



Audit of Selection Processes in Selected Departments

Public Service Commission

August 2008

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.

Audit of Selection Processes in Selected Departments



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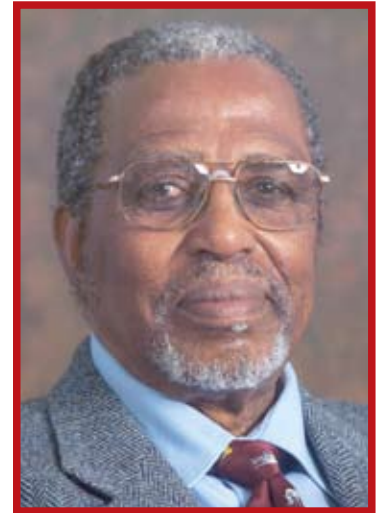
List of Acronyms

CV	Curriculum Vitae
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
HoD	Head of Department
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
NCPA	Northern Cape Provincial Administration
NWPA	North West Provincial Administration
WCPA	Western Cape Provincial Administration
LPA	Limpopo Provincial Administration
ECPA	Eastern Cape Provincial Administration
GPA	Gauteng Provincial Administration
MPA	Mpumalanga Provincial Administration
KZNPA	KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Administration
PA	Performance Agreement
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSM&ES	Public Service Monitoring and Evaluation System
PSR	Public Service Regulations
SMS	Senior Management Service

Foreword

The quality of the service rendered by the Public Service is to a large degree dependent on the knowledge, skills and competencies of the staff in its employ. Therefore the Public Service must ensure that its recruitment and selection processes yield the desired quality of staff.

The responsibility to recruit and select skilled employees into the Public Service is vested in Executing Authorities within a framework of national norms and standards determined by the Minister for Public Service and Administration through the Public Service Act, 1994 and the Public Service Regulations. In order to fulfill this responsibility effectively, it is incumbent on Executing Authorities and their departments to ensure that the recruitment and selection processes that they apply are beyond reproach and comply with the national norms and standards that have been set.



If the recruitment and selection processes of departments are flawed, departments will not succeed in employing candidates with the requisite skills and competencies which meet the requirements of the posts that are advertised. This, in turn, will have a negative effect on the ability of departments to deliver services in critical areas. Furthermore, the outcome of a flawed recruitment and selection process may be challenged by unsuccessful candidates through the lodging of grievances or the declaration of disputes.

Based on the findings of investigations into complaints conducted by the Public Service Commission (PSC), and the grievances submitted by public servants to the PSC, it appears that departments experience serious challenges in applying the requisite norms for recruitment and selection. The PSC, on numerous occasions, has found that complaints and grievances submitted to it regarding the filling of posts are substantiated and that the recruitment and selection processes followed by departments in this regard were flawed. These investigations have found transgressions of the national norms and standards as well as other inefficiencies in applying the recruitment and selection regulated procedures. The complaints and grievances found to be substantiated affect departments across the Public Service and the PSC are therefore concerned these problems may be endemic to the Public Service as a whole.

Given the aforementioned considerations, the PSC identified the need for an Audit of the selection processes of a select number of national and provincial departments, against best practice and stipulated regulations and norms. It gives me great pleasure to present the results of this Audit. I believe that it serves as a valuable monitoring mechanism. Its findings and recommendations should contribute to service delivery improvement in the Public Service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sangweni'.

Prof SS Sangweni
Chairperson: Public Service Commission





Executive Summary

1. Introduction

Given the difficulties that the Public Service experience in attracting persons of the desired quality to its employment, it is of the utmost importance that its recruitment and selection processes yield the desired results by ensuring that the most suitable candidates are appointed to posts. To arrive at the selection of the most suitable candidate, all procedures that have preceded the choice of the candidate, including advertisement, shortlisting and the development of appropriate selection criteria, must have been diligently thought through and applied consistently and effectively in accordance with set national prescripts and norms.

Within any organization certain norms and standards apply during the recruitment and selection process. In the case of the Public Service, these standards are determined by the Minister for Public Service and Administration through the Public Service Regulations and are supplemented by the departmental policies on recruitment and selection. If these norms and standards are not followed, the validity of the outcome of the recruitment and selection process may be challenged. However, the processes that are followed in arriving at a suitable candidate for a post must not only comply with norms and standards but must also be designed to meet the specific requirements of the post to be filled.

Despite efforts to regulate and standardize best practices throughout the Public Service by means of *inter alia* the PSC's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit, it appears that departments are faced with major challenges in the application of selection processes and procedures. As a result of this the PSC deemed it appropriate to conduct an Audit of selection processes in a select number of national and provincial departments to measure the effectiveness of these processes against best practice.

2. Objectives

Given the importance of effective recruitment and selection in the Public Service, the PSC set out to achieve the following objectives through this Audit:

- To determine whether selection processes comply with the norms and standards set in the Public Service Regulations as well as departmental policies, where these policies do exist.
- Evaluate whether the selection processes applied by departments comply with best practices as outlined in the PSC's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit.
- Recommend corrective measures where selection processes are found to be inadequate.

3. Scope

The evaluation was conducted in the national and provincial departments of Health and Public Works because they are examples of labour intensive departments within the Public Service that are reliant on effective recruitment and selection processes for the appointment of staff with the required skills and competencies to perform in their specialized fields of work.

4. Methodology

A sample of 9 posts that were filled by each department from 1 January 2005 to September 2007 at senior management, middle management and production level was identified. The recruitment and selection processes applied in each of these posts were analyzed in terms of compliance with the national norms and standards and best practice as provided for in the PSC's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit. Interviews were also conducted with the Heads of the Human Resource Management Units in each of the Departments to clarify areas of concern and/or uncertainties identified during the audit. Based on the outcome of the audit, findings were formulated on the extent of compliance to national norms and standards and best practice and recommendations were made to improve the recruitment and selection processes applied by departments.

5. Limitations

The investigation was delayed by poor departmental document and record management. Where documents were not provided the PSC had to assume that such documents do not exist.

Despite several reminders, the Department of Public Works in the Eastern Cape and the Department of Roads, Transport and Works in Gauteng did not provide the requested documentation to the PSC. The PSC therefore could not assess the selection processes applied in these departments. Delays were also experienced in obtaining access to files and documents in some provincial departments as the files were not centralized in these departments but are kept at institution level (e.g. hospitals and clinics).

6. Main Findings

The findings of the Audit indicate major deficiencies in the selection processes applied by departments. The following issues are of specific concern to the PSC:

- The majority of departments did not have job descriptions for posts that had been advertised. Without approved job descriptions it is not clear how departments link the actual contents of the posts to the advertisements. This may have a negative consequence in that advertisements may not address the specific requirements for a post and may lead to the selection of candidates that do not possess the required qualifications, skills and experience.
- Job evaluation was not in all instances conducted prior to the advertisement of posts as required by the Public Service Regulations. As a result of this omission, departments did not establish whether the posts advertised were graded at the correct levels. Failure to conduct job evaluations may have further negative consequences where a post is evaluated after it has been filled only to find that the post should be graded at a lower level. In such instances the department will have to down-grade the post and the incumbent will have to be transferred to a post of equal grading.
- Advertisements were generally placed in line with the requirements of the Public Service Regulations in national newspapers. However, in very few instances were the advertisements approved prior to publication. This raises concerns regarding accountability as managers must be certain of the need to fill a particular post before it is advertised.
- The sifting process applied by many departments was not structured and did not assist the process of short-listing. Through the sifting process candidates who do not meet the minimum requirements for appointment in the post are eliminated and the task of short-listing candidates is simplified. Only in a few instances were master lists compiled to assist managers and Selection Committees in perusing the applications.

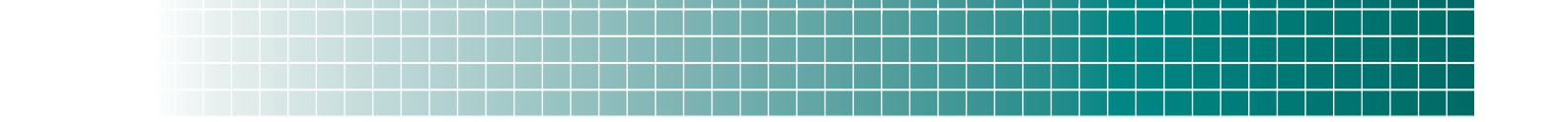
- In most instances, the selection committees were responsible for short-listing candidates. It is of concern, however, that the short-listing criteria in many instances were not documented and that there appeared to be no consistency in the application of scoring systems for short-listing purposes. The discussions and motivations used during the short-listing process were also not captured in the majority of instances, which in effect means that the reasons for short-listing candidates and disqualifying others were not recorded.
- The Selection Committees were in general properly constituted. However, it is of concern that potential conflicts of interests of committee members in their relationship with candidates were not identified in most departments. This omission could give rise to allegations of nepotism if not addressed.
- The discussions of Selection Committees were recorded in writing and formally submitted to the requisite delegated authority for approval. However, in many instances the relevant delegations could not be provided by the departments to the PSC and as such there is a real risk that the appointment of persons was approved by officials who do not have the requisite authority to do so. In these instances the appointments made may be *null and void*.
- The most glaring deficiency found by the PSC is the lack of proper record keeping by departments. Copies of job descriptions, results of job evaluations, advertisements, short-listing minutes and minutes of selection interviews were in many instances not filed. The PSC assumes that these documents did not exist and that departments were therefore transgressing the Public Service Regulations.

