



# CONSOLIDATED REPORT ON INSPECTIONS OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY SITES

Public Service Commission

August 2007

## 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.

# CONSOLIDATED REPORT ON INSPECTIONS OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY SITES



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# FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to present this consolidated report on Inspections in the Departments of Home Affairs, Labour and Social Development (Free State), and Housing (Gauteng).

In 2005 the Public Service Commission (PSC) identified a need to conduct Inspections in the form of Unannounced and/or Announced Visits. The aim of the Inspections is to assess the quality of services provided to the public and to determine if departments are meeting the required service standards, and the needs of the people using the service.

The inspection team which comprised Public Service Commissioners and officials identified a package of good practices and challenges faced by both front-line staff and citizens during the delivery of public services. Some of these challenges require immediate attention by the Departments. This report outlines recommendations to bridge identified service delivery gaps.

The PSC has already interacted with the Executing Authorities of the relevant departments to share the findings and recommendations in the individual Inspection reports. However, the PSC felt that there is a need to share the findings of the Inspections with its stakeholders in order to promote an appreciation of the value of Inspections as a monitoring mechanism. Hence this consolidated report was put together.



The PSC wishes to register its appreciation for the senior management's cooperation and willingness to share information, the warm reception that was shown by the supervisors and other staff at the service points, and the willingness of the citizens to share their service delivery experiences.

I believe that Inspections are a valuable monitoring mechanism which will help Departments to introduce more effective service delivery strategies that take into account views of both citizens and front-line staff when developing their Service Delivery Improvement Plans. As a result, Inspections will be introduced in other Departments on an annual basis.



**PROF. SS SANGWENI**  
**CHAIRPERSON**

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# Glossary of abbreviations and definitions

CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CDW	Community Development Worker
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
EA	Executive Authority
GCIS	Government Communication and Information System
HoD	Head of Department
ID	Identity Document
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ISS	Information Security System
IT	Information Technology
MEC	Member of Executive Council
MPCC	Multi Purpose Community Centre
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PMDS	Performance Management and Development System
PSC	Public Service Commission
SAPS	South African Police Service
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund



# Executive summary

## 1. Background

Since the advent of democratic rule in South Africa in 1994, the Public Service has been driving efforts to transform service delivery. In its role as an oversight body, the Public Service Commission (PSC) found it important to put in place a range of monitoring mechanisms that can be used to establish the progress that is being made in such service delivery transformation efforts. One such mechanism involves the inspection of service delivery sites. The aim of the inspections is to assess the quality of services provided to the public and to determine if departments are meeting the required service standards and the needs of the people using the service.

The PSC conducted a pilot of inspections of service delivery sites during 2005/2006 which included the Departments of Home Affairs, Labour and Housing (Gauteng) and Social Development (Free State). During the pilot inspections both Announced and Unannounced Visits were conducted. This is a consolidated report of findings and recommendations arising from the pilot inspections. The report is based on the interviews conducted with officials and citizens as well as observations made during the site visits.

## 2. Methodology

To initiate the process, letters were sent to the relevant Executive Authorities (EAs) and Directors-General (DGs) and Heads of Department (HoDs) informing them about the intention of the PSC to conduct inspections in their respective departments. However, for the unannounced visits, dates and sites to be visited were not mentioned. In addition to conducting interviews with staff and citizens, the inspection teams made observations about the state of facilities guided by a checklist that was developed in advance.

### 3. Key Findings

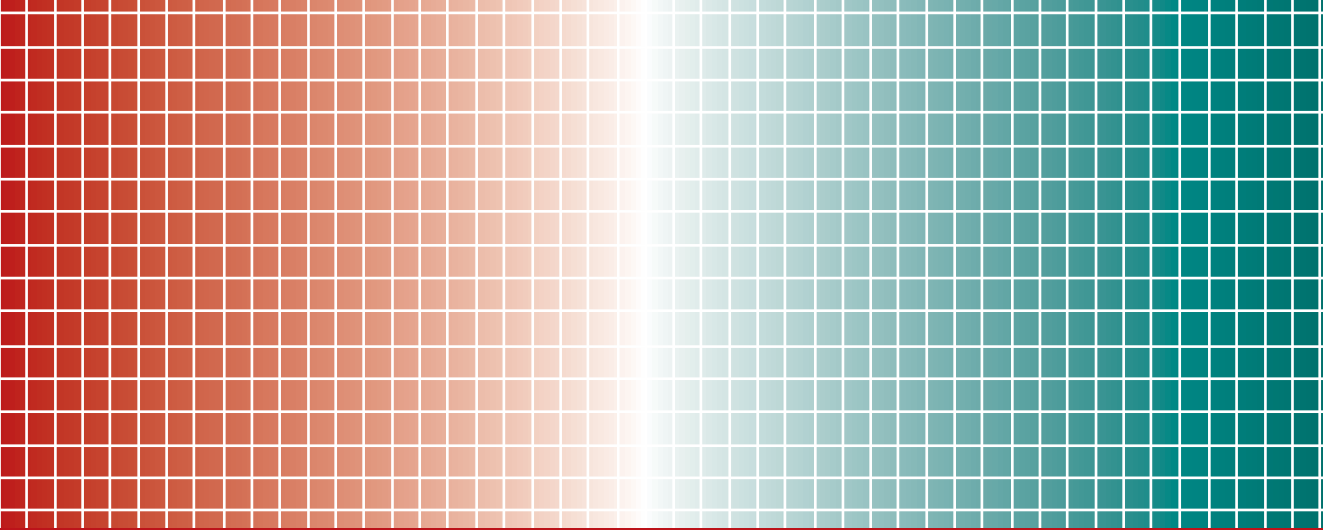
The inspection teams had an opportunity to receive first hand information from both staff and citizens. The teams also observed the types of challenges experienced at service delivery sites. Specific findings are given for each department in the report. The following are generic findings that apply to all four departments.

- Almost all visited service points had acceptable outside signage, which was clear and gave proper information.
- The majority of the service points were found to be clean and welcoming.
- Most of the visited sites did not have proper inside signage giving directions to appropriate service counters.
- Most of the visited service points had ramps for people with disabilities.
- Almost all visited service points had adequately resourced front desks and dedicated staff guiding people to correct counters.
- Most of the visited service points had no service standards displayed.
- The inspection teams observed that there was generally a lack of on-site infrastructure addressing citizens' complaints, queries, and suggestions.
- It was observed that at most visited service points the staff appeared to be friendly, professional, and knowledgeable.
- At most of the visited service points, indications were given that lunch and other breaks are taken without disrupting the service flow.
- At some service points, citizens complained about turnaround times for applications.

### 4. Recommendations

In addition to the department-specific areas for improvement outlined in the main report, the following overall recommendations emerged from the inspections:

- Head Offices of Departments need to assist Regional Offices or service delivery sites in developing the service standards so that citizens are informed of the level of service they should expect. Service standards should be developed and written in languages predominantly



spoken in specific areas. Once developed, service standards should then be appropriately placed where they can be easily seen by citizens. The Head Offices should thereafter closely monitor compliance.

- Even though some service points have toll free numbers, suggestion boxes and complaint registers should still be made available and placed at visible points at all service delivery points as some people cannot easily access phones. Moreover, some people may want to lodge their complaints immediately after occurrence of an event that leads to dissatisfaction.
- Name tags must be worn by all staff members so as to improve accountability of staff and client relationship.
- All service delivery points should have proper outside signage. Such signage will promote easy identification of the service points by the public.
- Inside signage should be placed at all service delivery points so that citizens can easily find their way to the correct counters. Furthermore, for the benefit of those that cannot read, there should be a staff member dedicated to guiding citizens to the right service counters. These measures would assist in shortening time spent by citizens on queues.
- Lunch and other breaks should be well managed. Citizens should not be left unattended because some staff are out on a break.
- All entrances should have ramps so that people with disabilities can easily enter the buildings.
- A friendly and welcoming environment should be created at all service points. The reception area or front desk should be kept clean. Water should also be readily available to the public and the air-conditioning system should be kept in good working condition at all times.
- Toilet facilities should always be well maintained and kept clean.

## 5. Conclusion

The pilot inspections in the four departments generated useful insights on the quality of service delivery in the sites that were visited. In addition, the pilot enabled the PSC to further appreciate the value of inspections as a monitoring mechanism and the implications for rolling it out in other areas. The PSC believes that other stakeholders should also seriously consider this methodology in their monitoring activities given the critical primary information that it can generate.

# Chapter One

## Introduction

## 1.1 Background to Inspections

Service delivery improvement needs to be understood against the backdrop of the historic mission of the democratic, non-racial people-centred government and the developmental state that seeks to transform South African society by ensuring improved service delivery. Efforts to improve public service delivery are guided by the White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery (Batho Pele), 1997<sup>1</sup>. The White Paper calls for a shift away from inward looking, bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes, towards a search for new ways of working which puts the needs of the public first. Within this context, it is critically important to ensure that there are sound monitoring mechanisms through which to assess the progress that is being made towards the realization of such a people-centred Public Service. One such mechanism which the Public Service Commission (PSC) has introduced is the inspection of public service delivery sites.

In terms of the Public Service Commission Act, 1997,<sup>2</sup> "the Commission may inspect departments and other organizational components in the public service, and has access to such official documents or may obtain such information from heads of those departments or organizational components as may be necessary for the performance of the functions of the Commission under the Constitution or the Public Service Act". Guided by this provision, the PSC embarked on a programme of inspecting service delivery sites through announced and unannounced visits. The aim of the Inspections is to assess the quality of services provided to the public and to determine if departments are meeting the required service standards, and the needs of the people using the service.

Furthermore, Inspections are a fact finding exercise meant to observe and get first hand information on service delivery issues. In principle, the inspections process encourages compliance and looks at actual service provision in action to match the expectations of the service users with actual performance of the service provider. Inspections are not intended as a punitive measure but as a continuous improvement activity in respect of public service delivery as weaknesses are identified and corrective measures suggested with excellent performance commended.

## 1.2 Pilot Inspections

The PSC decided that before it could roll out a programme of inspections, there should be a limited pilot to ensure that the methodology is tested and refined. Such a methodology would promote a shared understanding of the overall purpose of inspections and provide a systematic and consistent process for implementation. A protocol document<sup>2</sup> was developed to guide the inspections. The pilot inspections took place in the following departments:

<sup>1</sup> Department of Public Service and Administration (1997). *White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery*. Government Printers: Pretoria

<sup>2</sup> Public Service Commission. 2005. *Protocol on Inspections*.

