight role or mandate that the PSC has over the entire Public Administration and the good reputation of the OPSC might be attributed to the quality and insightful reports that are produced by the OPSC. Furthermore, the findings seem to suggest that employees are relatively satisfied with the PSC work but were not satisfied with the culture, working conditions and the attitude of some managers in the OPSC.

### **3.4 WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The survey sought to determine whether the working conditions within the OPSC motivate the employees to work hard towards organisational objectives. The findings show that 49% of the employees who participated in the survey were not sure as to whether the work environment motivates them to work hard or not. Thirty five percent (35%) of the employees who participated in the study were of the view that the work environment is not motivating at all. Only 16% of the employees who participated in the survey were of the view that the work environment motivates them to work hard. Employees are of the view that a lack of cleanliness of the building and respective offices; absence of corporate image, lack of resources (furniture in good condition, etc) are the reasons why the work environment is perceived to be

not motivating them. A productive work environment requires a management that is able to positively motivate its employees in an infrastructure that is amenable to employees' needs.

### **3.5 ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

The survey sought to determine the thoughts of employees regarding whether they were working towards achieving specific goals. The findings show that 59% of employees who participated in the survey were not sure that they were working towards the accomplishment of goals of the OPSC, whilst 41% of the employees who participated in the survey thought that they were working towards the accomplishment of goals of the OPSC. This finding shows that feedback is not given to employees regularly on the progress made in terms of achievement of OPSC goals.

With regards to supervisors having a clear understanding of what their subordinates achieve in their jobs, the majority of employees 72% who participated in the survey indicated that their supervisors/managers do not seem to know the achievements of the employees, whilst 28% of the employees who participated in the survey confirmed that their supervisors were clear on what subordinates achieve in their job. Surely, this is a cause for concern as supervisors and managers are instrumental in communicating, managing and ensuring achievement of the goals of the OPSC through those who report to them. This finding also raises questions about the ability and credibility of the assessment process by supervisors and managers. Understandably, managers or supervisors who do not know what their subordinates do would not be in a good position to provide the necessary assessment or supervision.

With regards to the employees understanding how their job relates to the overall objectives and goals of the OPSC, 80% of the employees who participated in the survey indicated that they understand how their job relates to the overall objectives and goals of the organization, whilst 13% said sometimes and 7% did not respond to this particular question. This finding suggests a positive element with regard to the type of employees the OPSC has in its employment.

Regarding the question on the understanding of roles and responsibilities, 39% of the employees who participated in the survey are of the view that sometimes their managers understand their roles and responsibilities, 31% of the participants were of the view that the managers understand their roles and responsibilities and whereas 13% were of the view that their managers do not have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities, whilst 17% were not sure.

### **3.6 TRAINING OR EMPOWERMENT OF EMPLOYEES**

The survey sought to determine whether employees have access to development opportunities in the OPSC. The findings show that 48% of the employees who participated in the survey are not satisfied with access to staff development opportunities. Thirty three percent (33%) of the participants were of the view that they were sometimes satisfied with access to staff development opportunities and 11% were not sure about access to staff development opportunities. Only 8% of the employees who participated in the survey were satisfied with access to staff development opportunities in the OPSC. This may be viewed as if the OPSC does not value training and staff development of its employees. Perhaps this finding suggests that due to budgetary constraints the OPSC has not provided ample opportunities for employees to access development opportunities. If indeed, budgetary constraints are problematic towards staff development, it should be communicated to all employees so that there can be a balanced understanding of the challenges facing the organisation. Such understanding is necessary to assist employees to make informed perspectives about the OPSC as an employer. A lack of access to training and staff development opportunities may lead to low productivity and low morale among employees and turnover.

With regard to supervisors/managers recognizing the skills and competencies that employees bring to the workplace, 50% of employees who participated in the survey felt that sometimes their skills and competencies were recognized, 30% felt that their supervisors/managers were unable to recognize the skills and competencies that employees bring to the workplace. However, 20% were of the view that their supervisors/managers were able to recognize the skills and competencies that employees bring to the workplace.