Based on the PSC foregoing findings, the recruitment and selection process in the Public Service leave much to be desired. The flaws identified are of a serious nature and impact negatively on the credibility of the processes applied and the outcome thereof.

7. Recommendations

Based on the foregoing findings, of this audit the following recommendations are made to assist in improving the recruitment and selection processes of departments:

- In order to avoid haphazard recruitment and selection practices, departments should develop detailed and clear policies. The PSC's Toolkit on Recruitment and Selection, gives clear guidance on the development of departmental recruitment and selection policies.
- The delegations to approve the advertising of posts as well as the appointment of persons to posts must be clearly spelt out and should be made available to all managers. The human resource management components should monitor that the relevant delegations are adhered to at all times and that submissions for the approval of advertisements and the filling of posts are submitted to the persons with the requisite delegated authority to approve them.
- Departments which have decentralized their human resource function should ensure that the recruitment and selection procedures and practices are standardized and consistent. This requires effective supervision and management especially by the human resource management component.
- It is recommended that the relevant provincial legislatures should take departments to task on the deficiencies as identified by the PSC during this Audit. Detailed reports on each department can be made available by the PSC to the legislatures on request.

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- The disclosure of conflicts of interest in the relationship between selection committee members and candidates should be made compulsory in all instances. It is recommended that a provision to this effect be included in the Public Service Regulations and subsequently in departmental recruitment and selection policies.
 - It is critical that departments must prioritize and properly manage the records of all recruitment and selection processes. Effective record-keeping is a regulatory requirement and must be adhered to.

8. Conclusion

There is a lack of continuous and planned involvement, guidance and monitoring by Human Resource (HR) managers in the steering of departmental recruitment and selection processes. The processes and procedures comprising a specific departmental selection strategy, are often dealt with in a *laissez faire* manner with complete disregard of the potential impact thereof on the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the department's employment objectives.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background

Within any organization there are norms and standards for recruitment and selection. In the case of the Public Service, these standards are determined by the Minister for Public Service and Administration through the Public Service Regulations¹ and are supplemented by individual departmental policies on recruitment and selection. If these norms and standards are not followed, the validity of the outcomes of the recruitment and selection processes are open to challenges. Furthermore, not only must the processes which are followed in arriving at a suitable candidate for a post only comply with prescribed norms and standards, it must also be designed to meet the specific requirements of the post to be filled. This entails clearly stating the inherent requirements of the post to be filled in the advertisement, and applying criteria for selection that will ensure that the best candidate for that particular post will be identified from the pool of potential candidates who have applied. The process must also be designed in a manner which ensures objectivity to prevent practices such as nepotism.

In spite of the existence of prescribed norms and standards investigations by the Public Service Commission into recruitment and selection practices applied by departments following complaints and requests found a high level of non-compliance by departments with selection procedures and criteria as outlined in departmental policies and the national norms and standards. Departmental processes are also not able to ensure the identification and recruitment of the most suitable candidates who meet the requirements of the relevant posts in terms of knowledge, skills and experience. Best practices in the recruitment and selection process are therefore not followed in all instances. These findings are substantiated by the PSC's State of the Public Service Report for 2007², which indicates that 14% of the 863 complaints lodged with the PSC in the 2005/2006 financial year relate to Human Resource Management issues such as recruitment, selection and appointments.

These findings are further corroborated by research done by Reports of the transversal Public Service Monitoring and Evaluation System (PSM&ES)³ of the PSC which revealed that only 62% of all departments surveyed during the 2005/2006 financial year have policies on recruitment and selection. In addition, a PSC analysis of the grievances filed in departments throughout the Public Service also indicate that recruitment and selection process is the third highest causal factor of grievances of public servants. Only performance management and salary related disputes result in more grievances being lodged with the PSC⁴.

Despite efforts to regulate and standardize certain best practices throughout the Public Service by means of inter alia the PSC's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit⁵, it appears that departments are faced with major challenges when it comes to the application of selection processes and procedures.

1.2 Objectives

Given the importance of effective recruitment and selection in the Public Service, the PSC set out to achieve the following objectives through this Audit:

- To determine whether recruitment and selection processes comply with the norms and standards set in the Public Service Regulations as well as in departmental policies, (where such policies do exist.)

1 Republic of South Africa. *Public Service Regulations*, 2001.

2 Republic of South Africa. *State of the Public Service Report*. Public Service Commission, 2007.

3 Republic of South Africa. *Consolidated Monitoring and Evaluation Report*. Public Service Commission, 2007.

4 *The management of performance in the public service: challenges relating to performance assessments and award systems*, OR Ramsingh, Director-General, Office of the Public Service Commission, 1997.

5 Republic of South Africa. *Recruitment and Selection Toolkit*. Public Service Commission, 2004.

- Evaluate whether the recruitment and selection processes applied by departments comply with best practices as outlined in the PSC's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit.
- Recommend corrective measures where selection processes are found to be inadequate.

1.3 PSC Mandate

In terms of Section 196 (4) (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996⁶, the powers and functions of the PSC are, amongst others, to investigate and evaluate the application of personnel and public administration practices, and to report to the relevant executive authority and legislature. The PSC is also empowered by section 195 (1) of the Constitution to promote the basic values and principles governing public administration as set out in section 195. One of these principles provides that "Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation".

In terms of section 10(1) of the Public Service Commission Act, 1997⁷, the Commission may conduct an inquiry into any matter in respect of which it is authorised by the Constitution or the Public Service Act to perform any function.

With effect from 1 April 2008, the PSC may also issue directives on compliance with the Public Service Act, 1994⁸ in terms of the extent to which recruitment complies with the provisions of the Act which are enforceable. These powers have been assigned to the PSC in terms of the Public Service Amendment Act, 2007⁹ and emanates from the PSC's mandate in terms of section 196(4)(d) of the Constitution 1996 to issue directives on recruitment to ensure compliance with the principles that govern public administration as enshrined in section 195 of the Constitution.

This audit into selection processes in selected national and provincial departments was therefore conducted in terms of the PSC's mandate to investigate and evaluate the application of personnel and public administration practices in the Public Service.

1.4 Scope

The evaluation was conducted in the national and provincial departments of Health and Public Works. The decision to conduct the evaluation in these departments was based on the fact that they are labour intensive employers that rely heavily on the outcome of recruitment and selection for the employment of staff with the required skills and competencies in their specialized fields of work.

1.5 Methodology

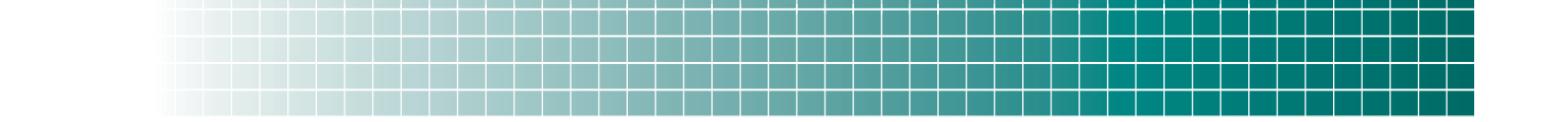
The audit was conducted through correspondence sent to the Heads of the Departments of Health and Transport, Roads and Public Works on 28 November 2007 in which they were informed of the project and requested to appoint departmental contact persons to assist the researchers.

6 Republic of South Africa. Public Service Commission Act, 1997.

7 Republic of South Africa, Public Service Act, 1994.

8 Republic of South Africa. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

9 Republic of South Africa, Public Service Amendment Act, 2007.



A sample of 9 posts that were filled by each department from 1 January 2005 to September 2007 was identified through the following:

- PERSAL¹⁰ printouts of all appointments made during this period by departments were obtained.
- The selection of appointments from the PERSAL printout was made randomly and targeted three different levels within each department ranging from production to senior management. The choice of posts at different levels was informed by the fact that recruitment and selection at the different levels must be purposefully designed to ensure that candidates with desired knowledge, skills and experience are appointed. In each department three posts at each of the following levels were therefore selected:
 - Senior Management Service (SMS) level (salary levels 13 to 16);
 - Middle Management Service (MMS) level (salary levels 9 to 12; and
 - Production level (salary levels 3 to 6).

The recruitment and selection processes applied in each of these posts were analyzed in terms of compliance with the national norms and standards and best practice as provided for in the PSC's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit. A check list was used to audit each appointment against regulatory and policy requirements as well as against the PSC's Toolkit. Interviews were conducted with the Heads of the Human Resource Management Units in each of the Departments to clarify areas of concern and/or uncertainties identified during the audit.

The Recruitment and Selection Policies of each Department were obtained and analysed. The processes followed in the filling of each post which was part of the audit were measured against the requirements of the departmental policy where such policies existed.

Based on the outcome of the audit, findings were formulated on the extent of compliance to national norms and standards and best practice and recommendations were made to improve the recruitment and selection processes applied by departments.