- Departments of Home Affairs,
- Department of Labour,
- Department of Housing (Gauteng), and
- Department of Social Development (Free State).

One of the primary considerations in conducting inspections is to provide quick feedback to departments inspected so that aspects affecting service delivery can be remedied as soon as possible. To this end the findings of the Inspections were shared with the Executing Authorities of the respective departments in the form of reports. This comprehensive report of all departments that were visited during the pilot Inspections presents the findings from the visited service delivery sites and Head Offices, and gives recommendations pertaining to the findings. It was felt that this first round of pilot inspections should be published for a wider audience to promote awareness of the value of inspections as a monitoring mechanism.

### 1.3 The Aims and Objectives of the Inspections

The aim of the Inspections is to assess the quality of services provided to the public by government departments and to determine if departments are meeting the required service standards, and the needs of the people using the service. Furthermore, Inspections are a fact finding exercise meant to observe and get first hand information on service delivery issues. The specific aims of inspections are to:

- afford the Commission an opportunity to observe the extent to which service is delivered to citizens and to get sense of what kind of service delivery challenges are facing staff in their positions – particularly at service delivery points,
- engender a sense of urgency and seriousness among officials regarding service delivery,
- introduce objective mechanisms of identifying both weaknesses and strengths in improving service delivery,
- report serious concerns about the quality of service delivery and compliance with Batho Pele requirements,
- carry out investigations of serious failures as pointed out by inspections and other studies,
- improve service user care relations and promote a service user oriented Public Service, and
- Create platform where quick feedback can be given to departments to act on some of the issues and challenges identified during Inspections.

### 1.4 The Inspections Methodology

To initiate the process, letters were sent to the relevant Executive Authorities (EAs) and Heads of Department (HoDs) informing them about the intention of the PSC to conduct inspections in their departments. For the unannounced visits, dates and sites to be visited were not mentioned. For the announced visits to Head Offices, dates were secured for meetings with

the management. The Commission ensured that specific designed questionnaires were sent to the Head Offices before the visits in order to have all required information prepared for the meeting.

In the Free State Province, there was also a pre-inspection meeting with the Member of the Executive Council (MEC), the Head of Department, five District Managers, and other officials and support staff, with a view to among others, explain the inspection process, and to select the areas or sites to be visited. During the meeting, a set of criteria was also agreed upon to facilitate the selection of inspection sites.

In all the inspections, Public Service Commissioners played a leading role at the service delivery sites. On arrival at the site, the inspection team leader asked for a manager/supervisor, introduced the team, and explained the purpose of the visit. Thereafter, short meetings were held with the supervisors and at most sites supervisors invited key personnel to join the meetings. The inspection team then toured the sites, accompanied by relevant personnel of the department being visited.

During inspections, the team was guided by the checklist<sup>3</sup> which contains the following issues pertaining to the Batho Pele Policy:

- Observing facilities;
- Observing access to information;
- Observing staff;
- Talking to citizens;
- Talking to staff; and
- General observations.

For each of the issues listed above, the checklist provided specific questions on which the inspection team should focus. For an example, in terms of observing the facilities the following were looked at: outside and inside signage; reflection of business hours; display of the cost of rendered services; condition of the building; condition of the furniture; availability of ramps for people with disabilities; and cleanliness.

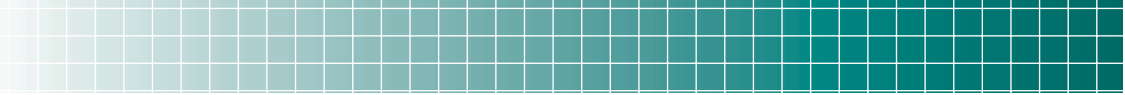
## 1.5 Limitations of the Methodology

The methodologies applied during inspections had some challenges. The following were the notable limitations of the methodologies applied:

- The intention to involve the Executive Authorities in the service delivery site visits delayed the process as it was difficult to get appointments with them. To overcome this challenge

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from the DPSA's checklist for unannounced visits, 2005





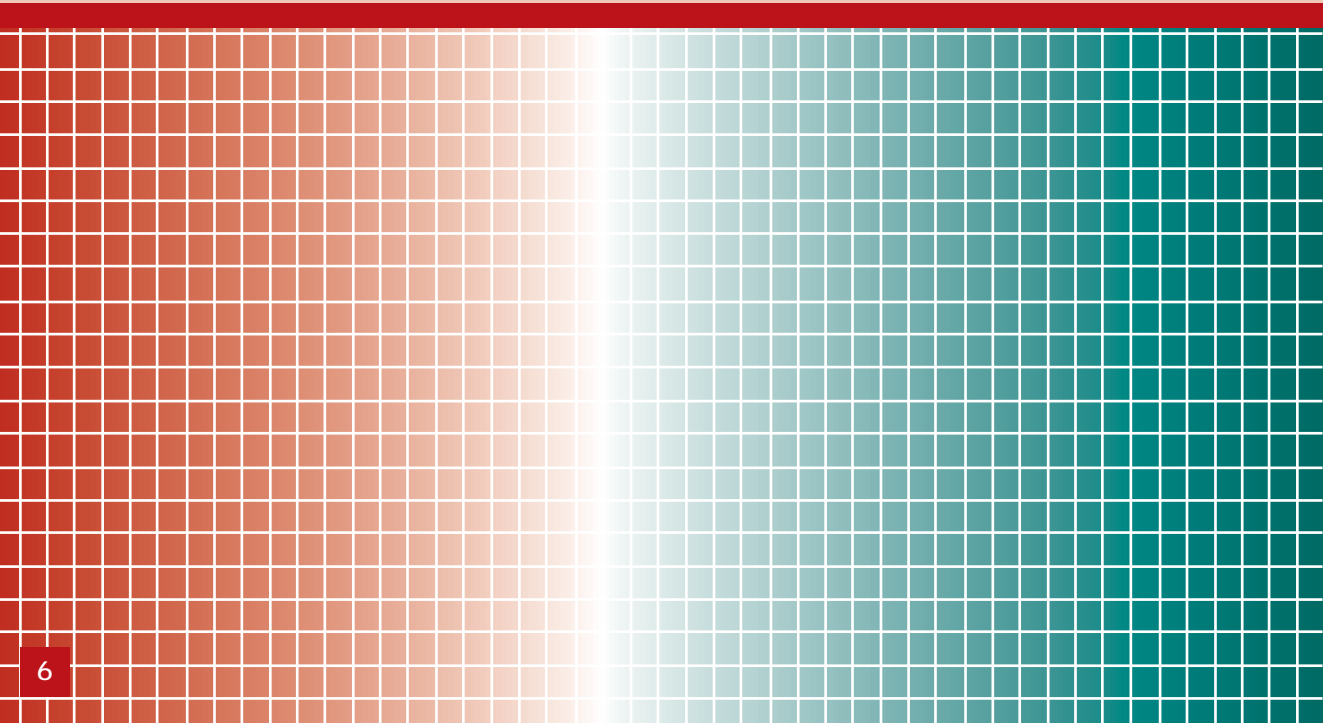
the Commissioners eventually conducted the inspections without the presence of the relevant Executive Authorities.

- The checklist that was designed by the DPSA did not cater for some areas of service delivery provided by the visited Departments. Some of the issues mentioned in the checklist are not relevant to specific service delivery points. However, to accommodate this shortfall the PSC designed relatively short questionnaires specific to inspected Departments.

## 1.6 The Structure of the Report

The following sections present information acquired from the meetings held and observations made during the inspections. The structure of the report is as follows:

- Chapter 2 presents the findings from the Department of Home Affairs.
- Chapter 3 presents findings from the Department of Labour.
- Chapter 4 presents findings from the Department of housing in the Gauteng province.
- Chapter 5 presents findings from the Department of Social Development in the Free State province.
- Chapter 6 presents the conclusion and recommendations.



# Chapter Two

Department of Home Affairs

## 2.1 Introduction

The Department of Home Affairs was identified as one of the critical departments to be included in the pilot inspections. Given its role in the issuing of Identity Documents (IDs), Birth and Death Certificates and Passports, it is one of the key departments with which members of the public interface regularly. In addition, the Department has in recent years received a lot of negative publicity regarding its service delivery performance, with most observations indicating that urgent improvements are required in this regard. This chapter presents the findings obtained during the visit at the selected service delivery sites of the department.

## 2.2 Sites Visited

Inspections of service delivery sites of the Department were conducted between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2006. Seven service sites in the Gauteng area and the Head Office were visited. The table below shows the list of service points that were visited.

**Table 1: Home Affairs Sites**

Department of Home Service Points	Date Visited
OR Tambo International Airport (then Johannesburg International Airport)	6 March 2006
Randfontein Regional Office	7 March 2006
Krugersdorp District Office	7 March 2006
Tsakane - Faranani MPCC	8 March 2006
Brakpan District Office	8 March 2006
Alexandra MPCC	9 March 2006
Marabastad	9 March 2006
Head Office	30 March 2006

## 2.3 Key Findings

The following is a consolidated overview of the key findings and recommendations of the sites visited.

### 2.3.1 Findings at the Service Delivery Point

#### 2.3.1.1 Observing facilities

The inspection team observed that almost all service points had acceptable outside signage, which was clear and gave proper information. However, the Alexandra office which is situated in a Multi Purpose Community Centre (MPCC) did not have an outside signage indicating



availability of the services of the Department of Home Affairs. The inspection team also observed that most sites did not have proper inside signage giving direction to appropriate service counters. In addition, in Brakpan and Marabastad the inside signage was illegible.

It was of concern to note that, with the exception of Randfontein, Krugersdorp, and Brakpan, business hours and services rendered were not displayed at the service points. Most of the service points also did not display the cost of services. It is important to tell service users whether there is a charge or not for a particular service. This would possibly encourage more use of the service if it is free or if there is only a minimal charge. Displaying the cost of services also minimises the abuse of service users and false expectations in cases where there are high charges that may not be affordable to some users.

The furniture was generally found to be in a good condition at most of the service points. However, the inspection team observed that in Brakpan and Alexandra the furniture looked fairly old and it was not in an acceptable condition. The condition of the buildings in six of the visited sites was acceptable. Furthermore, almost all visited sites had ramps for people with disabilities.


