



**W**e once again publish another edition in the month of August, when we honour our women. This Women's Month, we take this opportunity to salute our battalion of heroines who fought tirelessly to achieve this freedom we enjoy today. 9 August is a historic day in the history of our country's liberation struggle and it will be befitting for all of us in the Public Service to honour and celebrate those women within the system who are making a difference in the delivery of services to our people.

I take this opportunity, in this month of August, to introduce to you our performance management system of individual departments developed by the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) and approved by Cabinet. This system is meant to ensure that we monitor and assist departments with concrete and scientific evidence of their departmental performance, which should allow them to take inputs and convert them into outputs. This will allow our nation to achieve the outcomes we set ourselves.

While the South African Government system is awash with monitoring systems and tools, there has not been an integrated high-level overview of departmental performance. This has resulted in uncoordinated and duplicated efforts that have led to frustration and limited improvements in management capability and service delivery.

International practice throughout the developed and the developing world shows that adequate management capability is a prerequisite to achieve effective societal outcomes. International experience indicates that changes in performance take hold when the accounting officers and executive authorities take accountability for their own performance.

The overwhelming focus has been on the achievement of results, i.e. service delivery, and not on what is required organisationally to deliver those results. Given the nature of the evolution of the South African State, it is critical that there is a focus on management capability at political level. This has given rise to the development of the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT).

The MPAT is a Presidential initiative to improve government performance through highlighting a number of performance areas, predominantly management capability. It is intended to be one of the mechanisms for implementing outcomes 9 and 12, namely developing an efficient and effective local government and an efficient and effective public service.

Management performance will be assessed across a comprehensive range of management areas, from supply chain management to strategic planning. In each management area, performance will be assessed against the management standards established by the relevant transversal departments (e.g. National Treasury for supply chain management).

National Treasury, the Department of Public Service and Administration, the Office of the Public Service Commission and the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG) have existing tools and processes to assess specific areas of management. The management performance assessments will incorporate the information produced by these existing assessment processes, and duplication will be avoided.

Quantitative indicators and audit results will be used to assess whether a department is complying with legal requirements. However, more qualitative methods, such as questionnaires or assessment by a subject matter specialist, will be used to assess the degree to which management practices result in the efficient and effective translation of inputs into outputs. The latter aspect is the key differentiator between management performance assessments and the OAG's compliance audits. Management performance assessments will draw on information from the OAG's audit reports, but will provide a broader perspective of management performance.

The assessment results will be used to locate departments in terms of four progressive levels of management performance. A department which scores at level one overall has insufficient capability, is largely non-compliant and is performing poorly in terms of its management practices. In such cases, intense support is required. In contrast, a department which scores at level four overall has excellent capability, is fully compliant and is performing above expectations. In such cases, good practice case studies will be developed and disseminated through learning networks.

Different types of departments require different management capabilities. For example, a small department which only engages in small repeated procurements requires a basic level of transactional procurement capability, whereas a large department which spends billions on the procurement of complex goods or services requires a sophisticated level of strategic procurement capability. This is taken into account by weighting the indicators differently for different departments. Thus, compli-

ance indicators will be weighted higher for the department with the small and simple procurement budget, and qualitative indicators will be weighted higher for the department with the large and complex procurement budget.

The assessment process consists of The Presidency/Office of the Premier/provincial department responsible for local government and the department or municipality being assessed draws on the results of the most recent application of the existing assessment tools and processes to partially complete a report card. The remainder of the report card is completed using a standard questionnaire to collect information regarding aspects of management areas not covered by existing tools. In some instances, a further step of external assessment by a subject matter specialist may be required. Once the report card has been completed, there is an engagement between the assessors and the leadership of the department or municipality to discuss the results of the assessment. Finally, where necessary, the department or municipality must then put in place a plan to address areas of weakness. The DPME, the premiers' offices and provincial departments responsible for local government will monitor the implementation of the improvement plans.

The target is to carry out assessments of 20 national and 20 provincial departments in the current financial year, and to scale up the assessment of all national and provincial departments by the end of the next financial year. Assessments of municipalities by provinces will be piloted in the current financial year and then similarly taken to scale.

The DPME and premiers' offices will provide summaries of the assessment results to Cabinet and provincial executive councils. The system should be seen as yet another effort to assist departments to perform better and achieve better outputs.



Othman Gollins Chabane

Minister for Performance, Monitoring, Evaluation and Administration



# Celebrating Women's Month...

**“W**e women of South Africa, wives and mothers, working women and housewives, African, Indians, European and Coloured, hereby declare our aim of striving for the removal of all laws, regulations, conventions and customs that discriminate against us as women, and that deprive us in any way of our inherent right to the advantages, responsibilities and opportunities that society offers to any one section of the population.”

As we celebrate Women's Month, this preamble of the Women's Charter, adopted by the Federation of South African Women in 1954, comes to mind. The adoption of the charter was a precursor to the 1956 march by women to the Union Buildings, protesting against the imposition of pass laws against women. The struggle for the emancipation of women in South Africa has, since then, come a long way.