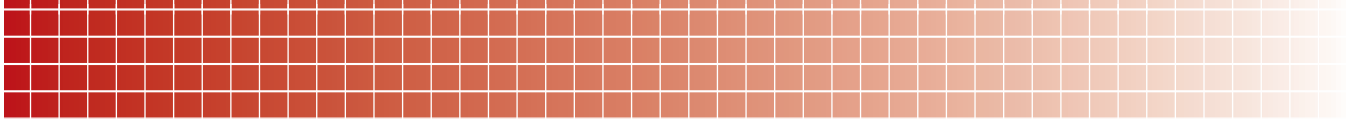
1.6 Limitations

The investigation was delayed by the fact that departments have poor document and record management. In many instances the PSC could not obtain critical documentation on aspects of the recruitment and selection process applied in respect of individual posts as departments did not provide the relevant documents or delayed in submitting them to the PSC. Where documents were not provided the PSC had to assume that these documents do not exist.

Despite several reminders, the Department of Public Works in the Eastern Cape and the Department of Roads, Transport and Works in Gauteng did not provide the requested documentation to the PSC and the PSC therefore could not assess the selection processes applied in these departments. The fact that the PSC had to follow-up with these departments further delayed the finalization of the audit.

Delays were also experienced in obtaining access to files and documents in certain provincial departments as the files are not centralized in such departments but are kept at institution level (e.g. hospitals and clinics). The relevant departments therefore had to courier the files to the respective head offices for the PSC to obtain access.

10 Republic of South Africa. Personnel and Salary Administration System, National Treasury.



1.7 Structure of the Report

The background to this Audit was provided in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, an outline of the legislative framework for recruitment and selection in the Public Service is provided in order as an analytical background to the PSC's finding in respect of the compliance by departments to the national norms and standards. The principles to be considered in terms of best practice during the recruitment and selection process are discussed in Chapter 3 and provide the basis for the PSC's assessment of the extent to which departments apply best practice in recruiting and selecting candidates for the filling of posts. The PSC's findings on the extent to which departments comply with the national norms and standards and apply best practice in the filling of their posts are discussed in Chapter 4. Based on the PSC's findings, recommendations on the improvement of recruitment and selection practices by departments are made in Chapter 5. Concluding remarks on the outcome of the audit are provided in Chapter 6.



Chapter Two

Overview of the Legislative Framework

2.1 Overview of the Legislative and Regulatory Framework

Recruitment and selection within the Public Service are decentralised to individual departments. However, the manner in which Departments do this must be within the framework of national norms and standards as prescribed through legislation and regulated by the Minister for Public Service and Administration. This Chapter provides an overview of the Legislative and Regulatory Framework that guides recruitment and selection in the Public Service.

2.2 The Legislative and Regulatory Framework

Recruitment and selection processes are designed to ensure that the most suitable candidates are appointed to posts in the Public Service. In order to ensure that the recruitment process complies with acceptable norms and standards, a comprehensive legislative, regulatory and policy framework has been put in place for the Public Service. An overview of the legislative, regulatory and policy framework is provided in **Table I**.

Table I: Legislative, Regulatory and Policy Framework

Legislation/Policies	Provisions
The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) ¹¹	The Constitution provides that public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.
The Public Service Act (1994) as Amended ¹²	<p>The purpose of this Act is to provide for the organization and administration of the Public Service in the Republic, the regulation of the conditions of employment, terms of office, discipline, retirement and discharge of members of the public service, and matters connected therewith.</p> <p>In respect of recruitment and selection the Act assigns powers to Executive Authorities as follows:</p> <p>“(7) An executive authority has all those powers and duties necessary for –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) the internal organisation of the department concerned, including its organisational structure and establishment, the transfer of functions within that department, human resources planning, the creation and abolition of posts and provision for the employment of persons additional to the fixed establishment; and(b) the recruitment, appointment, performance management, transfer, dismissal and other career incidents of employees of that department, including any other matter which relates to such employees in their individual capacities.”

¹¹ Republic of South Africa. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.

¹² Republic of South Africa, Public Service Act, 1994.

Legislation/Policies	Provisions
The Public Service Amendment Act (2007) ¹³ (continued)	Schedule 3 of the Act provides for the PSC to investigate compliance with the Public Service Act, 1994 and to issue directives to ensure compliance with the Act in respect of recruitment in terms of the PSC's mandate provided in section 196(4)(d) of the Constitution 1996.
The Employment Equity Act (1998) ¹⁴	The purpose of the Employment Equity Act is to achieve employment equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in the workplace. It seeks to do this through elimination of unfair discrimination and by implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups (previously disadvantaged groups), in order to ensure their equitable representation in all categories and levels of the workforce.
The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service (1997) ¹⁵	<p>The purpose of this White Paper is to provide a policy framework that will facilitate the development of human resource management practices which support an effective and efficient Public Service, geared for economical and social transformation.</p> <p>In respect of recruitment and selection the White Paper provides as follows:</p> <p>“Cost effective recruitment strategies will be designed to reach and attract candidates from all sections of the population; and to maximise recruitment among people from historically disadvantaged groups.</p> <p>Selection criteria will be based only on the inherent requirements of the position to be filled, and will be based on competencies rather than undue over-emphasis on academic qualifications. Merit must be defined within the context of employment equity.”</p>
The Public Service Regulations (2001) as Amended ¹⁶	<p>The Regulations are subordinate to the Public Service Act and they amplify upon the powers conferred on executing authorities in terms of the Public Service Act. In respect of recruitment and selection the Regulations provide as follows:</p> <p>General principles</p> <p>“Employment practices shall ensure employment equity, fairness, efficiency and the achievement of a representative public service.</p>

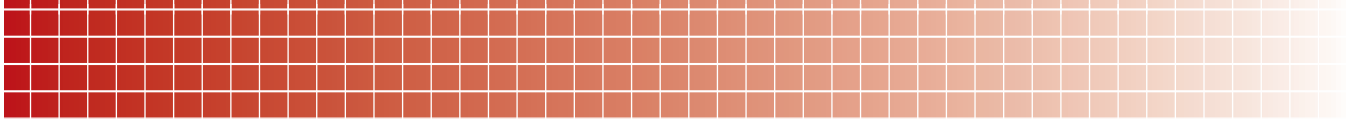
13 Republic of South Africa, Public Service Amendment Act, 2007.

14 Republic of South Africa. Employment Equity Act. 1998.

15 Republic of South Africa. White paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997

16 Republic of South Africa. Public Service Regulations, 2001.





Legislation/Policies	Provisions
The Public Service Regulations (2001) as Amended (continued)	<p>Affirmative action shall be used to speed up the creation of a representative and equitable public service and to give practical support to those who have been previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination to enable them to fulfill their maximum potential. Employment practices should maximise flexibility, minimise administrative burdens on both employer and employee, and generally prevent waste and inefficiency.”</p> <p>Job evaluation</p> <p>“Before creating a post for any newly defined job, or filling any vacancy, an executing authority shall –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) confirm that she or he requires the post to meet the department’s objectives;(b) in the case of a newly defined job, evaluate the job in terms of the job evaluation system;(c) in the case of a vacant post on grade 9 or higher, evaluate the job unless the specific job has been evaluated previously; and(d) ensure that sufficient budgeted funds, including funds for the remaining period of the medium-term expenditure framework, are available for filling the post.”<p>Determining requirements of a post</p><p>“For each post or group of posts, an executing authority shall establish a job description and job title that indicate, with appropriate emphasis on service delivery –</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) the main objectives of the post or posts in question;(b) the inherent requirements of the job; and(c) the requirements for promotion or progression to the next salary range, in accordance with a relevant career path.”<p>“At least once every three years, an executing authority shall review job descriptions and titles and, where necessary, redefine them to ensure that they remain appropriate and accurate.”</p><p>“An executing authority shall determine composite requirements for employment in any post on the basis of the inherent requirements of the job. An executing authority shall –</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) record the inherent requirements of a job;(b) ensure that the requirements for employment do not discriminate against persons historically disadvantaged; and(c) comply with any statutory requirement for the appointment of employees.”



Legislation/Policies	Provisions
<p>The Public Service Regulations (2001) as Amended (continued)</p>	<p>Advertising posts</p> <p>“An executing authority shall ensure that vacant posts in the department are so advertised as to reach, as efficiently and effectively as possible, the entire pool of potential applicants, especially persons historically disadvantaged.</p> <p>An advertisement for a post shall specify the inherent requirements of the job, the job title and core functions.</p> <p>Any vacant post in the SMS shall be advertised nationwide.</p> <p>An executing authority shall advertise any other vacant post within the department as a minimum, but may also advertise such post –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) elsewhere in the public service; or (b) outside the public service either nationwide or locally.” <p>Selection</p> <p>“An executing authority shall appoint a selection committee to make recommendations on appointments to posts. The selection committee shall consist of at least three members who are employees of a grading equal to or higher than the grading of the post to be filled or suitable persons from outside the public service or in which both such an employee or employees and such a person or persons are represented.</p> <p>However –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the chairperson of the selection committee, who shall be an employee, shall be of a grading higher than the post to be filled; and (b) in the event that the manager of the component within which the vacant post is located, is graded lower than the vacant post, such a manager may be a member of the selection committee. <p>The selection committee shall make a recommendation on the suitability of a candidate after considering only –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) information based on valid methods, criteria or instruments for selection that are free from any bias or discrimination; (b) the training, skills, competence and knowledge necessary to meet the inherent requirements of the post; (c) the needs of the department for developing human resources;

Legislation/Policies	Provisions
The Public Service Regulations (2001) as Amended (continued)	<p>(d) the representativeness of the component where the post is located; and</p> <p>(e) the department's affirmative action programme.</p> <p>A selection committee shall record the reasons for its decision.</p> <p>Decision on appointment</p> <p>“When an executing authority does not approve a recommendation of a selection committee, she or he shall record the reasons for her or his decision in writing.”</p>
The Senior Management Service Handbook ¹⁷	This Handbook sets out clearly the conditions of employment and the roles of SMS members and amplifies the regulatory requirements for recruitment and selection in the Public Service as contained in the Public Service Regulations. In addition to normal recruitment and selection practices the Handbook also provides for skills search (head-hunting) as a method of recruiting persons to the senior management service.
The Toolkit on Recruitment and Selection ¹⁸	The Toolkit was compiled as a result of investigations undertaken by the Public Service Commission on recruitment and selection and provides comprehensive and practical guidelines on recruitment and selection.