The majority of service points were found to be in a clean and welcoming condition. However, the office in Marabastad (especially the immigration unit) was found to be very filthy. The office in Tsakane (Faranani MPCC) was also messy with boxes all over the floor. The condition of public toilets was unacceptable at almost all the visited sites. The toilets were messy and in a poor state showing that they are not maintained, except where the City Council is responsible for the facility. Although it is not a prescript for Departments, a well functioning front-office should have an appropriate and adequate infrastructure for the convenience of the public. This includes amongst other things facilities for mothers with babies. It was disappointing to observe that all visited service points did not have facilities for mothers with babies.

At most service points the inspection team observed that the air conditioning and access to water for the public were appropriate. Although most service points have adequate seating, this is not specifically designed for the disabled or pensioners. Only one service point (Brakpan), has special seating arrangements for pensioners and disabled people.

Parking appeared to be sufficient at all visited service points. Almost all service points seemed to be easily accessible for people using public transport and are located in safe areas.

### **2.3.1.2 Assessing access to information**

In assessing access to information, the inspection team noted that in most sites visited there are no staff members guiding people to the right points of service on arrival. Most delivery points did not have dedicated staff members who serve as floor walkers where they escort citizens to appropriate counters, and with this apparent shortfall street agents are encouraged



to fill the gap. However, most delivery points have staffed service desks, which are stocked with appropriate information. In certain instances security officers assist with guiding clients to the relevant areas of inquiry. It was further observed that most service points utilize the services of private security companies to staff the help desks. Given that the employees of such companies are not public servants, it would be important to ensure that their interaction with members of the public is still guided by the principles of Batho Pele. This is a matter to be addressed through the service level agreements entered into with the security companies.

It was disturbing to observe that only Randfontein had service standards displayed. The importance of displaying service standards cannot be overemphasized. Citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they know what to expect. Furthermore, it was observed that only English language was used in Randfontein where service standards were displayed. Clearly, this could disadvantage people who do not understand English.

The inspection team also observed that there was generally a lack of on-site infrastructure for addressing citizens' complaints, queries and suggestions. There were no suggestion boxes or complaints registers at all visited service points. This undoubtedly makes it difficult for citizens to express their concerns with the quality of service delivery or even give recommendations for improving service delivery. However, at Johannesburg International Airport, Randfontein and Krugersdorp the inspection team was informed that toll free lines have been installed to address this aspect. The toll free number is 0800 601190 and it is connected to the Head Office line.

### **2.3.1.3 Observing staff**

To promote accountability, openness and transparency, staff should always wear their nametags whilst at work. Citizens should be able to remember the names of officials who assisted them. Wearing nametags further enables citizens to follow up on cases should a need arise. The inspection team observed that almost all staff members at the visited service points wore nametags. It is only at the Johannesburg International Airport where none of the staff wore nametags. This is of concern given the importance of this Airport as a major entry point into the country.

It was encouraging to note that at almost all service points, staff appeared to be friendly, professional and knowledgeable about their work. Front-line staff represent a very important element of the public service delivery chain as they interface directly with citizens. Perceptions and opinions about public service delivery are usually developed at this interface.

### 2.3.1.4 Talking to citizens/service users

Talking to citizens is important for inculcating a customer centric culture, and for monitoring and evaluating the attitudes of citizens towards service delivery. This assists the department to determine the needs of the citizens, and to improve service delivery accordingly.

The reaction that the team got from citizens varied from one service point to another. In Brakpan most interviewed citizens reported that they were generally satisfied with service delivery. In Krugersdorp there were no citizens at the time of inspection and in Marabastad the team did not interview service users. At the Johannesburg International Airport, Randfontein, and Faranani MPCCs citizens expressed displeasure. Such displeasure related largely to the following issues:

- **Access to service delivery points** – specifically relating to time traveled to reach service delivery points. Citizens still have to travel long distances to access services of the Department. Some interviewed citizens indicated that they would have preferred to have service points at the townships where they stay rather than to travel to the city center.
- **MPCCs** – after talking to a number of people outside the Home Affairs Offices at the MPCC in Alexandra, the inspection team established that many were not aware of the availability of the services provided by the Department of Home Affairs at the centre. The manager at the Home Affairs office at the MPCC in Alexandra, also confirmed that most citizens were indeed not aware of the existence of their services at this particular MPCC.

At the Faranani MPCC in Tsakane, citizens indicated that although people often came in large numbers for services, their experience was that the offices of Home Affairs were usually closed. When opened, services would still not be provided effectively because the office is not well resourced. The office employs one person, and it does not have necessary equipment such as a computer for capturing information. Citizens interviewed by the inspection team also raised the concern that documents they had applied for could not be delivered at the MPCCs due to unsafe conditions such as car hijackings.

- **Long queues** – of the 24 booths at the arrivals terminal of the Johannesburg International Airport, 17 were unmanned, and some service users indicated that they had been in the queues for arrivals for more than 3 hours. In Randfontein some citizens indicated that they had been in the queues for more than 1 hour with no one attending to them.
- **Turn around times for applications** – In Randfontein some clients indicated that they had returned to the offices more than five times without getting the documents they had applied for, and that no proper explanation had been given to them regarding when these documents (birth certificates, ID books, passports, and death certificates) would be available.

### 2.3.1.5 Talking to staff

When talking to staff, at most service points an indication was given that computers and other equipment at counters were adequate. However, it was generally felt that there was a shortage of front-line staff, leading to long queues and slower service delivery. In Krugersdorp, it was reported that staff shortages were a very serious concern given that the office serves people coming from some parts of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal who travel all the way in order to get better service.

At all service points staff indicated that lunch and other breaks are taken without disrupting the service flow. Staff also indicated that they were generally happy with the back office environment as it is conducive, and supports efficient service delivery. There is enough back-office staff to take care of duties like filing, sending documents to relevant places, etc.

The following are concerns that were raised by the staff:

- **Shortage of staff** – There is a shortage of front line staff to deal with the service demands at most service points and this results in congestion at the counter areas. At the Johannesburg International Airport nearly half of the counters were unmanned at peak time.
- **Grading of some posts** – At some service points, units are headed by staff who are at lower levels. For an example, in Marabastad some supervisors are at level 7. The Acting Head at the Johannesburg International Airport is at Assistant Director level. At both these service points, the staff felt that the scope, demands, and responsibilities of these posts necessitated appointment of personnel at higher levels.
- **Communication** – In Brakpan, the interviewed staff indicated that the line of communication between the provincial, regional and district offices is bureaucratic, and that internal problem solving is not well managed. Management at the Regional and Head Offices does not address complaints and concerns raised by staff.

It was however encouraging to learn from staff at the Johannesburg International Airport that communication between them, Head Office and stakeholders such as the South African Police Services' is open and good.

- **Performance assessment** – In Marabastad, staff reported that a Performance Management Development System (PMDS) is available but management is not familiar with it. Some managers do not understand their role in the implementation of the PMDS, and staff has not been assessed for some time. The staff that was interviewed indicated that this contributes to low staff morale.



- **Staff training** – In Marabastad and the Johannesburg International Airport it was reported that proper planning is not done to address the needs for staff training, and this negatively affects staff competence and performance.
- **Posts left vacant for a long time** – at some service points certain posts were said to have been vacant for more than 2 years, with no indication when they would be filled. For instance at the Johannesburg International Airport, the post of the Head of the Office has been vacant for more than 2, years with someone appointed in an acting capacity.
- **Delegations without authority** – staff felt that bureaucracy and red-tape regarding some administrative operations delayed decision making. District managers are not given sufficient authority to enable them to make decisions. For an example, in Krugersdorp toilets have to be repaired but a request has to be sent to the Head Office for authorization. It was felt that it would have been quicker if the district manager had the authority to approve such transactions. In Krugersdorp they have also waited for nametags from the Head Office for 2 years.
- **Corruption** – high levels of corruption were reported at the Johannesburg International Airport, with 18 immigration officers dismissed between 2004 and 2006. At the immigrations office in Marabastad, concern was raised by some staff members that using too many interns might expose the Department to increased counter corruption. Interns could be subjected to bribery by asylum applicants as they are not vetted.
- **Consultation with the community** – at most service points it was reported that consultation with service users is not done, leading to challenges in understanding community needs.
- **Safety and security** – Some staff felt that it is not safe for documents to be sent through the post office to the applicants as these might land in the hands of unintended recipients.
- **Refugees and immigration offices** – the inspection team was informed that there are only two offices dealing with first time asylum applications in the Gauteng province - one in Johannesburg, and another in Marabastad. The office in Johannesburg is not operational, leaving Marabastad to be the only functioning office dealing with new asylum applications in the entire Gauteng province. As a result, asylum seekers flock to this office. The office employs only 2 permanent staff members and a number of interns serving approximately 100 new asylum seekers per day. This office is encountering a number of challenges, amongst which are:

- a) the holding cells for illegal immigrants are too dirty and might be hazardous in terms of health conditions, and also embarrassing in terms of international obligations and standards;
- b) the catering budget for feeding those kept in the holding cells is not sufficient;
- c) the systems and services of this unit are not safeguarded from exploitation by criminals and syndicates. Corruption is therefore likely to occur;
- d) too many interns who are not well trained and lack professionalism. Furthermore, there is no close supervision of interns;
- e) interns are vulnerable to bribery by illegal immigrants. They lack commitment as they are not full time employees, and they are not vetted. This can lead to increased corruption and crime relating to aiding and abetting illegal immigrants, and illegal issuing of documents;
- f) there is a backlog of more than 100 000 asylum applications to deal with;
- g) there are people who take their chances and apply for asylum although they come from stable countries;
- h) SAPS sometimes destroy authentic documents and arrests legal immigrants. There is a need to train SAPS officials on how to deal with suspected illegal immigrants;
- i) minimum security measures taken to ensure safety of officials working at the holding cells for illegal immigrants waiting to be transported to Lindela;
- j) working conditions not conducive as the offices are dirty and messy due to overcrowding of the holding cells and too many people coming for applications;
- k) staff morale is too low;
- l) the absence of railing for passengers as they arrive at the Johannesburg International Airport, and the design for the reception areas for arrivals pose a major security problem. Passengers literally pour over immigration officials, putting such pressure on them that the implementation of some immigration policy requirements is put at risk. There are pillars in wrong places which conceal some arriving passengers from the security sight;

- m) the security at the issuing office was not adequate and there was uncertainty on who was supposed to issue the inspection team with the access cards; and
- n) the outsourcing of the Holding Facility at the Johannesburg International Airport for 'questionable' arrival passengers may open up embarrassing Human Rights concerns for the Department.