The quality of employees and skills development through training are major factors in promoting long-term productivity within any organization. According to McNamara<sup>4</sup>, if you hire and keep good employees, it is imperative to invest in the development of their skills, so that the employees can increase their productivity. The purpose of training and development of staff is thus:

- Creating a pool of readily available and adequate replacements for personnel who may leave or move up the organization
- Building a more efficient, effective and highly motivated team, which enhances the organization's competitive position and improves employee morale
- To address gaps identified during performance appraisal so that performance could improve

Regarding the question of employees' satisfaction with the training and mentorship opportunities within OPSC, the findings show that 56% of employees who participated in the survey were not satisfied, 30% indicated that they were sometimes, 8% were not sure and 6% indicated their satisfaction with the training and mentorship opportunities. Perhaps this finding should be a concern to the Office because in many cases new employees need mentoring. Key to the work conducted by the OPSC is research-based and it is by and large different from what most line departments do. Therefore, newly appointed employees might need a great deal of support in research through active mentoring.

### **3.7 COMMUNICATION**

The survey sought to determine whether the employees are aware of the procedure for handling employee grievances and the findings show that 75% of the employees who participated in the survey were aware of the procedure for handling grievances,

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<sup>4</sup> MacNamara C. Employee Training and Development: Reasons and Benefits. 2001

2% had limited awareness, 15% were not sure, 8% were not aware of the procedures at all. The finding suggests that the total of 25% that is not clear about the grievance procedures have not gone through orientation within the OPSC or have never used the process and hence the lack of understanding it.

Regarding the OPSC's ability to communicate policy changes to the employees on time, the findings show that majority of employees (62%) who participated in the survey, are not convinced that policy changes get communicated to the employees on time. A conclusion could be drawn from these findings that there are employees who do not receive work related information on time. The majority of employees (93%) who participated in the survey are of the view that management does not solicit employees' ideas and opinions on matters affecting them in the OPSC. Only seven percent (7%) of the employees who participated in the survey indicated that management solicits employees' ideas and opinions on matters affecting them in the Office. Employees' involvement in organisational matters would help management to understand the dynamics involved in the performance of work and be able to come up with plans to address such dynamics. Regular communication with employees would also help in ensuring that employees understand all the policies utilised in the OPSC and what is expected from them.

### **3.8 EMPLOYEE MORALE**

The survey also sought to determine the morale of the employee within the OPSC. In this regard, 54% of the employees who participated in the survey indicated that morale is low and negative in the OPSC, 43% indicated that somehow the employees are positive about the organization and only 3% viewed employees' morale is extremely good. The following were some of the reasons given for the negative employees' morale at the OPSC:

- No training and staff development opportunities for employees specifically the low levels employees
- Well-being of employees at lower levels not considered, only management,
- No team spirit, people work in silos and not assisting each other
- Creativity and innovation not encouraged in the OPSC

- Lack of strategic and operational guidance from management
- Employees' ideas, especially lower level are not taken into consideration by management
- Office not doing enough to address the trauma experienced by employees during the tenure of the previous Head of OPSC
- Work environment (walls and furniture) depressing

It must be noted that morale in the workplace is among the end results of the different elements that make up the entire working environment which includes among others, salary, job satisfaction, supervisory contributions, responsibilities and overall working conditions. McNamara<sup>5</sup> argues that poor employee morale is something that should be managed as soon as it manifests itself. Concerted effort should be made to prevent low morale. Low morale is contagious and it can easily spread amongst the employees if it is not attended to early.