2.3 Summary

The legislative, regulatory and policy framework provides clear parameters within which departments can apply their recruitment and selection practices. The provisions contained in this legislative framework were not designed to restrict departments' ability to recruit and select persons for appointment but to ensure that such processes are executed with due consideration to consistency and accountability.

¹⁷ Republic of South Africa. *Senior Management Service Handbook*, Department of Public Service and Administration.

¹⁸ Republic of South Africa. *Recruitment and Selection Toolkit*. Public Service Commission, 2004.

Chapter Three

Principles that Apply During the Recruitment and Selection Process

3.1 Introduction

As mentioned in the preceding sections recruitment and selection in the Public Service is governed by prescripts and by legislation as well as good practices that have developed over time and apply to all employers. The PSC in its Toolkit for Recruitment and Selection¹⁹ identified some of the underlying principles that should apply to the Public Service during recruitment and selection. In addition to considering compliance with the national norms and standards, the PSC during this audit therefore also assessed the extent to which departments applied best practice as outlined in the PSC's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit. This Chapter provides an overview of the principles outlined in the PSC's Toolkit and the framework that the PSC developed, based on these principles, an audit of the recruitment and selection practices applied by departments is being conducted.

3.2 Important Principles Underlying Recruitment and Selection

The PSC's Toolkit on Recruitment and Selection²⁰ lists the following three essential principles in ensuring effective recruitment and selection.

3.2.1 Clear Policy Guidelines must be Established

Departmental policies on recruitment and selection must comply with the national norms and standards as contained in the Public Service Act, 1994²¹, the Employment Equity Act, 1998²² and the Public Service Regulations, 2001²³. This is to ensure that Government's transformation objectives are realised and administrative justice is achieved. If policy guidelines are non-existent, there are no guarantees that these objectives will be met and Recruitment and selection can end up being managed clumsily, leaving the results open to scrutiny and challenge.

3.2.2 All the Steps in the Recruitment and Selection Process must be Diligently Applied

The various steps in HR practices represent building blocks for recruitment and selection. If any of the steps are skipped or ignored, all the subsequent steps are compromised. In accordance with the PSR I.1.1, Chapter III, a post cannot be filled unless-

- job evaluation has been conducted and approved as far as new posts and posts from post level 9 and upwards are concerned;
- a job description has been developed from the abovementioned job evaluation addressing the main objectives and inherent requirements of the post (post and person specification);
- a motivation for the filling of a post has been approved;
- a job description has been utilised for the proper drafting of an advertisement that has been approved;
- selection committee has been appointed to handle the selection of the most suitable candidate(s);
- selection criteria for screening purposes have been identified and applied consistently for the screening of candidates;

19 Republic of South Africa. *Recruitment and Selection Toolkit*. Public Service Commission, 2004.

20 Republic of South Africa. *Recruitment and Selection Toolkit*. Public Service Commission, 2004.

21 Republic of South Africa, *Public Service Amendment Act, 2007*.

22 Republic of South Africa. *Employment Equity Act, 1998*.

23 Republic of South Africa. *Public Service Regulations, 2001*.

- selection criteria for short-listing purposes have been identified and applied consistently to shortlist candidates;
- selection criteria for the final selection of candidates have been identified before-hand and applied consistently to identify the most suitable candidate(s);
- a nomination for appointing the most suitable candidate(s) has been approved by the executing authority or his/her delegate;
- unsuccessful candidates are notified timeously by means of a letter of regret;
- a candidate is informed in writing of his/her appointment as the most suitable candidate; and
- a candidate accepts, in writing, his/her appointment.

3.2.3 Sound administrative practices must be followed

Apart from ensuring a satisfactory outcome, sound administrative practices will also ensure objectivity, consistency, equity and fair labour practices. Poor recruitment and selection decisions result in costly grievances, complaints, disputes, litigation and discontentment. The recruitment process can successfully be challenged from a procedural perspective and it is therefore imperative that due administrative process is followed scrupulously.

The Promotion of Administration Justice Act (PAJA), 2000²⁴ was put in place to ensure just this as well as recourse should candidates have reason to believe tardiness for example, administratively in recruitment and selection.

From a service delivery point of view, poor selection also has negative implications due to poor post and person matching, resulting in the unnecessary redeployment of human resources to uphold productivity.

3.3 Measuring Compliance with the Principles Underlying Recruitment and Selection

As indicated in paragraph 3.2.2, the entire recruitment and selection process can be divided into different phases. Each phase consists of a number of activities that have to be executed before role-players can commence with the next phase. Each phase of the recruitment and selection process must be applied with circumspect as any flaw may impact on the credibility of the process in its entirety.

The PSC developed an Internal Toolkit on Human Resource and Procurement related investigations²⁵ which, amongst others, identifies the different activities which influence the recruitment and selection process, and what may go wrong in the process, and influence the outcome of the selection process. These activities were identified based on the principles contained in its Toolkit on Recruitment and Selection²⁶ and were used by the PSC as the basis for conducting this audit of recruitment and selection processes applied by departments. The PSC's Internal Toolkit²⁷ identifies areas of risks that must be considered by investigators in assessing the recruitment and selection process as outlined in **Table 2**.

24 Republic of South Africa: The Promotion of Administration Justice Act (AJA), 2000.

25 Republic of South Africa: Toolkit on the conducting of Procurement and Human Resource Investigations. Public Service Commission, 2007.

26 Republic of South Africa: Recruitment and Selection Toolkit. Public Service Commission, 2004.

27 Republic of South Africa: Toolkit on the conducting of Procurement and Human Resource Investigations. Public Service Commission, 2007.

Table 2: Areas of risk in the selection process

Recruitment and Selection Process	How the Process can be Compromised
Job Evaluation	<p>No departmental policy on job evaluation and grading, contrary to the PSR.</p> <p>Improper loading of evaluation results to achieve higher gradings than actual job contents suggest.</p> <p>Failure to ensure that a person who is absorbed in an upgraded post was previously evaluated and his/her performance was found to be satisfactory.</p> <p>Failure to ensure that all newly created jobs and jobs graded at level nine and upwards are evaluated.</p> <p>Irregular composition of job evaluation panels.</p> <p>Wrongful benchmarking of posts.</p> <p>Failure to use the system known as EQUATE.</p>
Advertisement of Post	<p>Irregular use of the head hunting process.</p> <p>Posts at salary level 9 and up must be advertised in a nationally circulated publication but are not.</p> <p>Failure to advertise the post.</p> <p>Irregular use of transfer mechanisms in the Public Service through the transfer officials that is not in the interest of the State (e.g. using inter-departmental transfers to block or limit competition during the filling of a post).</p> <p>Closing date not adhered to.</p>
Application of screening criteria	<p>No set criteria for appointment.</p> <p>Candidates that do not meet the basic requirements of the post are considered.</p> <p>The job content for the post is unclear, and results in unclear or unfair criteria being applied.</p> <p>Inconsistency in application of criteria.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	How the Process can be Compromised
Short-listing of candidates	<p>Candidates that do not meet the minimum requirements of the post are short-listed.</p> <p>Disregard of the Employment Equity plans of the department.</p> <p>Suitable candidates are excluded from the short-list in favour of less suitable candidates through manipulation of the scoring.</p> <p>Inconsistent application of short-listing criteria.</p> <p>Short-listing criteria that are not aligned to advertised requirements.</p> <p>Failure to keep minutes by the short-listing panel.</p>
Interviewing of candidates	<p>Questions to be posed to the candidates are not formulated beforehand.</p> <p>The questions asked are not related to the key competencies for the post.</p> <p>The weighting of the scores are not decided on beforehand.</p> <p>A candidate (internal) assists in the formulation of the interview questions.</p> <p>Interview questions are provided to a candidate prior to the interview.</p> <p>Original score sheets and interview notes are not filed.</p> <p>Recommendations made to the Executing Authority differ from the recommendations of the interview panel.</p> <p>The chairperson of the panel is of a lower or equal rank to the position being filled.</p> <p>The decision making authority sits on the panel.</p> <p>Questions are not consistently asked to all candidates.</p> <p>Interview panel not being representative.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	How the Process can be Compromised
Interviewing of candidates (continued)	Members of the panel failing to declare interests (e.g. failing to disclose that they are related, friends to candidates).
Appointment of the successful candidate	<p>The person making the appointment not having the necessary delegation.</p> <p>Deviating from the recommendations of the panel without recording the reasons in writing.</p> <p>Appointments being made at a salary level different from the advertisement.</p> <p>Appointing candidates prematurely, i.e. not in the month subsequent to the approval.</p>

Table 2 highlights common transgressions of the national norms and standards that departments commit during the recruitment and selection process as identified by the PSC in the course of its investigations into complaints and grievances arising from flawed recruitment and selection processes. Thus the key question arising from these was how common these transgressions are in the Public Service.