## 2.4 Inspections at Head Office

The inspection team met with management at the Head Office on 30 March 2006 and the focus was on the following areas:

### 2.4.1 Strategic planning

The PSC observed that the 9 Constitutional principles and values of public administration [Section 195 (1) of the Constitution] are not built into the Department's strategic plan for the current MTEF. Given its pivotal role in enabling the citizenry to enjoy their rights, the Department needs to align its corporate values and plans with the Constitutional principles and values of Public Administration. The Department needs to integrate Monitoring and Evaluation into its planning and execution – the PSC observed that this is not reflected in the current strategic plan. The Department's strategic plan does not include outcomes, it only goes as far as outputs.

### 2.4.2 Fraud and corruption prevention strategies

Management gave an indication that the most commonly reported cases of corruption are theft of IDs and immigration papers. However, it was reported that there is a strategy in place to address counter corruption. Senior management informed the inspection team that minimum infrastructure was currently being put in place together with measures to tighten the management of cases of misconduct. The Department is moving towards integrating all investigative units within various branches. Capacity to address issues of corruption is still a problem in these units.

### 2.4.3 Safety and security

The PSC inspection team pointed out that in its approach the Department needs to prioritise security issues. The inspection team regarded this as being important given that the Department is virtually risk prone. The Department's senior management informed the inspection team that there were internal discussions on this issue arising from lack of awareness of the Information Systems Security (ISS) in the department. Attempts are also underway to provide a coherent and consistent minimum-security package for the offices in the form of CCTV cameras and alarm systems.

#### 2.4.4 Information technology systems (IT)

The Department's senior management informed the inspection team that the IT system is being revamped with plans to put all missions abroad on an IT movement control system.

#### 2.4.5 Human Resources Issues

Critical intervention areas relating to capacity building, performance management, filling of posts and possible restructuring were discussed.

The inspection team raised the need for the Department to investigate the grading of some posts at the service points, especially those posts being occupied by people who have to take serious decisions, especially immigration officers.

The Department still faces a challenge of filling posts at lower levels. The inspection team was informed that as a result of financial constraints, the filling of the posts has been staggered over a three year period.

#### 2.4.6 State of immigration

The inspection team raised the need for the immigration services to be professionalized to entrench loyalty and raise staff's morale. The Department confirmed that attempts to address this issue have begun with the reorganization of its foreign consular offices. Regional managers of these offices will also be appointed at senior management level.

#### 2.4.7 Other issues

In addition to the above-mentioned areas of focus, the inspection team took the opportunity to raise other issues of importance with the management of the department.

The following were the keys issues raised:

- The inspection team pointed out its concern about the high rate of non-compliance in terms of financial disclosures by designated officials. The inspection team also advised that attention should be given to compliance with performance contracting by senior managers.
- The issue of challenges surrounding the use of interns in critical positions was also discussed, and it was agreed that the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) must come up with a relevant policy regarding management of the use of interns. The Department of Home Affairs should raise this issue up with DPSA.

- The inspection team also raised the need for the Department to avail its services at MPCCs, and to conduct information campaigns so that communities can be aware of the availability of these services. Management advised that a study has already been commissioned to look at improved access to the Department's services.

## 2.5 Recommendations

The PSC recommends that:

- 2.5.1 The Department needs to seriously consider concerns raised by staff about the need to decentralize some functions to the Regional Offices. However, in doing so, the Department should take cognizance of the fact that decentralization needs to be accompanied by the building of appropriate capacity at the local level.
- 2.5.2 The Department should strengthen its anti-corruption mechanisms. The PSC is aware of some of the Department's anti-corruption actions within the context of the National Anti-Corruption strategy. The concern expressed by the staff on the employment of interns in critical positions should be addressed. All interns to be employed to critical positions should be vetted and closely managed.
- 2.5.3 Approved posts should not be left vacant for a long time as this impacts negatively on service delivery.
- 2.5.4 The Department needs to employ floor walkers for escorting citizens to appropriate counters on arrival. This recommendation needs to be considered immediately as most service points are encountering problems of street agents. Creating and officially filling the posts of floor walkers at all service delivery points would minimize the involvement of street agents, and will address some of the corruption issues mentioned above.
- 2.5.5 The Department should further investigate the concerns raised by some staff that certain key posts are incorrectly graded, especially posts that require decision making and have supervisory responsibilities.
- 2.5.6 The Department should follow up on the performance management system and this should be linked to individual's development or training needs.
- 2.5.7 The involvement of the Department in the MPCCs should be strengthened. Offices at the MPCCs should be well equipped and staffed. Should a need arise these offices should be opened every day of the week. Citizens should be made aware of the availability of the Department's services and the time of operation should be displayed. This recommendation also applies to mobile units.

2.5.8 Urgent attention needs to be paid to the security matter, especially at the Johannesburg International Airport and Marabastad Immigration offices.

2.5.9 The situation at the Marabastad Immigration office should be addressed immediately as it can cause an international embarrassment; the holding cells are overcrowded and very dirty. The improvement of the on transit facility and location should be fast-tracked.

## 2.6 Conclusion

The inspections conducted in the Department of Home Affairs have generated critical information on service delivery in the sites that were visited. A report has been given to the EA and it is hoped that the Department will work on a targeted plan to address the challenges that have been raised and to conduct follow up monitoring in future. It is through such interventions and monitoring that the Department can accelerate its efforts to transform service delivery and put people first.

# Chapter Three

## Department of Labour

## 3.1 Introduction

The Department of Labour offers a range of critical services that support sound labour practices and seek to promote workplace productivity. The Department therefore is central to government's efforts to build a capable and effective workforce that contributes to growth and development. In addition, the Department impacts directly on the livelihoods of vulnerable members of the public through the administration of unemployment benefits. Given these considerations, the PSC felt that it would be important to include the Department in the pilot phase of the inspections. This chapter presents the findings obtained during the visit at the selected service delivery sites of the department.

## 3.2 Sites Visited

Inspections of service delivery sites of the Department were conducted between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2006. Six service points in Gauteng and the Head Office of the department were visited. The table below shows the sites visited in the Department of Labour.

**Table 2: Labour Sites**

Department of Labour Service Points	Date Visited
Kempton Park	6 March 2006
Randfontein	7 March 2006
Krugersdorp	7 March 2006
Brakpan	8 March 2006
Compensation House	10 March 2006
Soshanguve	10 March 2006
Head Office	30 March 2006

## 3.3 Key Findings

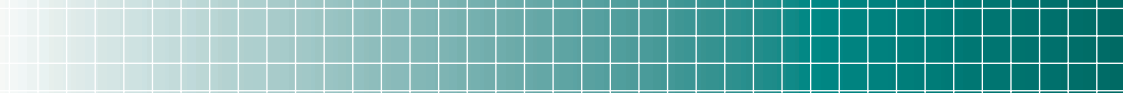
The following is a consolidated overview of the key findings and recommendations of the sites visited.

### 3.3.1 Findings at the Service Delivery Points

#### 3.3.1.1 Observing facilities

The inspection team observed that all visited service points had acceptable outside signage, which was clear and gave proper information. However, the inspection team observed that 50% of the visited sites did not have proper inside signage giving direction to appropriate





service counters. Lack of proper inside signage may create problems as citizens would end up going from one point to another trying to locate the specific counter from which to access services.

Business hours were displayed at all visited service points. Most of the service points displayed the services they offer as well. However, the inspection team discovered that with the exception of Compensation House<sup>4</sup>, the service points did not display the cost of rendered services.

The condition of furniture and buildings was generally found to be good in most of the service points. Furthermore, most of the visited sites had ramps for people with disabilities. However, the inspection team noticed that in Randfontein there were no fire escape exits, which is clearly a serious safety risk.

The majority of service points were found to be in a clean and welcoming condition. However, the condition of public toilets was found to be unacceptable at almost all the sites. The public toilets were messy and in a poor state showing that they are not well maintained. There were also no facilities for mothers with babies at most service points.

At most service points the inspection team observed that the air conditioning and access to water for the public were appropriate. Although most service points have adequate seating, this is not specifically designed for the disabled or for pensioners.

Parking appeared to be sufficient at all visited service points. Almost all visited service points seemed to be easily accessible for people using public transport, and are located in safe areas.

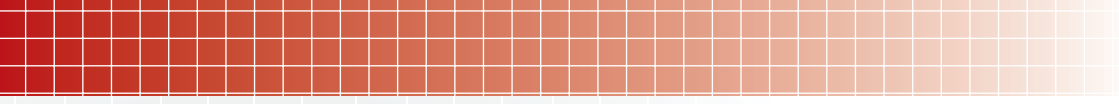
### **3.3.1.2 Assessing access to information**

In observing access to information, the inspection team noted that in most visited sites there are staff members guiding people to the right points on arrival. This makes it easier for the public to find their way around the building, and minimizes chances of people wasting time in wrong queues. All visited service delivery points also had adequately resourced help desks.

It was observed that 50% of the visited delivery points (Brakpan, Compensation House and Soshanguve) had displayed service standards. It was further observed that service standards are mostly reflected in English. This may disadvantage people who do not understand English.

The inspection team also observed that there was generally a lack of on-site infrastructure for addressing citizens' complaints, queries and suggestions. There were no suggestion boxes or complaints registers at most visited service points. This undoubtedly makes it difficult for citizens to express their concerns with the quality of service delivery, or even give recommendations for improving service delivery. However in Brakpan and Krugersdorp, there are complaints

<sup>4</sup> Compensation House is the centre from which the Occupational Health Services offered by the Department are administered.



registers and suggestion boxes. The inspection team was informed that queries are addressed and feedback is provided to complainants.

### **3.3.1.3 Observing staff**

To promote accountability, openness and transparency, staff should always wear their nametags whilst at work. Wearing nametags further enables citizens to follow up on cases should a need arise. The inspection team observed that staff members did not wear nametags at most visited service points. It was only in Brakpan and Randfontein where the staff wore nametags.