The following were suggestions from employees to improve the employee morale in the OPSC:

- Provision of training as employees want to feel that they are developing and growing in their career
- Review how projects are identified and must be more relevant
- Root out the old culture of working in silos and hindrance to creativity and innovation
- Appoint managers who are competent in management and clued up in their areas of responsibility and capacitate those managers who are already appointed but struggling to operate in their respective positions
- Ensure that all employees are treated with professionalism, dignity and respect
- Provide adequate resources to officials, thereby enabling them to perform their duties effectively and efficiently

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<sup>5</sup> MacNamara C. Employee Training and Development: Reasons and Benefits. 2001

- Managers should maintain consistency in the application of disciplinary procedures
- Improved communication is key to the improvement of employee morale
- Tangible appreciation for the work done
- The PSC itself could occasionally interact with the entire OPSC

### 3.9 EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

This part of the survey sought to determine whether the OPSC considers the work-life balance needs of its employees. The findings of the survey shows that 85% of the employees who participated in the survey perceived the employer as not considerate to work-life balance needs of its employees. Only fifteen percent (15%) of the employees were of the view that the employer is considerate of work-life balance needs of its employees. Most of the time employees are taking work home and findings show that others, come over the weekends, whereas some employees come to the office earlier and leave very late to complete their work. This could be stressful. The findings also show that in most instances officials do not even get compensated for this additional time they put for their work.

Furthermore, the finding suggests that there are no activities that allow the employees to be able to engage in and interact with each other at social level at the OPSC. Perhaps the newly established social hub which is likely to take place once a quarter would provide a platform for officials to meet at social level.

**Table 1** below indicates some work-life balance potential benefits for the OPSC and employees.

**Table1: Work-life balance potential benefits**

<b>Work- Life Balance potential benefits for OPSC:</b>	<b>Work-Life Balance potential benefits for employees:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease staff absenteeism and sick leave</li> <li>• Gain focused and engaged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce stress and anxiety</li> <li>• Improve concentration and sustain task focus longer</li> </ul>

employees and teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Productivity increased</li> <li>• Staff satisfaction sustained</li> <li>• Increase employee morale and workplace performance</li> <li>• Enrich staff quality of work/life balance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase energy and vitality</li> <li>• Decrease un-productivity</li> <li>• Improve staff health levels</li> </ul>
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**Source: Internet, Holistic Services Group**

It must be noted that the above mentioned work-life balance plans could be meaningless if management is not committed to ensure its effective implementation.

The findings further show that the majority of the employees (95%) who participated in the survey were of the view that their employer is not showing interest in the morale and welfare of employees.

### **3.10 WORK RELATIONS**

Seventy five percent (75%) of employees who participated in the survey indicated that employees have no respect for each other, whilst twenty five percent (25%) of the employees who participated in the survey indicated that employees have respect for each other. This low percentage of respect may be attributed to various issues, like culture of the organisation, work performance, and individual behaviours. According to Holistic Service Group the following are examples to mention a few of issues that may lead to employees not respecting each other in a workplace<sup>6</sup>:

- Lack of leadership that steers the respectful culture and direction of the organisation, then employees will not have respect for the leadership and management

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<sup>6</sup> Holistic Services Group



- If employees are incompetent in their areas of work, then respect for each other will be non-existing
- Also some behaviours, like, showing up late and unprepared for meetings, asking your colleague or subordinate to lie for you or do something unrelated to work (i.e. run personal errands) and having arrogant attitude towards others lead to non respect amongst employees

With regards to the issue of respect, it is difficult to conclude that the above-mentioned examples are key drivers of non respect at the OPSC as no further interrogation was posed on the question of respect. The above-mentioned examples may be used as a guide to ascertain where the problem is with regard to respect at the OPSC and address it.

The findings of the survey further show that, in general, managers are approachable and employees are free to inform their managers of their work-related concerns. However, being approachable and listening to the work-related concerns does not actually mean they are able to solve work-related challenges that are presented to them, neither can they give guidance and leadership where it's needed. The following are the areas which were highlighted as challenges experienced by subordinates when approaching management at the OPSC:

- Some managers do not accept and embrace different work-related views/inputs from subordinates. There is resistance by management to new work approaches
- Some managers do not act on work-related matters brought to their attention,
- Lack of communication and performance management as some managers are incompetent in the area of subordinate's work
- Some managers disrespect and humiliate subordinates in the presence of their colleagues
- When subordinates differ with management on work-related issues it gets personalized. Victimization and marginalization by management then takes place

- Employees are expected to do as they are told by management and no engagement is accepted whether it is for clarity or for correcting the wrong instruction being given
- Some managers are not trustworthy and they create animosity amongst subordinates by back chatting their subordinates to other managers and subordinates. This results in negative perception being created about that particular employee
- Some managers are viewed as defensive and manipulative
- Executive does not interact with the rest of employees, only with management who in most of the time share distorted and incorrect information with subordinates

Despite the above challenges, employees are of the view that there are few managers that are exceptional, that are able to engage and guide the employees through the challenges they encounter when doing their work and they are seen as good role models.