The different phases in the recruitment and selection process compliment each other and for purposes of this audit were grouped together as follows:

(a) Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement

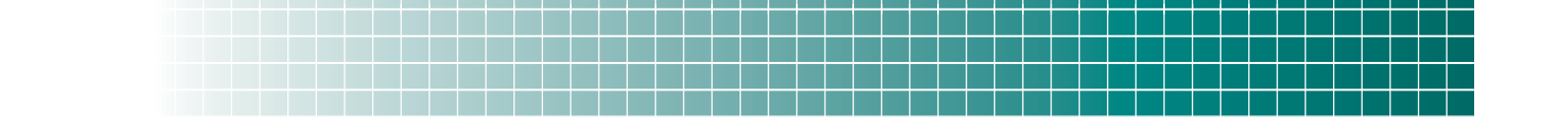
In this section the selected departments were required to provide information on questions in respect of the job evaluation, job descriptions and advertisements. The aim was to establish whether the departments' processes were consistent, just, fair and valid in respect of these activities and to what extent these conformed to the requirements contained in the Public Service Regulations and departmental policies.

For advertising to meet its objectives the following principles need to be applied and adhered to as indicated in the PSC's Toolkit on Recruitment and Selection:

- An advertisement should not favour, prejudice or discriminate.
- An advertisement should be fully in line with the job content and the post person specifications.
- Advertisements should give a clear indication of requirements that must be met.
- The widest possible number of applicants must be attracted in the most cost-effective manner.
- Advertising should promote staff mobility, utilisation, and career development opportunities.
- Advertisements should cater for attracting potential.
- The language and style of advertisements must be clear and simple in order to enhance employment equity.

(b) Sifting of Applications

The sifting process is aimed at identifying and removing applicants who do not meet the minimum entry



requirements, and who therefore do not qualify to be considered. The departments needed to indicate that this process was consistent, just, fair and valid and that the applications identified met with the basic entry level requirements as advertised.

In determining whether the sifting process met its objectives the PSC checked whether the following basic principles were applied:

- A fair set of screening criteria should apply, which should have the sole purpose of identifying those applicants who meet the basic requirements and advertised requirements.
- Sifting criteria must be in line with the job content and appointment, as well as advertised requirements so that applicants screened are clear on the criteria that apply.
- The criteria should apply to all applicants in a consistent manner.
- Any waivers (i.e. applicants passing the screening test without meeting basic requirements) should be fully motivated and approved and be properly documented.
- A declaration of a conflict of interest should be made if any candidate is related to or friends of an official involved in the screening process, together with steps taken to uphold fairness, equality and objectivity, if such relationship(s) exist.
- The various activities of the sifting process should be documented and put on record.

(c) Short-listing Process

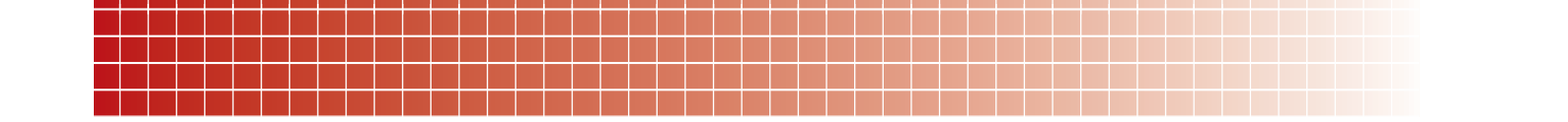
The short-listing process is aimed at identifying a manageable number of the best suited candidates for purposes of final selection from amongst all qualifying applications. In conducting the audit of short-listing processes, the PSC set out to determine whether the following criteria had been met:

- A fair set of short-listing criteria should apply, with the sole purpose of identifying a pool of best suited candidates for a specific position.
- Short-listing criteria must be in line with the job content and appointment, as well as advertised requirements so that applicants short-listed are clear on the criteria that apply in a consistent manner.
- Any waivers (i.e. applicants being short-listed without meeting short-listed requirements) should be fully motivated, approved and be properly documented.
- A declaration of conflict of interest should be made if any candidate is related to or a friend of an official involved in the short-listing process, together with steps taken to uphold fairness, equality and objectivity, if such relationships exist.
- The various activities of the short-listing process should be documented and put on record.

(d) Final Selection

The final selection process is aimed at identifying, from amongst the short-listed candidates the one candidate that is most suitable to fill the post. This final selection phase mostly consists of a selection interview augmented by (a) competency test(s). The PSC in conducting its audit of the final selection processes applied considered the following principles:

- A fair set of final selection criteria should apply, which should have the sole purpose of identifying the most suitable candidate(s) for a pool of best suited candidates.
- Final selection criteria must be in line with and limited to what is relevant in terms of job content, as well as appointment and advertised requirements so that applicants interviewed are clear on the criteria that apply in a consistent manner.

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- Any waivers (i.e. applicants being selected without meeting final selection requirements) should be fully motivated and approved and be properly documented as prescribed by Regulation VII C.1 and C.2 of Chapter I of the PSR, 2001 as amended.
 - A declaration of a conflict of interest should be made if any candidate is related to or a friend of an official on the selection committee, together with steps taken to uphold fairness, equality and objectivity, if such a relationship exist.
 - The various activities of the final selection process should be documented and put on record.

3.4 Summary

Selection is but the final phase of a process designed to achieve the ultimate outcome of appointing the most suitable candidate for a post. As indicated, the success of each phase of the recruitment and selection process is dependent on the successful completion of the preceding phase(s). An assessment of whether the selection process identified the most suitable candidate can therefore not be conducted in isolation from the rest of the recruitment and selection process.

Chapter Four

Analysis of Findings

4.1 Introduction

Through the legislative and regulatory requirements and guidelines, such as the PSC's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit²⁸, departments have a solid framework upon which to base their recruitment and selection practices. However, as indicated in the introduction to this Report, the PSC has concerns regarding the extent to which departments comply with the norms, standards and principles provided for in this framework.

This Chapter presents the PSC's findings on the extent to which the selected departments comply with this framework of norms, standards and principles. The findings in respect of departments of Health are first reflected and thereafter the departments of Public Works. A summary of the main findings of the Audit is then provided.

4.2 Audit of Recruitment and Selection Processes Applied in Departments of Health

The recruitment and selection processes applied in the departments of Health at National and Provincial level were audited to measure compliance with the national norms and standards and the principles contained in the PSC's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit²⁹. **Table 3** provides a synopsis of the extent to which these departments complied with the national norms and standards as well as best practice as outlined in the PSC's Toolkit on Recruitment and Selection in all aspects of the different phases of the recruitment and selection process.

Table 3: Extent to which departments of Health complied with national norms and standards and applied best practice in the recruitment and selection process

Recruitment Process	National		Northern Cape		North West		Western Cape		Limpopo		Free State		Eastern Cape		Gauteng		Mpumalanga		KwaZulu-Natal	
	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement		DC		DC		DC	C			DC		DC	C	DC		DC		DC		DC
Sifting	C			DC		DC	C			DC		DC	C		C		C		C	
Short-listing		DC		C		DC	C			DC		DC		DC		DC		DC	C	
Final Selection	C		C		C		C			DC		DC		DC		DC		DC	C	

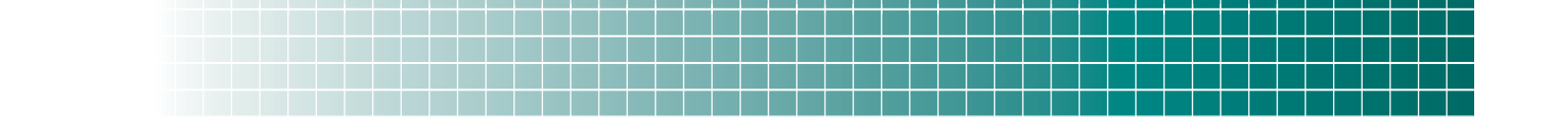
Legend:

C: Complied with the national and norms and standards and applied best practice in the recruitment and selection process

DC: Did not comply with the national and norms and standards or did not apply best practice in the recruitment and selection process

28 Republic of South Africa. Recruitment and Selection Toolkit. Public Service Commission, 2004.

29 Republic of South Africa. Recruitment and Selection Toolkit. Public Service Commission, 2004.



Based on the findings of the Audit only one department, the Western Cape Department of Health, complied in all respects with national norms and standards and best practice as far as job information, evaluation and advertisement is concerned. This means that that the vast majority of departments did not ensure that –

- (a) the jobs were advertised with the correct requirements for appointment;
- (b) the jobs were correctly graded in terms of its job weight; and
- (c) as wide as possible pool of prospective candidates for the position was reached.

These are serious flaws and impact negatively on the final appointment of the most suitable candidate for a post at the correct salary level.