The front-line staff, interface directly with citizens. It was encouraging to note that at all visited service points, staff appeared to be friendly, professional and knowledgeable. Citizens' assessment of public service delivery primarily occurs at this interface. Positive experiences developed during this interface increase the confidence that clients have in the service.

### **3.3.1.4 Talking to citizens/service users**

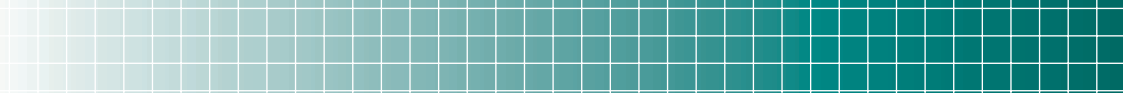
Talking to citizens is important for determining what satisfies them, what is working or not working and what areas of service delivery should be improved. Consulting with citizens also enables the Department to modify unrealistic expectations.

The reaction that the team got from citizens varied from one service point to another. In Kempton Park and Soshanguve, interviewed citizens complained about the amount of time they had to spend waiting before being served. This was mostly attributed to the fact that some of the public servants are very slow when rendering services. Although the offices are supposed to open at 8h00 in Kempton Park, some citizens indicated they had arrived at 8h45 only to find the offices still closed. However, at all service points interviewed citizens generally reported that they were satisfied with the quality of services they were getting. At the majority of the service points citizens also reported that the offices are easy to reach using public transport.

At Compensation House, some citizens that were interviewed complained that the service was supposed to be free but consultants charged them for assisting in completing the forms. The Department needs to address this issue as some citizens believe that these consultants are part of the staff. Indications were also given by some clients that Labour Centres in their areas did not function properly as a result they had to travel long distances to Pretoria to ensure that their applications were being processed.

### **3.3.1.5 Talking to staff**

When talking to staff at most service points an indication was given that computers and other equipment at counters were adequate.



Staff also indicated that lunch and other breaks are taken without disrupting the service flow. The inspection team, however, observed that the service delivery flow was disrupted in Kempton Park as most staff members were on break, and only one person was at the counter.

Only one service point (Randfontein), reported staff shortages. It was indicated that some posts were abolished following a recent job evaluation exercise.

At almost all the service points, staff indicated that they were happy with the back office environment as it was conducive and supportive of efficient service delivery. They felt that there was enough back-office staff to take care of duties like filing, and sending documents to relevant places.

### 3.4 Inspections at Head Office

The inspection team met with management at the Head Office on 30 March 2006. The discussions centred on the following issues:

#### 3.4.1 Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF)

There is a need to explore how the UIF can be 'revamped' to promote the creation of a society that is not dependent on the fund, but one whose members can be re-absorbed into the labour market.

#### 3.4.2 Service Delivery Organization

It was indicated to the inspection team that plans are currently being developed to re-organize the Department into a better service delivery organization. The process would involve a strategic shift in the manner in which the Department previously operated. Service delivery is going to be process driven, and resources will be redirected into 3 pillars of service delivery, namely, Human Resources Development, Automation, and Partnerships.

#### 3.4.3 Creation of Agencies

The Department also intends to 'agencify' some of the services it provides. This would involve decentralizing some services with an aim of improving service delivery, and enhancing access to the Department's services.

#### 3.4.4 Occupational Health Services

It was indicated that the Department is involved in integrating Occupational Health Services competencies with the Department of Minerals and Energy, and Health.

## 3.5 Recommendations

The PSC recommends that:

- 3.5.1 Negotiations with Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) about arranging for the Department of Labour's services to be availed at the Faranani MPCC in Brakpan should be hastened.
- 3.5.2 The Department needs to build the nine Constitutional principles governing Public Administration into its strategic plan. This could be done by ensuring that the strategic plan addresses the key provisions such as the effectiveness and efficiency, public participation, and the promotion of professional ethics.
- 3.5.3 There is a need to review the effectiveness of labour centres to ensure that they improve the manner in which they help the public in the administration of application forms for the Compensation Fund.
- 3.5.4 The Department needs to interrogate its research capacity, and specifically look at the impact of its policies and stated goals – whether these are yielding the desired results.
- 3.5.5 Citizens should be made aware of the difference between using consultants and officials in terms of the costs involved.

## 3.6 Conclusion

The Department of Labour is one of the critical role players in government's efforts of accelerating growth and development. The findings from the pilot inspections raise important issues which the Department should consider when reflecting on ways through which to intensify its service delivery programmes. A report containing the findings and recommendations has already been given to the Minister of Labour, and it is hoped that these will be pursued through specific action plans as well as follow up monitoring processes.

# Chapter Four

Department of Housing,  
Gauteng Province

## 4.1 Introduction

The provision of quality housing is one of the critical services within government's programme of creating a better life for all. The Gauteng Department of Housing was therefore identified as one of the important institutions to be included in the PSC's inspections pilot. This chapter presents the findings obtained during the visit at the selected service delivery sites of the department.

## 4.2 Sites Visited

Inspections of service delivery sites of the Department of Housing (Gauteng province) were conducted between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2006. The table below shows the sites visited in the Department of Housing, Gauteng.

**Table 3: Housing Sites**

Department of Housing Service Points	Date Visited
Diepsloot Housing Support Centre	4 April 2006
Daveyton Customer Care Centre	5 April 2006
Mogale City – Local Municipality	10 April 2006
Department of Housing: Customer Support Centre	11 April 2006
City of Tshwane Housing Division	12 April 2006

## 4.3 Key Findings

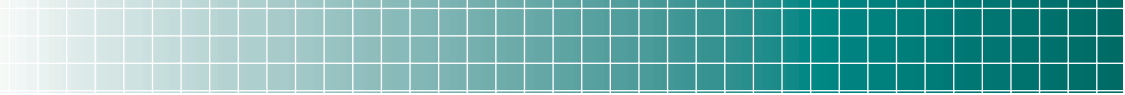
The following is a consolidated overview of the key findings and recommendations of the sites visited.

### 4.3.1 Findings at the Service Delivery Points

#### 4.3.1.1 Observing facilities

The inspection team observed that at Daveyton Customer Centre, Mogale City Local Municipality and at the Customer Care Centre at Head Office, outside and inside signage was acceptable. The signage was legible, and gave appropriate information. Proper signage improves access to a service point. Citizens are able to recognize the service points as well as the correct counters inside the building.

Business hours and services offered were reflected at the majority of the visited service points. There were also people explaining to citizens how to apply for the various services.



At almost all visited service points, the cost of rendered services was not displayed. It is very important to inform service users whether there is a charge or not for a service. This encourages more use of the service if it is for free or if there is minimal charge. On the other hand, displaying cost of services removes any potential abuse in that corrupt public servants may not be able to charge the public for services that are free. Such transparency also helps to remove false expectations in cases where there are high charges that may not be affordable to some users.

The furniture and condition of buildings were generally found to be in good condition at most service points. This creates an environment, which promotes effective and efficient performance by employees, and creates a welcoming environment for service users.

Almost all visited service points were found not to be user friendly for people with disabilities. A number of the buildings did not have ramps for people with disabilities.

All visited service points were clean. The inspection team observed that toilet facilities were in an acceptable condition at most service points. The facilities were clean and well maintained.

At almost all visited points, staff indicated that they were happy with their safety while at the service point location. However, staff in Diepsloot indicated that they felt unsafe in the area and that although this has been reported to the Head Office, no indication has been given regarding installation of security systems.

#### **4.3.1.2 Assessing access to information**

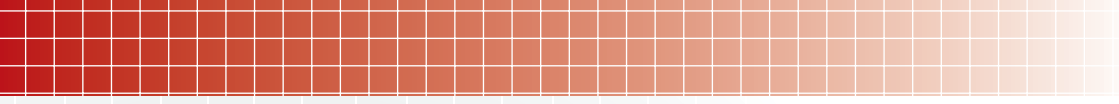
It was pleasing to observe that all visited sites had dedicated staff guiding people to correct counters on arrival. This is one way of improving access to correct service points.

It was however, disturbing to observe that none of the visited service points had service standards displayed. The Head Office Customer Care Centre, had ISO (International Organization for Standardization) standards displayed. Compliance with ISO requirements promotes the credibility of an organization. However, these may be too technical and not easily understood by citizens.

All visited service points had information/help desks that were stocked with appropriate forms and material. Making forms and other material available at the help desks simplifies the delivery chain. Citizens are made aware of the service delivery processes and information required from them in order to access a service.

The inspection team observed that there was generally a lack of on-site infrastructure for addressing citizens' complaints, queries and suggestions. Most visited service points did not have complaints registers and suggestion boxes. However, at Diepsloot Housing Support Centre and





at the Head Office Customer Centre there were complaints registers and suggestion boxes. Lack of on-site infrastructure for addressing citizens' complaints and suggestions undoubtedly makes it difficult for citizens to lodge their complaints regarding the quality of service, or even to give recommendations for improving service delivery. However, at the Daveyton Customer Centre and the Head Office Customer Centre, the inspection team was informed that there are toll free lines catering for customer complaints and suggestions.

#### **4.3.1.3 Observing staff**

To promote accountability, transparency and openness, staff should always wear their nametags at work. Wearing nametags further enables citizens to follow up on cases should a need arise. It was observed by the inspection team that staff did not wear nametags at almost all visited sites. It is only in Diepsloot where staff wore nametags.

However, it was pleasing to note that at all visited points, staff appeared to be friendly, professional and knowledgeable. It is encouraging for citizens to be served by courteous and knowledgeable staff. It creates a perception that the service about to be delivered is reliable and increases the citizens' confidence in the service.

#### **4.3.1.4 Talking to citizens**

Talking to citizens is important for shaping more effective service improvement strategies and it deepens understanding of public service delivery. Talking to citizens also ensures that developed service standards are realistic and maintained.

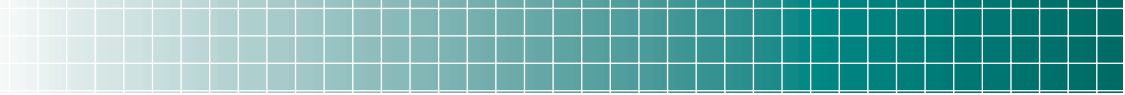
Generally, interviewed citizens indicated that they were satisfied with the service delivery. At all visited service points, citizens reported that the waiting time for services was acceptable. Most of them also said that they were satisfied with the distance or travel time taken to reach the service points.