### **3.11 MANAGEMENT OR LEADERSHIP WITHIN OPSC**

The findings show that employees have mixed feelings about the management and leadership within the OPSC. The findings show that the employees who participated in the survey identified the following issues that affect the supervisory procedures in the OPSC:

- Lack of competent managers in their areas of responsibility and in managing people and performance. This situation does not seem to be managed, and yet affects the morale of subordinates
- Lack of communication and consultation within branches. There is no strategic direction and guidance on project proposals and reports, no feedback from different forums management are part of
- Managers that are terrified of engaging Executive and Commissioners on different views regarding the work and reports
- Employees are not treated the same by managers and favouritism exists

- Misuse of the Performance Management System as punishing tool, instead of being the guiding tool for training gaps and monitoring of performance
- Resistance to change, or accept new ideas and approaches and creativity to work by management
- A need to reconsider reporting lines of Regional Offices, one manager for Regional Directors as an option and monitoring of Regional Directors regularly
- Delegation of work is not done by some managers as there is lack of trust
- Managers that do not add value to reports by giving content input, instead they ask questions which when answered they remain confused or don't pick it up that the questions have been addressed
- Exploitation of employees who comply with the rules and do their work
- Lack of management of those who are not performing and equal work must be shared amongst employees
- Training budget must be increased
- Work-study for Corporate Services must be conducted

Perhaps the findings of the survey somehow suggest weaknesses in the strategic and operational direction from management, lack of communication, lack of innovation and poor performance by some managers.

### **3.12 FLEXIBILITY**

Forty four percent (44%) of employees who participated in the survey indicated that they were not given enough flexibility to perform their functions, followed by 12% who indicated that sometimes and 10% who indicated that flexibility is not allowed at all in the OPSC. Thirty four percent (34%) are of the view that flexibility is allowed when performing their functions. Lack of flexibility is demonstrated where change in the way of doing things is not embraced by some managers. The finding also suggests that innovation is lacking in some managers and they end up hiding behind the set procedures for not changing the way things are done. The issue of competency in the managers also plays a role in allowing flexibility for employees in terms of their work.

## **CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the recommendations and conclusion of the work place climate survey conducted in the OPSC.

### **4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Employees' perception of the PSC and OPSC's image**

- The OPSC should consider adopting a corporate image.

#### **Work Environment**

- Adequate resources should be provided to employees to enable them to perform their duties effectively and efficiently.

#### **Organizational Objective**

- Branches must have regular feedback sessions to provide employees with the progress made towards OPSC's goals and also use these sessions to get employees' inputs on management of the office and its activities. Branches must be encouraged to have their in-house mini strategic planning sessions/workshops that involve all employees in crafting the plans of their branches which inform the work-plan of the OPSC and prepare for the end of the year office strategic planning session. By so doing everyone will have a common understanding of where the OPSC is going, what needs to be achieved by when and how the results impacts on the whole office work-plan
- Individual managers must understand the specific objectives of their job and how those objectives fit in with the overall goals of the OPSC. The managers of the various branches in the OPSC should not only know the objectives of their branches but also actively participate in translating these objectives to the subordinates/employees and in setting performance standards to ensure that all subordinates/employees within their respective branches understand the broader

goals of the OPSC and are able to work towards attaining them as they carry out their daily activities