Five departments followed a thorough sifting process whilst only two departments complied in all respects with the national norms and standards as well as the best practice outlined in the PSC's Toolkit on Recruitment and Selection as far as short-listing is concerned. By not following the prescribed sifting process correctly, departments may include candidates that do not meet the requirements of the posts in the final selection process. This may result in the consideration of the candidature of persons that will not be able to perform in the positions that they have applied for. By not providing the necessary attention to the short-listing phase, departments may eliminate candidates with the necessary skills and competencies for a particular post and include candidates that do not meet the requirements. If the short-listing process is not appropriately dealt with, candidates that have been eliminated could further successfully challenge the outcome of the recruitment and selection process.

The final selection process complied with national norms and standards and best practice in only three of the departments. This means that in the majority of departments, selection panels might not have been properly constituted, the potential conflicts of interests that selection panel members may have in terms of their relationships with potential candidates may not have been identified, criteria for selection may not have been appropriately identified and the final decision to appoint a suitable candidate may not have been made by the correct delegated authority. This may result in persons being appointed that do not meet the requirements for the position and the elimination of candidates that are suitable for appointment. Again, the outcome of the recruitment and selection processes could be successfully challenged if this phase is not appropriately completed.

It should be noted that the PSC's findings were informed by the documentation provided by departments and where such documentation could not be presented, the PSC had to assume that they were non-existent.

The analysis as provided in **Table 3** was informed by the PSC's audit of each of the nine posts identified per department. The findings per department in respect of the four focal areas of the investigation are reflected below.

4.2.1. National Department of Health

The recruitment and selection process applied in nine posts in the national Department of Health were audited. The findings in respect of compliance to national norms and standards and the application of best practice are discussed in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Audit of selection processes in the National Department of Health

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>As indicated in Chapter 2 of this Report, all posts in the Public Service must have job descriptions. Of the nine posts analyzed, only five had detailed job descriptions. Three posts only had a list of duties and did not contain information on the minimum requirements in terms of qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience. One of the posts did not have any job description at all. Job descriptions serve as the base documents that determine the inherent requirements for a post and the duties attached to such a post. Without a job description there is no basis for determining the contents of advertisements and the inadequacy of job descriptions identified through this audit therefore raises concerns regarding the validity of the information used by the department in its advertisements.</p> <p>In all of the instances where job descriptions were in place, the detail on the job description was sufficient to develop selection criteria for recruitment and selection purposes.</p> <p>In terms of the Public Service Regulations, before creating a post for any newly defined job, or filling any vacancy, an executing authority shall –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) in the case of a newly defined job, evaluate the job in terms of the job evaluation system; and (c) in the case of a vacant post on grade 9 or higher, evaluate the job unless the specific job has been evaluated previously. <p>None of the posts below salary level 9 in this department were newly created and therefore did not have to be job evaluated. All posts on level 9 and above were job evaluated and the job evaluation was conducted in compliance with the department's Job Evaluation Policy.</p> <p>All adverts were signed and approved by the requisite delegated authority. In terms of the job application template provided by the Department of Public Service and Administration, all applicants must indicate whether they are South African citizens and whether they have criminal records. However, South African citizenship and good character were not captured as minimum requirements in any of the advertisements. The minimum requirements contained in the advertisements only related to qualifications, training, knowledge, skills and experience.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Sifting of Applications	<p>In all the instances, the sifting was done by the responsible line manager supported by a human resource practitioner as well as a representative from the Employment Equity Unit. The sifting criterion was decided by the line manager and was informed by the minimum requirements of the job as outlined in the advert.</p>
Short-listing	<p>The short-listing criteria clearly motivated why only certain applications were selected for final consideration. It was clear from the documentation provided that there was consistency in the short-listing process of all the selected appointments.</p> <p>The short-listing was aligned with the requirements of the advertisement and the criterion was circulated to all panel members for approval, before the actual short listing was done. However, all panel members did not participate in the actual short-listing process as this was left mainly to the responsible line manager. By allocating the responsibility for short-listing to one person, critical information in the applications of candidates may be overlooked in the short-listing process and the ability of the selection panel to decide on the most suitable candidate may be curtailed.</p> <p>For all appointments below SMS level, a scoring mechanism was used to identify the best suited candidates. All appointments at level 13 and above were not scored, and only written motivation was used to identify the most suitable candidates. Although scoring is not required by the Department's recruitment and selection policy, the SMS Handbook provides that the elimination of candidates must be done in a justifiable manner. The application of a scoring system to some degree avoids subjectivity in the selection process, and should be used as a guideline in deciding on the candidature of applicants.</p>
Final Selection	<p>The final selection was done by an interview panel. In all instances the panel consisted of the Line Manager that did the sifting as well as the panel members selected by the line manager. In all the appointments the Employment Equity representative did not attend the interviews, instead an apology was tendered. Whilst such a situation is not desirable, the department complied with its recruitment policy by inviting the Employee Equity representative. The chairperson of the panel was in all cases, the senior line manager responsible for the post. In all instances the panel members had insight into the job content of the relevant post.</p>



Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>The final selection criteria were captured in writing and were highlighted in all submissions attached. In all instances where candidates were interviewed, there was no structured interview questionnaire developed prior to the interviews. Instead the selection panel formulated the questions to be asked, at the commencement of the interview. According to the Department this practice was applied to prevent candidates gaining access to the questions before the interviews. This practice, however, also raises concerns in that the questions to be posed of candidates are not carefully thought through and may not solicit the desired responses.</p> <p>The department checks beforehand whether panel members have any relationship with any of the candidates. This is done by the Human Resource Component that requests panel members prior to the commencement of the interviewing processes to identify whether they have any relationship with the short-listed candidates. If there is a potential conflict of interest, the panel member/s are substituted.</p> <p>All interview proceedings were recorded by the human resource practitioner and all the information including the final recommendations were captured in a submission. The decisions on the appointment of the candidates were taken by the appropriate delegated authority and the decisions were, in all instances, in line with the recommendations of the panel.</p>

Of particular concern during the audit of the recruitment and selection process in this department was the lack of job information which should inform advertisements. In the absence of such information the department is not in a position to ensure that the right candidates for the posts involved are reached. This may result in persons being appointed to positions for which they do not possess the necessary qualifications, skills and competencies. Such candidates may also be faced with a situation where the tasks that they must perform subsequent to their appointment are not aligned to the job contents of the advertisements that they based their applications on. This may lead to newly appointed candidates being disillusioned with their new work environment which may in turn lead to inadequate performance.

4.2.2 Northern Cape Department of Health

The findings on the extent to which the Northern Cape Department of Health complies with the norms and standards and applies best practice in recruiting and selecting are outlined in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Audit of selection processes in the Northern Cape Department of Health

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>The PSC was provided with job descriptions updated after the appointment of employees. The updated job descriptions also did not include the type of knowledge, skills and experience/exposure required for the posts. These job descriptions could therefore not serve as basis for the contents of the advertisements that were placed.</p> <p>According to the Department it is standard procedure to conduct job evaluations when posts on level 9 and above or newly created posts are advertised. However, no supporting documentation to uphold the statement could be provided. The PSC must therefore conclude that such job evaluations were not conducted and that the appointments made may not have been at the correct salary levels.</p> <p>SMS positions (i.e. levels 13 to 16) are advertised in local as well as selected national newspapers. Posts in the middle and junior management cadres i.e. levels 8 to 13 are advertised in at least two local daily newspapers. Positions from salary levels 1 to 8 may be advertised internally within the Department or externally in local newspapers. In terms of the Departmental Recruitment and Selection Policy, requests for the filling of vacant, funded posts are submitted to the relevant line function heads of components who are responsible for granting approval. However, documentation relating to such approvals could only be provided for one of the nine posts evaluated. Again the PSC must conclude that in the other instances, the adverts were placed without approval. This may lead to the filling of unfunded posts.</p>
Sifting of Applications	<p>Sifting is done in the Department following the compilation of a master list reflecting the personal particulars of all applicants. Human resource practitioners then determine which applications are to be included in a long list of candidates to be used for short-listing. Information and data included in the long list are race, gender, age, qualifications and experience of candidates. It was furthermore confirmed with the department during the audit that it is standard practise to discuss issues such as the selection criteria and employment equity targets with the Line Manager in question as well as with the Selection Panel.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Sifting of Applications (continued)	<p>Officials interviewed could, however, not provide any documentary proof of the set criteria used in determining which applicants should be included in the long list or why applicants were eliminated from the long list and the reasons for such eliminations. It appears to be left to the discretion of the human resource practitioner tasked with compiling the list. This is of concern as candidates with the necessary qualifications, skills and competencies may be eliminated during the sifting process.</p>
Short-listing	<p>According to officials interviewed, short listing occurs when long lists are provided to the line function heads of components (line managers) who requested the posts to be advertised. These line managers then “pick” which candidates should be short -listed. Documentary proof of the process followed during short-listing could not be provided. It appears that short-listed candidates are randomly picked from the long list without necessarily and consciously considering criteria such as gender, employment equity targets, job requirements or experience. Other requirements such as South African citizenship, good character (no criminal record as captured in item 4 of Form Z83), training, knowledge and skills are also not specifically considered or included in the short-lists or any other documentation used in the sifting and short-listing processes. The process applied during short-listing by this department is therefore inefficient and may lead to the elimination of appropriate candidates prior to the final selection process.</p>
Final Selection	<p>A structured interview questionnaire is used by the selection panel during interviews. All candidates are requested to respond to the same questions in order to ensure fairness and consistency. However, the Department does not keep copies of such questionnaires and the panel’s summary of candidates’ responses. According to the officials interviewed, these questionnaires are immediately shredded after the interviews have been conducted and not kept on file. This is cause for concern as the department would find it in a difficult position to defend disputes that emanate from the selection process without documentary evidence of the questions that were used during the interview process.</p> <p>Panel members are verbally requested by the Human Resource Component before the interviews are conducted to declare whether they have relatives and/or friends amongst candidates to be interviewed.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>If so, panel members are requested to recuse themselves from the interview panel. The relevant panel member is then substituted by another official from the Department. However, no records of this process are kept by the Department and the PSC was therefore not in a position to verify the information provided.</p> <p>A human resource practitioner records all proceedings, including the responses provided by the candidates, the deliberations by panel members on their assessment of the suitability of the various candidates as well as the reasons why a certain candidate is identified as being the most suitable. The panel's recommendations are captured in a submission addressed to the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Health as the original power to appoint has not been delegated. The final decision is then taken by the executive authority. Documentary proof provided during the audit exercise substantiating the aforementioned processes included the notes of the scribe, submission to the executive authority and appointment/promotion letters. In all nine cases the final decisions made by the MEC corresponded to the recommendations put forward by the selection panel.</p>