However, some interviewed citizens indicated that the turnaround time for application was too long. It was reported that time taken between the submission of the first application and the delivery of houses was too long. Other people requested for information to be displayed in other languages (not just English). Some felt that the Department should consider upgrading local service points in order to save time and costs of traveling to the city center.

#### **4.3.1.5 Talking to staff**

Staff at the majority of service points felt that the counter areas were appropriate for effective and efficient service delivery. Many also said that they were fairly happy with the availability of supporting resources, although staff in Diepsloot and Mogale City had concerns about the lack of equipment such as computers.





At most service points, staff indicated that they were coping with the load of work. It was reported that lunch breaks and other breaks are taken without disrupting the flow of work. However, in Diepsloot concerns were raised about staff shortages, and that officials sometimes could not even take their lunch breaks.

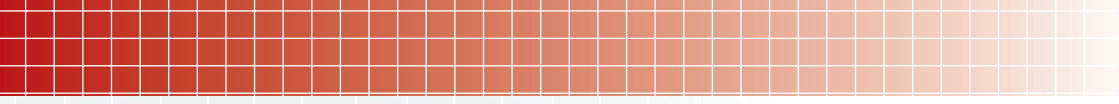
The following are concerns that were raised by the staff at different service points:

- In Diepsloot where the staff serves a densely populated area with lots of housing related challenges, it was reported that there is inadequate equipment to support communication and service delivery e.g. use of e-mail and fax machines.
- The staff in Diepsloot also indicated that they feel unsafe in the area, and that no indication has been given regarding installation of security systems.
- There is a shortage of staff in Diepsloot. A Community Development Worker (CDW) assists the Centre in raising awareness about housing related issues, some of which may create problems if left unattended for a long time.
- In Mogale City the back office environment was reported not to be conducive to the provision of effective support to front-line staff. The filing system is not well maintained, and files with important information are left lying on the floor.
- In Mogale City there is also continuous malfunctioning of computers which leads to backlogs and citizens feel unhappy about this.

## 4.4 Recommendations

The PSC recommends that:

- 4.4.1 The Department of Housing should follow up on the suggestion given by citizens regarding upgrading service points in the townships and the usage of understandable language in filling the forms. The Department should consider translating issued documents into the language predominantly used in the area.
- 4.4.2 A basic security system should be installed at the Diepsloot Centre.
- 4.4.3 The Head Office should consider upgrading IT systems in Diepsloot and Mogale City to enable staff to perform their duties and to address the issue of backlogs. Means of communication should also be upgraded, for example installation of fax machines and e-mail facilities.



4.4.4 The Department should consider the creation of more posts at the Diepsloot Centre to ensure the Centre can deal with the work load.

## 4.5 Conclusion

There are very critical issues that have emerged through the pilot inspections that were conducted in the Gauteng Department of Housing. In its efforts to provide decent shelter and build sustainable human settlements, it is hoped that the Department will reflect on the findings and recommendations contained in this report and accordingly address the gaps that have been identified. It is further hoped that the Department will also draw lessons from these inspections regarding inspections as a monitoring mechanism and use them in future in its programmes. A report on the pilot inspections has already been submitted to the EA.

# Chapter Five

Department of Social  
Development,  
Free State Province

## 5.1 Introduction

The Department of Social Development provides social services that contribute towards the protection of communities from vulnerability and poverty. Its social security services such as old age pension and child support grants are among the most important mechanisms through which government reduces income poverty in society. It is against this background that the Free State Department of Social Development was considered for inclusion in the PSC's inspections pilot. This chapter presents the findings obtained during the visit at the selected service delivery sites of the department.

## 5.2 Sites Visited

The inspections of service delivery sites of the Department conducted between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of June 2006. A total of 10 (ten) sites were selected for Social Security Services and 5 (five) sites for Development Projects<sup>5</sup>. The table below shows the list of service points that were visited.

**Table 4: Social Development Sites**

Department of Social Development, Free State	
Social Security Services	Development Projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cornelia 1</li><li>• Edenville</li><li>• Koppies</li><li>• Virginia</li><li>• Koffiefontein</li><li>• Botshabelo</li><li>• Phuthaditjhaba Community Hall – Qwaqwa</li><li>• Bolata Tribal Office – Qwaqwa</li><li>• Petrusburg</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kgatelopele Project</li><li>• Ikaheng Bakery</li><li>• Atlehang Multi-Purpose Centre</li><li>• Beyang Bana Pele and Bloemfontein Crèches</li><li>• Itekeng Support Group</li><li>• Mphatlalatsane</li></ul>

## 5.3 Key Findings

The following is a consolidated overview of the key findings and recommendations of the sites visited. For purposes of facilitating analysis and reporting, the findings and recommendations have been organized according to the two key service delivery areas of Social Security and Development Projects.

<sup>5</sup> The Department is involved in a range of development projects targeting children, youth, women, the elderly and people with disabilities

## 5.3.1 Findings at the Social Security Services Sites

### 5.3.1.1 Observing facilities

Generally, the condition of buildings of all social security sites visited was acceptable and clean. All the buildings were spacious enough to serve the social security grant receivers, with the exception of Koppies and Edenville, where halls are small and not able to accommodate the number of beneficiaries. For this reason, some beneficiaries had to queue outside in the cold despite the number of available seats inside the hall. At Petrusburg, pay-outs were made in a small church building while the bigger community hall where citizens were usually served was being renovated.

The furniture, consisting of a number of chairs for grant receivers and tables for All Pay Personnel and Social Development personnel, was in a good condition. There were extra chairs available at some sites, especially where the hall was small. Business hours, signage and the cost of services were not displayed at all sites, except the odd "All Pay" sign at the entrance of three of the sites visited.

Although the conditions of most buildings could be described as satisfactory, some presented a number of health risks and were not accessible to the wheel-chair bound and the frail. At Virginia, for example, a crèche is run on the same grounds as the pay-out point, thus presenting a potential safety risk for both the crèche staff and the children in case of robbery and shootings. The children can also be held hostage by people aiming to rob the pay-out point.

The fencing around almost all visited sites was satisfactory. However, a security risk was observed at Cornelia 1, where there is no perimeter fencing at the entrance gate. The hawkers had their wares strewn all over the ground around the hall. This also made access to the hall difficult as social grant beneficiaries had to weave their way through those goods. At Edenville however, a perimeter fence was put around part of the main entrance to the yard of the hall to ensure easy access, and also as a safety precaution.

The toilets at all sites were not adequate to serve the number of social security beneficiaries. The condition of toilets at most sites was a health risk as they were found to be filthy and some had pipe leakages. Furthermore, all toilets inside the buildings of the sites visited were inaccessible to wheel-chair bound people as they were upstairs. There were also no disability-friendly toilet facilities. At Edenville and Virginia, for example, there were fewer toilets that served a large number of people, with about 2 397 people having to use 6 toilets. The 2 outside toilets in Virginia were also leaking, without toilet seats, and one of them had no doors. There was also a leaking pipe at Edenville, and there were also four toilets serving 1 548 people. The two in the hall were upstairs, thus inaccessible to the wheelchair-bound, while the last two were used exclusively by the crèche. The majority of sites were generally wheel chair –friendly. However, the ground at the entrance gate of the Cornelia 1 did not allow easy access for



people with disabilities. The ramp at Virginia was also too steep for wheel chair-bound grant beneficiaries.

There were no facilities for mothers with babies at all the visited sites. Water was made available to beneficiaries but there were 2 taps per site visited. All visited sites did not have air-conditioning or heating equipment.

All sites visited were located along transport routes. They were accessible to the beneficiaries, and were generally safe due to the presence of security personnel. Service at Social Security pay-point was generally found to be quick.

### **5.3.1.2 Assessing access to information**

In all the social security sites visited, there were members of staff with nametags who guided people, some of whom were pension committee members. All sites had staffed information/help desks stocked with appropriate forms and with the requisite personnel to assist beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries with information. A queue marshal inside the hall saw to the smoothness of the pay-out process. The exception was at Virginia, where clients interviewed were critical of the role of the marshal. No service charter or service standards were displayed in all the social security sites visited.

All sites visited except one (Petrusburg) did not have suggestion boxes. Clients were not informed before-hand about the process of laying complaints. At Petrusburg a form was available for filing of a complaint. There was however no indication of how the complaint would be dealt with once the form was filled in. However, in one instance, at Phuthaditjhaba Community Hall, complaints were lodged with the Regional Office of the Department of Social Development. Staff from the Head Office of Social Development often visited sites to attend to some of the problems raised.

### **5.3.1.3 Observing staff**

The inspection team observed that all staff members at all sites visited were friendly and helpful. They also appeared knowledgeable and professional in carrying out their duties. The vigilance of the security staff was noticeable when all inspectors had to be checked with their superiors before being allowed access to the site. This was understandable given the security risks involved in their work.

It was also pleasing to observe that all staff at Social Security sites had nametags and/or wore uniforms. Any form of staff identification facilitates service delivery especially in situations where service users are not sure of the processes.

#### **5.3.1.4 Talking to citizens/service users**

Members of the community interviewed were generally satisfied with the services they received. On average, they waited for about thirty minutes to be served. However, at Virginia, Koppies and Edenville people complained bitterly about the waiting period. Some indicated that they had to wait for one to two hours to be served. They attributed this to the limited capacity of the hall, large numbers of people receiving social security grants, and inefficient queue marshals. However, at Bolata people indicated that by eleven o'clock they had already received their grants.

Since all social security pay-points were apparently carefully chosen, there was unanimous agreement among the people interviewed that they could mostly walk to the sites. Almost all sites were situated along main public transport routes, and this further increased access to clients. The inspection team was informed that almost all the sites are situated within 5km radius from all beneficiaries' residences. People on wheel-chairs could be observed moving to the sites unaided at Cornelia, Edenville and Virginia. On the whole, the queues moved reasonably fast, according to the citizens interviewed.

#### **5.3.1.5 Talking to staff**

Staff members at the social security pay-points were generally satisfied with their work. The appropriate numbers of staff were deployed to assist citizens accordingly. Staff took turns to go for breaks with no disruption of services. At some sites, All Pay staff indicated that they were always linking telephonically to their supervisors in case of doubt or to ask for any form of support when needed.

Staff also generally acknowledged that there was enough equipment and furniture for all sites to perform their services as required. For example, All Pay had generators at all sites ready in cases of power failure. However, at some pay-points staff believed Social Development had not met "its part of the bargain" with regard to facilities at the different pay-points, which were mostly not satisfactory. This especially relates to the maintenance of physical facilities at most pay-points.