### **Training and Development Opportunities of Employees**

- Leadership and culture which have effect on strategy and human resources must be improved in the OPSC. In-house workshop facilitated by experts in the field of leadership, human resource management and organisational behaviour should be considered
- Development of all employees through mentorship and coaching and generic and functional training. A customised training for researchers should be funded and made compulsory to be attended by researchers in the OPSC
- Managers must be trained on IT. The use of track changes and insert comment for quality check and editing will save time. The report should only be printed and packaged in a submission for the DG only
- System to capacitate incompetent managers should be put in place to improve their management styles
- The OPSC should source funding from donors for training and staff development purposes
- Create career-path opportunities for all employees

### **Communication Strategies**

- Perhaps the communication mode that is used by the OPSC needs to be reviewed. Managers also need to take an active role in communicating work related information and policy changes as they are instrumental in implementing such policies in the course of their work
- Top-down and bottom-up approaches should be followed for effective communication at the OPSC

### **Employee Morale**

- The OPSC should work hard to improve the morale of the employees

## **Employee Wellness**

- A combination of plans that support the work-life balance is needed. The employer should consider adding flexible time so that employees are either allowed to start work early in the morning so they can leave early or start late and stay longer
- The employer should also consider, within reason, anything that could be done for the comfort and improvement of employees and that is provided over and above their salaries. The employer must monitor and improve working conditions and create harmony at the office
- There is also a need for a culture that supports work-life balance for all employees that is being driven by senior management and is incorporated into the culture at all levels
- The OPSC has the Employee Wellness Program that is outsourced to ICAS so that employees can get expert help in dealing with stress related issues at work and at home. This support seems not enough the OPSC should improve on this

## **Work Relations**

- Intensify team building sessions
- All employees should be treated with professionalism, dignity and respect and no favouritism should be practiced by managers
- If protocol is used, then it must be used throughout. For example, if a DDG wants a DD to do something he/she must go through the Director and Chief Director
- Appreciation of the work done by the OPSC by Commissioners. The Commissioners should occasionally interact with the entire OPSC

## **Management or Leadership within OPSC**

- Deputy Director Generals must provide leadership in their branches
- Management should acknowledge constructive criticism
- Managers must provide guidance that is also supported by constructive feedback and must refrain from destructive criticism

- Managers must seek to understand the abilities of employees and support them where they struggle in performance and should also acknowledge good performance with the same determination as they condemn poor performance
- Managers must provide guidance in as far as work is concerned
- Supervisors should not have intimate relationships with any employee which may potentially lead to preferential treatment
- Continuous assessment and feedback of performance must be done
- People management and communication skills of managers and supervisors must be enhanced by training to facilitate good relations
- Identify one manager to supervise all Regional Directors
- Managers should ensure equal distribution of work. All employees should contribute toward the attainment of the organizational goals
- Managers at Regional Offices should be monitored regularly
- Allow Directors especially at Regional Offices more authority and signing power
- Work-study should be conducted for Corporate Services
- Work study must be conducted in the Office to assess the work of Regional Directors and Directors at Head Office since Regional Directors interact at high level including with MEC's. This study should also seek to determine whether the Regional Directors should remain under the leadership of Chief Directors or another component. It should be ensured that resources are distributed in an equitable manner.

### **Flexibility**

- Review the way the PSC selects projects to include some projects that capture best practices in the country and abroad within both the public and private sector and recommend the implementation of such practices
- The OPSC should determine a system to assess departmental performance and provide awards to best performing chief directorates
- The OPSC should write recommendations and also work closely with the Departments to help them to implement them
- Line function employees are desk bound in the office and do not meet the clients, this should be changed to improve on the quality of work

- Allow brainstorming sessions during the writing of project proposals and include respective DDG's and representative of Commissioners of specialist teams

#### **4.3 CONCLUSION**

The study found that generally, the majority of the employees who participated in the survey indicated that employee's morale within the OPSC is very low. Key to low morale amongst the employees is lack of training, incompetent management, lack of guidance in terms of work, management's lack of consideration for work-life balance needs of its employees, lack of communication, lack of flexibility when performing tasks and lack of team work within the OPSC and depressing work environment as aspects that have a negative impact on employee wellbeing. If the leadership and management of the OPSC could attend to these issues, maybe there might be improvement in the general feeling of employees and their productivity.