In the case of this department, the sort-listing process was found to be inefficient. There appears to be no pre-set criteria used in deciding on which candidates should be short-listed for interviews and final selection. This may result in candidates with the necessary competencies and skills being eliminated and others that do not meet the requirements for appointment being short-listed. Without pre-set criteria, the short-listing processes may be subjective and may be successfully challenged by unsuccessful candidates.

4.2.3 North West Department of Health

As indicated in **Table 6** a lack of documentation in the files of the Department of Health in the North West hampered the PSC's audit of the recruitment and selection processes applied in respect of the sample of nine posts selected. As a result the PSC had to conclude that such documents do not exist and that the department therefore did not comply with the national norms and standards.

Table 6: Audit of selection processes in the North West Department of Health

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	There were no job descriptions found in all of the nine files in respect of the posts selected. Copies of advertisements were found in only two of the nine files.



Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement (continued)	<p>The PSC therefore has to conclude that the posts were filled without due consideration to the inherent requirements of the posts and that the department did not comply with the Public Service Regulations in terms of advertising the relevant positions.</p> <p>There were no documents in all the nine files indicating that job evaluation was conducted by the Department before advertising vacant posts. The PSC must therefore conclude that no job evaluations were conducted. If any of the posts were newly created or on salary level 9 and above the Department would be in breach of the provisions of the Public Service Regulations.</p> <p>The duly completed application forms (i.e. the Z83) were found in only five of the nine files evaluated. Overall the department either practices very poor document management or critical parts of the recruitment and selection process have not been complied with. The PSC found the lack of documentary evidence unacceptable.</p>
Sifting of Applications	<p>In all the nine files, there were no records of how the sifting process was followed and as such the PSC must conclude that sifting is not done in any structured format.</p>
Short-listing	<p>No evidence could be found of the short listing process. It could therefore not be established if the same panel that conducts the interviews (i.e. final selection) is the same panel that did the screening and/or short-listing. The PSC must conclude that the identification of suitable candidates from the applications received is done in a haphazard manner.</p>
Final Selection	<p>Most of the files, however, had copies of the submissions containing reasoning for appointments, wherein information was recorded regarding individual candidates. Using the information contained in the submission reports, it could be established that in all instances where interviews were conducted (in this case five out of nine), the panels were properly constituted in terms of the PSR requirements. Line managers play a major role in interviews (e.g. for a staff nurse position, the panel would mostly consist of Professional nurses). However, the line manager in whose section the position is being filled would not necessarily be the chairperson of the panel.</p> <p>Furthermore, in all instances where interviews were conducted, personnel from human resource management provided secretariat services.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>In all the interviews conducted, the panel members used structured questions which are prepared by the panelists at least an hour before commencing with the actual interviews. This ensures that the possible risk of questions leaking to candidates is reduced.</p> <p>The final selection and appointment is done by the relevant authority who is Director HR for levels 1 to 8, HoD for levels 9 to 12 and EA for levels 13 to 16, which is in compliance with the Departmental delegations of authority.</p> <p>The panels' recommendations are, however, not specific on the person they want to be appointed. Instead, a few (about three candidates per post) are recommended for appointment. It could not be established what criteria is used by the relevant authority to select the candidate from the list of the candidates recommended for appointment.</p>

The recruitment and selection processes applied by the Department in all respects were found to be inadequate. The PSC has serious concerns about the ability of the Department to select the most suitable candidates for positions on its establishment. This may have serious negative consequences in terms of service delivery as candidates with the necessary skills and competencies to perform may not be appointed. In addition the department may successfully be challenged by aggrieved candidates emanating from the recruitment and selection process.

4.2.4 Western Cape Department of Health

The Western Cape Department of Health provided comprehensive documentation regarding the recruitment and selection processes followed in respect of the nine selected posts. The findings of the PSC are reflected in **Table 7**.

Table 7: Audit of selection processes in the Western Cape Department of Health

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>The PSC found evidence of updated job descriptions with sufficient updated detail on the job content in respect of all the posts audited. The purpose of the posts is clearly described and the activities are stated under each Key Performance Area (KPA). The expected outputs are quantified in terms of products and services that should be delivered. Performance standards are linked to each KPA and/or activity.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement (continued)	<p>The job description provides for critical information such as the required qualifications, prescribed KPA's, employment equity requirements, required knowledge, skills, etc. The job descriptions provided adequate information to base advertisements on.</p> <p>Posts on level 9 and above were job evaluated, prior to them being advertised. None of the posts below salary level 9 were newly created and therefore did not have to be evaluated.</p> <p>The advertisements contained all the critical information as captured in the approved job descriptions. The advertisements complied with the requirements of the PSR to attract all potential applicants. These include amongst others, the inherent requirements of the job, job title and core functions as well as Employment Equity requirements. The advertisements for the various posts were approved by the requisite delegated authority.</p>
Sifting of Applications	<p>The Department screens candidates in terms of minimum entry requirements which are developed and captured in a working paper prior to the sifting process based on the job description and the information contained in the advertisement. The line manager is responsible for drawing up the sifting criteria as well as conducting the actual sifting process, whilst the Human Resources component assisted and advised.</p>
Short-listing	<p>It was evident that the short-listing process was aimed at identifying a predetermined and manageable number of the best suited candidates for purposes of final selection from amongst all qualifying applications. For this purpose, short-listing criteria was formulated on paper, which motivated why only certain applications would be selected for final consideration. There was consistency in applying the short-listing criteria, which were aligned with the requirements of the advertisement. A scoring mechanism was utilized to identify the best-suited candidates. The selection committee was responsible for identifying the short-listing criteria, as well as conducting the actual short-listing process, and they were assisted and advised by HR. In all cases, the line manager had been part of the selection committee.</p>
Final Selection	<p>The final selection process is used to identify, from amongst the short-listed candidates, the one candidate that is the most suitable to fill the post. This final selection phase consisted of a selection interview. In some instances the selection interview was augmented by a competency test.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>The Department formulated final selection criteria on paper in writing to motivate the basis on which the most suitable candidate will be identified. The selection criteria included qualifications, training, knowledge, skills and experience, and was applied consistently and fairly. Scoring was done in accordance with the structured interview questionnaire and predetermined scoring standards in this regard, in order to identify the most suitable candidate. The selection committee was responsible for formulating the final selection criteria and conducting the actual final selection process. The line manager formed part of the selection committee, and HR advised and assisted.</p> <p>The department did not check beforehand that the panel members do not have any kind of relationship with one or more of the short-listed candidates, which may have been viewed as a conflict of interest. The Human Resource Component, however, advised that panel members are made aware of the prescripts in this regard.</p> <p>The department utilized the services of the human resource component to record the proceedings on paper. The record on file includes the responses provided by candidates, panel members' assessments and their deliberations after the interview as well as their motivation of why a certain candidate was identified as most suitable. The submission, including the recommendation of the panel, and all supporting documentation is captured on file. In all 9 cases that were scrutinized, the decision that was taken by the appropriate delegated authority was in line with the recommendations of the panel.</p>

The department's recruitment and selection processes complied in most respects with the national norms and standards and best practice. The only criticism that can be leveled against the department is that there is no formal process for identifying potential conflicts of interest of panel members. This may result in allegations of nepotism if it is found subsequent to the appointment of a candidate that he or she has any form of relationship with a panel member.

4.2.5 Limpopo Department of Health and Social Development

The Department of Health and Social Development in the Limpopo's compliance to the national norms and standards regarding recruitment and selection and the extent to which best practice was applied are reflected in **Table 8**.