#### **5.3.1.6 General observations**

It was observed that doors for entry and exit at all sites remained open for the duration of the pay-out. This meant that in cold weather the halls or pay point venues would be cold. Besides this, all sites were not air-conditioned. Such lack of air-conditioning could explain why doors remained open throughout the process of paying out grants to beneficiaries. Some of the sites did not have ceilings, and only two taps in the hall yard were available, including one in the toilet inside the hall at all sites visited.

There were no facilities for mothers with babies at all sites. When this was probed at Virginia, the security supervisor indicated that people normally leave their babies at home with neighbours or relatives.

There was ample parking space around most sites. At Cornelia and Edenville however, parking space was limited by hawkers' wares strewn around the hall precincts. In general service points are located in townships where grant beneficiaries live. However, it cannot be established whether these areas are safe. Comprehensive security and safety standards are upheld by All Pay, which has ensured that access to the pay point is controlled. For this purpose, an average of eight heavily armed security personnel guarded each site until all beneficiaries had been served.

All Pay staff at some sites indicated that they were trained in applying first-aid, but were not sure how they would react to cases needing more professional medical assistance. They also indicated the need for a medical emergency vehicle at the sites.

### 5.3.2 Recommendations

The PSC recommends that:

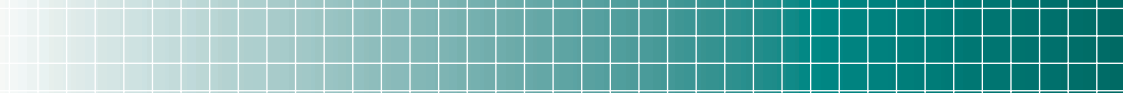
- 5.3.2.1 The Department of Social Development (Free State) consults with the municipalities at Virginia and Cornelia 1, to lower the steep ramp in the former, and to ensure wheelchair access at the gate in the latter.
- 5.3.2.2 Tents should be used for beneficiaries who would be waiting to receive grants in the main hall, especially at Koppies and Vredefort where the halls were found to be too small.
- 5.3.2.3 Hawkers at Cornelia 1 should be moved further and a safety perimeter barrier or fence be put up around the main gate.
- 5.3.2.4 An alternative venue for the crèche at Virginia pay-point should be sought. Alternatively, as the safety measure the crèche should not operate during the days when pay-outs are made at the venue.
- 5.3.2.5 Management should send letters of commendation to the Department of Social Development and All Pay staff who are doing an excellent job at the sites visited.

## 5.4 Development Project Findings

### 5.4.1 Observing facilities

Most development projects operated in generally unacceptable physical surroundings, except





the Bloemfontein Crèche which had a well-maintained physical infrastructure. The crèche is divided into different rooms for the different age groups of children, each with functioning air-conditioning system. The situation was, however, different at the Beyang Bana Pele crèche which instead operated from a shack. The shack is divided into a playroom and a kitchen which are adjacent to each other. Gas stoves are used to cook for children and are located in that same kitchen. This could be hazardous to the lives of the children in case of fire. Furthermore, children of different age groups are accommodated in one room.

The Kgatelopele project operated from the Moroka High School and Thaba Nchu Sun roads intersection in the open. The physical address of the Atlehang Multi-Purpose Centre which is reflected on record was different from the one the inspectors were taken to. It was noted that the Centre is located at a former residential building under the Mangaung Municipality and the building is poor in terms of safety. There were also broken pieces of window-panes apparently from a recent burglary, strewn on the floor. At Ikaheng Bakery, the room was mainly occupied by large baking ovens and had very limited space for movement. There were leaking water pipes, and filthy stagnant water next to the entrance. The facilities were not conducive to the kind of services provided by the project.

At almost all visited sites, outside signage was not visible except for Beyang Bana Pele and Bloemfontein crèches, and Ikaheng Bakery. However, cost of services was not displayed at all visited sites. Office hours were also not displayed at almost all visited development project sites.

Some development projects did not have offices. The Mphatlalatsane project had only one computer and did not have furniture. All their records are kept in boxes lined up against the wall. The condition of furniture at the Atlehang Multi-Purpose Centre was generally not acceptable. The furniture at both the Bloemfontein and Beyang Bana Pele crèches was in a generally good condition.

#### 5.4.2 Assessing access to information

With the exception of the Mphatlalatsane and Bloemfontein Crèches, the inspection team could not find evidence that the development projects provide clients with access to information. There were no indications on how the public was made aware of the services provided by the development projects. The Mphatlalatsane Crèche had regular contact with the youth at the four nearby schools. Brochures and pamphlets are distributed at these schools. The Bloemfontein Crèche had a reception desk where information could be readily obtained.

There appeared to be a gap in the flow of information from the Department of Social Development to the development projects. It was apparent that most members of the development projects were not well-informed about how they should administer and account for funding from the Department.

### 5.4.3 Observing staff

It was pleasing to observe that all the staff at the visited development projects were friendly and displayed generally acceptable levels of professionalism. The supportive and friendly attitude towards children by the staff at both crèches could easily be observed. However, all members of staff did not wear nametags or any form of identification.

### 5.4.4 Talking to citizens

Citizens interviewed regarding the provision of services by the visited development projects were generally satisfied with the service provided. It was however not possible to establish the level of satisfaction with the services of Kgatelopele Project, mainly due to its location. Several people however, stopped to check their products, and showed interest in them.

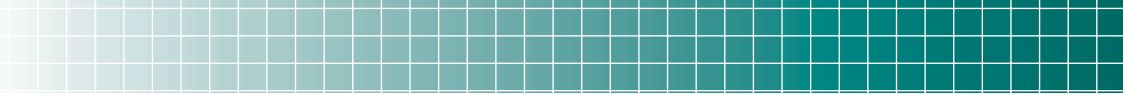
Moreover, parents whose children attended Bloemfontein Crèche were particularly impressed with the level of preparation of their children for the school by the crèche. This was later confirmed by the staff at this crèche who indicated that they received regular positive feedback from schools where children from the crèche attended. Parents of Beyang Bana Pele Crèche regarded the crèche as safe for their children and convenient for them because they can go to work knowing that their children are being taken good care of.

### 5.4.5 Talking to staff

The reaction that the team got from the staff varied from one development project to another. Generally, the staff was not satisfied with the nature and level of support they received from the Department of Social Development. This included funding, training and their development needs. There was also a general feeling that the Department does not adequately monitor and evaluate the development projects continuously so as to ensure value for money.

The following are concerns that were raised by the staff:

- The Kgatelopele Project Staff complained mainly about lack of visible support for them by the Department of Social Development. The areas they needed assistance in were financial and project management. Though the project co-ordinator indicated that the R1.6 million allocated to the project was also for the training needs of project members, it was not clear how this training would be organized, including the role of the Department of Social Development in this regard.
- The Ikaheng Bakery Project members were extremely unhappy about the rental and electricity money they had to pay to the NG Kerk which is the care-taker of the building. They believed that, since the building from which they operate was declared a Community



Asset, they should not pay for occupancy and electricity. They also alleged that the NG Kerk secures funding from elsewhere, using the names of the tenant companies without their consent. They also believed that the rental they paid was exorbitant compared to the money they received from the Department of Social Development.

- With regard to the Atlehang Multi-Purpose Centre, the members were of the opinion that the Department of Social Development treated non-governmental organizations (NGOs) unequally, and that other NGOs “got better deals” from the Department. The staff at the Centre also expressed an interest in running a nursing home for patients in the future.
- The Itekeng Support Group members showed great enthusiasm in their work. However, they were hampered by the fact that they do not have an office from which they operate. The Department of Social Development only paid stipends for five members of the group. As a show of their commitment, these five members agreed to share their stipend with the other five, and all of them received R250.00 per month. They also complained about the disparity in stipends between volunteers in the Department of Social Development and those in the Department of Health, with the latter allegedly receiving stipends of up to R1000.00 per month. The group has volunteered to make bookings for CD4 count patients with the nearby Pelonomi Hospital since this takes long. The other issue is that they do not have a vehicle to use when making their rounds to the various homes of their patients, since the area they needed to cover was fairly extensive.
- Mphatlalatsane staff complained about the apparent lack of support from the Department of Social Development, especially with regard to training and development on financial and project management. As indicated earlier, the physical facilities of this project were not conducive to quality service delivery on their side. Neither did the office environment afford the group an opportunity to utilise their skills optimally.
- With regard to Beyang Bana Pele, the staff complained about the fact that they did not have a building and have been operating from a shack since 1992. They also indicated that there was a general lack of support from the Department of Social Development. Training in project and financial management are regarded as crucial to them, and they request the Department of Social Development to provide this at least once a quarter. It seemed that the members of the project were coping with the work of taking care of and teaching children. They were sometimes assisted by students from tertiary institutions doing their teaching practicals. They also needed assistance from the Department of Social Development with electricity and telephone installation.
- The Bloemfontein Crèche appeared to be well-staffed. The facilities appeared well-managed and maintained, and staff took turns to take care of children on the playground. There seemed to be support from front and back-office staff which was provided by

relevant staff members. Staff members were confident that the crèche was meeting its objectives because they received positive feedback from the schools where the children from their crèche were admitted.

#### 5.4.6 General observations

Apart from the observations above, a number of general observations were made.

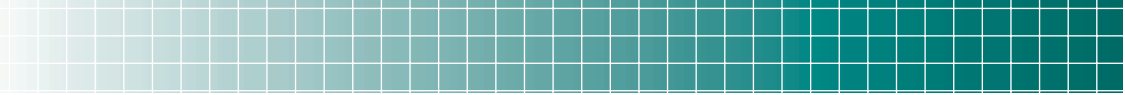
Since most of the development projects were either not operating from a building, had makeshift structures or had rented space on someone else's property, it was not possible on the whole to make general observations with regard to facilities.

All the development sites visited did not have air-conditioning or heating system. In general, the facilities were barely adequate for the minimum services that these projects should provide. A meaningful assessment of the facilities could therefore not be made. What was evident however, was that facilities, where they existed, needed an extensive makeover, and that there is also an urgent need to set up facilities for these projects so that they should provide value for the money allocated by the Department of Social Development. It also appeared that the Department of Social Development did not give the necessary continuous support to the projects. It appeared that there was limited or no monitoring of the projects by the Department. All projects also seemed to be in need of training in the areas of financial and project management.