Significantly, our Constitution, adopted in 1996, prohibits discrimination on the basis of any grounds, including gender. Various pieces of legislation have been passed to ensure gender mainstreaming. The latest strategic trajectory on this path was the establishment in 2009 of a ministry that specifically deals with, among others things, women's issues – the Ministry of Women, Children and People with Disabilities. The Ministry evolved from what used to be the Office on the Status of Women located in the President's office. This is all commendable.

However, as we make progress towards the full emancipation of women, we in the Public Service have to continuously pause and reflect whether we are doing enough, and at the requisite speed. Significant strides have been made as exemplified in the number of female directors-general and senior managers in general. Important as numeric targets may be, I submit that there is more to gender mainstreaming than just meeting equity targets. We need to do more to respond to the needs of women civil servants.

Gender and power relations in the Public Service need to be transformed to ensure that all sexes are equal participants in the workplace. Also, we need to create an enabling environment that ensures women's talents and potential are harnessed and their achievements celebrated. *Public Sector Manager* is particularly sensitive to the latter and that is why in every edition we have a feature focusing on women's achievements in the Public Service. This is over and above mainstreaming female middle and senior managers into the entire editorial content of the magazine.

One of the limiting factors in advancing gender mainstreaming in the Public Service is the lack of conceptual understanding of the issue – what it is, why we have to do it, how to do it and how to measure results. To address this challenge, we should consider making training on gender mainstreaming mandatory for all senior managers. It is when decision-makers are empowered with the right gender mainstreaming knowledge that they can see its strategic value and constitutional imperatives.

Fortunately, the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy already offers a four-day accredited Gender Mainstreaming Training Programme for Managers in the Public Service. The programme equips managers with knowledge and an understanding of the application of gender mainstreaming strategies. If we are going to use the Public Service as one of the vehicles through which to achieve gender equality, then this programme must be compulsory. One sees no way in which a manager who is not equipped with knowledge in this area can advance the gender mainstreaming policies of government.

**Jimmy Manyi**  
GCIS: CEO  
Cabinet Spokesperson



# We hear you!



**T**he piece, "Whose Mandela is it anyway?" by Busani Ngcaweni (July 2011) elicited a number of responses. Aside from informing and inspiring, one of the major objectives of the magazine is to create and encourage debate. Below are two comments from readers, David Mmakola and Kojo Parris.

It's an interesting question Busani Ngcaweni raises in his article "Whose Mandela is it anyway?" I suppose the name "Mandela" means different things to different people. To some he is a radical freedom fighter. To others, he is a symbol of reconciliation and forgiveness. On the other hand, others see him as the leader who did not lay the foundation for sustained economic transformation.

I can see that, in Ngcaweni's view, Mandela represents a visionary leader who managed a delicate transition process. While I do not disagree, I think our efforts to acknowledge extraordinary individual effort can fall into the trap of an "ahistorical account" that fails to see the social dimension of change.

My view is that the period 1990 to 1994 represented a convergence of global, regional and domestic forces that contributed (at least politically) to the resolution of the South African question.

Apartheid South Africa belonged to a group of countries that were forced to introduce political reforms at the end of the Cold War. The US, UK, Germany and France and the World Bank and IMF, felt that due to the large presence of whites in the country, they needed to ensure that the political settlement in South Africa guaranteed white privileges. Before 1990, these countries tried to convince the South African Government that the only way to do this was through minority rights protection, strong provincial government and the Constitutional protection of property rights. I think this also explains why the National Party (NP) withdrew

from the GNU after the adoption of GEAR. They concluded that through GEAR, the ANC became the guardian of white privileges, without having to be policed by the NP.

I think when one talks about the role that Mandela played, one must be mindful of the broader forces that shaped such a role.

– David Mmakola, Gauteng



**T**hank you for a thoughtful and reflective piece by Busani Ngcaweni. Forgive me for an indulgent niggler from the piece

– "Therein lies a challenge for public sector managers – to serve selflessly and with integrity". I wonder if the instinctively negative narrative around the public sector needs to be challenged? I'm bemused that the descriptors attributed to the sector – corrupt, lacking capacity and so on – bear a striking symmetry to pre-94 descriptors. I speak as a (former) investment banker who oft times cloisters with numerous South African business icons as schemes are routinely crafted to pillage, sans integrity, in the name of free enterprise. We all have a responsibility to push back against the growing tide that, seemingly, wishes to delegitimise the State, so, how about "Therein lies a challenge for patriotic South Africans – to perform selflessly and with integrity"?

– Kojo Parris, London

## Get PSM out there!

I recently saw a copy of *Public Sector Manager* from a friend who works for government. I am impressed by the quality of the articles and the look of the magazine. It enhanced my understanding of the things you do in government. I wish you can extend the reach of the magazine to people who are in the private sector, especially those who do business with government. – Sizwe Khumalo, Durban

**Editor's reply:**  
We are working on plans to make the magazine available through the retail chains and we will certainly open subscription to those outside of government.

## Write and win

The writer of next month's winning letter will receive an advanced driving course worth R800, courtesy of BMW SA.

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Please continue to help us make each issue better than the last by writing to the Editor, Vusi Mona, e-mail: [vusi@gcis.gov.za](mailto:vusi@gcis.gov.za). Don't forget to include your name and the city or town where you live.