### 5.5 Recommendations

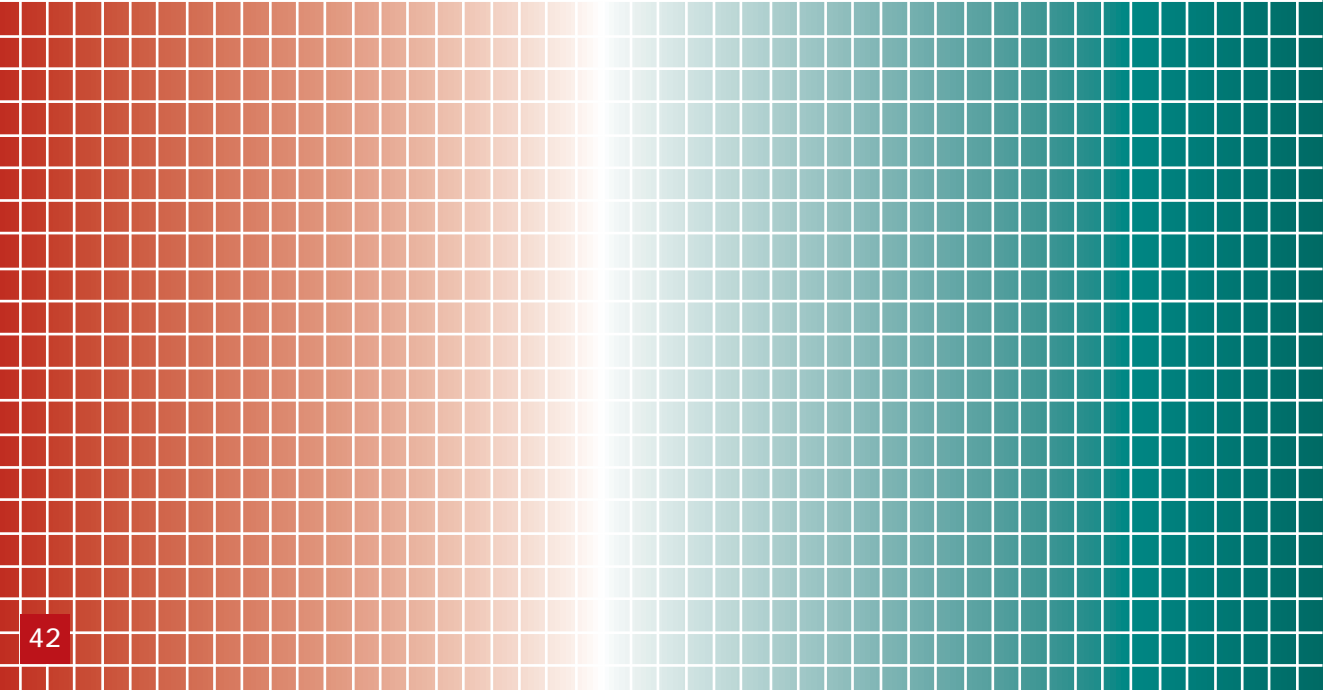
The PSC recommends that :

- 5.5.1 All development projects should be assisted to obtain offices or buildings, especially by using the funding allocated to them.
- 5.5.2 Ikaheng Bakery's surroundings should be attended to and upgraded so as to benefit the services provided by the project.
- 5.5.3 All development projects provide the public with information on their services. The Department of Social Development should post information on these projects free of charge on its website. The Department should also consider providing training for the development projects on how to share and disseminate information to the public.
- 5.5.4 The Ikaheng project should be provided with the necessary support by the Department of Social Development so that they should be able to erect their building in due course.

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- 5.5.5 The Department designs and provides the necessary training and support to the projects, especially in the areas of project and financial management.
- 5.5.6 The Department of Social Development investigates the allegedly extra stipends given to volunteers in the Department of Health volunteers and others in the Department of Social Development.
- 5.5.7 The Department of Social Development should explore ways of using stipends to recognize the great commitment shown by the Itekeng Support group to their work.
- 5.5.8 The location of the crèches in the different townships should be assessed with a view to merge some of them into institutions that are conveniently located to serve people in those areas. The Department of Social Development could then use the savings from such a process to explore public private partnerships with the owners of the crèches. Should this route be pursued, the Department would need to set minimum acceptable standards with regard to nutrition, qualifications of educators, and learning material for the children. The Department may also do this amalgamation together with the Department of Education's Early Childhood Development Programme so as not to duplicate services unnecessarily.

## 5.6 Conclusion

The services provided by the Department of Social Development are among the most critical in terms of the eradication of poverty in the country. It is therefore important that these services are provided as effectively and efficiently as possible. The pilot inspections have generated useful monitoring information on how service delivery is progressing in a selection of sites, and it would be important for the Department to engage critically with this information and to follow up on the recommendations made. A report on the pilot inspections has already been submitted to the EA.



# Chapter Six

## Conclusion and overall recommendations

## 6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall conclusion and recommendations from all the four departments that were visited during the inspections. The recommendations contained in this chapter are generic and apply to all the four departments. Each of the departments has already been individually informed of their specific recommendations as the PSC believes that inspections give insights which must be immediately conveyed to the responsible Executing Authorities. Inspections are therefore different from the other in-depth research activities that the PSC carries out as part of its oversight work because their findings and recommendations can become made available within a relatively short period of time.

The results of these inspections are based on the inspectors' observations and information received from staff and citizens at the service points. This exercise has yielded first hand information about the state of service delivery since visits to the service points were unannounced.

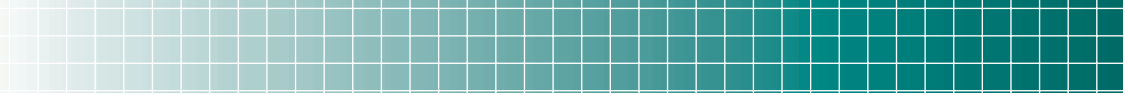
## 6.2 Conclusion

It is important for government to ensure that services are brought closer to the people. One way of doing that is through the establishment of MPCCs. These MPCCs should however be well secured and equipped. The communities should be made aware of the services being rendered within the MPCCs. However, it became apparent during the inspections conducted by the PSC that not much work has been done to ensure that all Departments within the MPCCs have fully equipped offices with staff, and that rendered services are displayed for the knowledge of citizens.

Studies show that most departments still do not comply with the requirements of the Batho Pele White Paper which was proclaimed in 1997. The purpose of the Batho Pele White Paper is to provide a policy framework and a practical implementation strategy for the transformation of public service. The Batho Pele White Paper requires departments to set standards which should be published and communicated to the citizens. Service standards are a means of educating citizens about services provided by a Department. With the service standards citizens are made aware of where, how and when will services be delivered, and citizens' expectations are managed. It was disappointing to observe that at most service delivery sites service standards were not set and communicated to citizens.

It was also established through the inspections that most service delivery points did not have visible on-site infrastructure for addressing citizens' complaints, queries and suggestions. Almost all visited service points did not have complaints registers and suggestion boxes. This makes it difficult for citizens to lodge complaints regarding the quality of service, or even to give recommendations for improving service delivery.





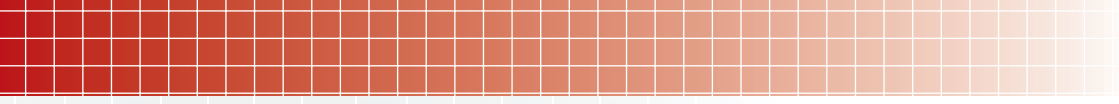
Information from both the front-line staff and citizens is important because it gives opinions on the levels of service delivery. The front-line staff have an opportunity of experiencing a range of customers' views and have practical knowledge of providing service. With good internal communication, the front-line staff can be able to convey their experiences regarding possible service delivery improvement areas. This is also true with information received from citizens. Consultation with citizens is key to service delivery because information identifying areas of improvement is solicited from the user perspective. At most visited service delivery points it was indicated that there were no standardized processes for engaging citizens.

During inspections a number of areas requiring close attention for service delivery improvement were identified. With this information it is hoped that the Departments will undertake focused and concerted action plans.

### 6.3 General Recommendations

The inspection reports submitted to the individual departments contain detailed department-specific recommendations that require the attention of Senior Management and EAs. The following are generic recommendations that apply to all the four departments:

- 6.3.1 Head Offices of Departments need to assist Regional Offices or service delivery sites in developing the service standards so that citizens are informed of the level of service they should expect. Service standards should be developed and written in languages predominantly spoken in specific areas. Once developed, service standards should then be appropriately placed where they can be easily seen by citizens. The Head Offices should thereafter closely monitor compliance.
- 6.3.2 Even though some service points have toll free numbers, suggestion boxes and complaint registers should still be made available and placed at visible points at all service delivery points as some people cannot easily access phones. Moreover, some people may want to lodge their complaints immediately after occurrence of an event that leads to dissatisfaction.
- 6.3.3 Name tags must be worn by all staff members so as to improve accountability of staff and client relationship.
- 6.3.4 All service delivery points should have proper outside signage. Such signage will promote easy identification of the service points by the public.
- 6.3.5 Inside signage should be placed at all service delivery points so that citizens can easily find their way to the correct counters. Furthermore, for the benefit of those that cannot read, there should be a staff member dedicated to guiding citizens to the right service counters. These measures would assist in shortening time spent by citizens on queues.

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- 6.3.6 Lunch and other breaks should be well managed. Citizens should not be left unattended because some staff are out on a break.
  - 6.3.7 All entrances should have ramps so that people with disabilities can easily enter the buildings.
  - 6.3.8 A friendly and welcoming environment should be created at all service points. The reception area or front desk should be kept clean, and water should be readily available to the public. The air-conditioning system should also be kept in good working condition at all times.
  - 6.3.9 Toilet facilities should always be well maintained and kept clean.

The pilot inspections have shown that inspections are a valuable monitoring mechanism which yields information that can be used by departments to fast-track service delivery immediately. The aim of publishing this consolidated report on inspections of Public Service delivery sites is to promote awareness on the value of this monitoring tool. The PSC will continue to apply this methodology as an integral part of other monitoring and evaluation methodologies such as Citizen Satisfaction Surveys and Batho Pele audits.

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