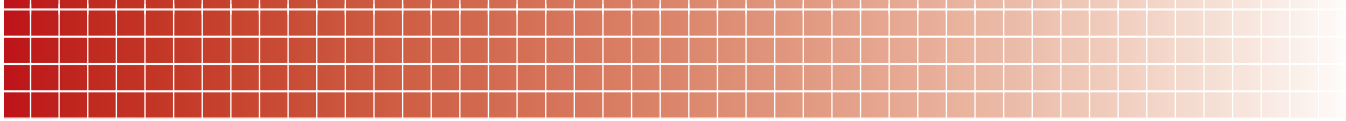


Table 8: Audit of selection processes in the Limpopo Department of Health

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
<p>Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement</p>	<p>The Department provided a copy of a job description only in respect of one post. Reasons for not providing job descriptions in respect of the other posts were not provided. The PSC must therefore conclude that such job description does not exist and that the department does not comply with the Public Service Regulations in this regard.</p> <p>The job description submitted in the case of the post of Manager: External Communications provided sufficient detail relating to the job content, outputs to be delivered by the job and the minimum requirements as well as the expected knowledge, skills and experience for the incumbent to successfully master the job. There was sufficient detail to develop an advertisement based on the job description.</p> <p>Out of the nine posts analyzed, the Department only provided the results of a job evaluation in respect of the post of Manager: External Communications, which was conducted on 25 January 2005. The Department could not provide information whether the other eight (8) posts were previously evaluated. None of the posts below salary level 9 was newly created and job evaluation was therefore not required. The PSC must, however, conclude that in respect of the five posts above salary level 9 in respect of which no information was provided, no job evaluation was conducted and the Department was therefore in transgression of the Public Service Regulations.</p> <p>The Department submitted proof of advertisements in respect of six (6) posts. The advertisements clearly indicated the inherent requirements of the posts concerned as required by the PSR. The applicable departmental delegations were also provided to confirm that the advertisements were approved by the relevant delegated authority.</p> <p>The Department could not provide a copy of the advertisement in respect of the post of two posts of Principal Specialist on level 13. It was further noted with concern that the candidates appointed to both posts of Principal Specialist were the only applications received and considered by the Department. The PSC must therefore conclude that the relevant posts were not advertised as required by the Public Service Regulations.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement (continued)	<p>The posts of Medical Manager (Level 12) and Staff Nurse (Level 6) were filled through inter-departmental and internal transfers. However, the Department's Transfer Policy was not provided to determine the process followed as well as compliance with its procedure. It could also not be determined whether the delegated authority had approved the transfer since the applicable delegations were not provided.</p>
Sifting of Applications	<p>The Department issued a Circular No. 119 of 2003 which provides procedures on recruitment and selection. The circular makes specific provision for short-listing criteria. The Department indicated that no formal screening was conducted on the posts reviewed. However, it was indicated that the selection panels were appointed to short-list and for this purpose, they were provided with all the applications. It could therefore be deduced that the screening was done simultaneously with the short-listing, and as such, the criteria for short-listing was applied.</p> <p>Schedules of applications were submitted, however, reasons as to why certain applications did not qualify for the next stage of the selection process were not provided. By not providing for reasons for rejecting certain applications, the Department could find itself in a difficult position should disputes arise regarding the fairness of the process.</p> <p>Scrutiny of documentation indicated that the selection panel was provided with all the applications for short-listing and that the sifting of applications was carried out simultaneously with the short-listing process, and was conducted by an appointed selection panel. The expectation by the Department that the selection panel must handle all the applications received, which may amount to hundreds, may hamper the quality of the short-listing process. Flowing from such a tedious process, misrepresentation of information in the Curriculum Vitae (CV) is likely to be missed, with the result that candidates with less appropriate or even without qualifications could be short-listed.</p>
Short-listing	<p>The short-listing criteria applied includes minimum entry requirements such as qualifications, required competencies and experience and were found to be in line with the requirements as indicated in the advertisements that the Department provided.</p>





Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Short-listing (continued)	<p>However, the information provided by the Department regarding the short-listing process did not indicate how applications were short-listed, nor were reasons provided why certain applications were found suitable for final selection.</p> <p>Based on information provided and flowing from the Department's Circular No. 119 of 2003, the selection panels were responsible for compiling the short-lists. Except in the case of the posts of Medical Manager and Staff Nurse which involved transfers, selection panels were duly appointed.</p> <p>The composition of selection panels consisted of appropriate line managers as well as scribes from human resource management.</p>
Final Selection	<p>The Department provided individual score-sheets in respect of the post of Chief Specialist and Principal Specialist with an indication of the scores achieved by the candidates. These score-sheets indicated that specific areas were identified for probing during interviews and candidates were rated according to a rating scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing "weak" and 5 representing "excellent". The areas identified for probing broadly encompassed the post requirements. In the case of the others posts only a summary of results were indicated in submissions for approval of the suitable candidates. There was no indication of how the scores were arrived at, nor were any reasons provided as to why other interviewed candidates were not successful.</p> <p>The Department's Circular No. 119 did not specify the type of interviews to be used, however, information provided by the Department indicated that interviews took place in the majority of cases audited. In respect of the posts of Chief Specialist and Principal Specialist it was clear that structured interviews were used.</p> <p>No indication was provided that the Department addressed potential conflicts during the selection process. The involvement of relatives and friends of selected candidates during the selection processes have the potential to compromise the fairness, consistency and justness of the outcome, and may open the Department to disputes.</p> <p>Save for the posts which involved transfers, the Department ensured in the majority of the posts reviewed that the constitution of the panels was in line with the provisions of the PSR.</p>



Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>The post of Principal Specialist was not handled through the selection process.</p> <p>The Department did not provide for electronic recording of the proceedings in all the cases reviewed. There was also no evidence provided that the proceedings were minuted, despite the express indication in the Department's Circular No. 119 of 2003 that the selection panels shall be constituted by the line managers with human resource management component providing the services of a scribe.</p> <p>In all the posts reviewed submissions were prepared and approved. However, it could not be determined in some of the posts whether the relevant delegated authorities approved the appointments since the applicable departmental delegations were not provided.</p>

The PSC found serious deficiencies in relation to the job information used by the department to recruit persons as well as the short-listing processes applied. Based on an analysis of the information provided by the department various aspects of the recruitment and selection process could be challenged and the department may not be appointing candidates that are suitable for the positions that they have applied for.

4.2.6 Free State Department of Health

The Free State Department of Health provided inadequate information to the PSC on the filling of the sample of nine posts. This hampered the PSC's ability to formulate findings and as a result the PSC had to conclude that such documentation and information does not exist. Detailed findings in this regard are provided **Table 9**.

Table 9: Audit of selection processes in the Free State Department of Health

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>No job descriptions were provided for any of the posts audited. The development of selection criteria for recruitment and selection purposes was done without job descriptions. No information was also provided on whether job evaluations were conducted and in the absence thereof the PSC must conclude that they were not conducted. Advertisements were provided in respect of all the posts but PSC was not in a position to verify that the contents of the advertisements were aligned to the job functions given the lack of information on job contents. It could also not be established whether the advertising of posts were approved by the requisite delegated authority.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Sifting of Applications	No evidence was provided of sifting of applications prior to short-listing. The PSC must therefore conclude that the department does not apply sifting which makes the process of short-listing that more cumbersome.
Short-listing	<p>There was no scoring mechanisms or any other method used for purposes of identifying the best suited candidates during the short-listing and the final selection processes. There was also a lack of evidence to confirm if the department devised a structured interview questionnaire to probe the areas identified in the selection criteria and whether these were aligned to the advertised requirements.</p> <p>The Department also failed to check beforehand that the panel members did not have any kind of relationship with one or more of the short-listed candidates as this might be viewed as a conflict of interest.</p> <p>There was also a lack of evidence to confirm that members of the selection panel possessed the desired depth of knowledge and insight of the job content in respect of which they had to evaluate a candidate's suitability. No process of declaring potential conflicts of interest of panel members is applied by the Department.</p>
Final Selection	Documentation on the approval of the final selection of candidates was not provided and as such the PSC is not in a position to comment on whether the decision was taken by the appropriate delegated authority.

The lack of documentary evidence impacted negatively on the PSC's ability to assess the selection processes applied by the department. Given the lack of evidence, the PSC must conclude that selection of candidates was done in a haphazard and unstructured manner which was not only in contravention of the Public Service Regulations but could have resulted in the department being challenged on appointments effected.

4.2.7 Eastern Cape Department of Health

As in the case of the Free State Department of Health, the Eastern Cape Department of Health provided very limited documentation upon which the PSC could base its findings. The lack of documentary evidence provided to the PSC is a serious indictment on the department's management of documents and records. The department is in breach of the Public Service Regulations and the appointments made could be challenged due the procedural flaws identified by the PSC. Based on the documentation submitted by the Department, however, the following findings could be made as reflected in **Table 10**.

Table 10: Audit of selection processes in the Eastern Cape Department of Health

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>No job descriptions could be found in files of most of the posts audited. No documents could also be provided to confirm whether any of the posts were evaluated. The PSC must therefore conclude that the posts were not evaluated and that the department is transgressing the Public Service Regulations.</p> <p>No advertisements could be found in respect of six out of the nine posts audited. When probed in relation to posts that were not advertised, the Department indicated that it made use of head-hunting when filling the sampled senior management positions but could not provide any documents or details of the processes followed in this regard. The Department appears to be in breach of the Public Service Regulations by not following the required procedures before embarking on head-hunting.</p>
Sifting of Applications	No evidence was provided of sifting of applications prior to short-listing. The PSC must therefore conclude that the department does not apply sifting.
Short-listing	<p>Whilst it is stated in the Department's Recruitment and Selection Policy that the Selection Committee and Human Resource Management are responsible for identifying the final selection criteria to be used, it could not be established if all the steps as outlined in the Policy were adhered to.</p> <p>In those cases where the Department held interviews, it used the services of human resource officials to record the deliberations by the panel members on their assessment of the various candidates' suitability and the reasons why a certain candidate was identified as being the most suitable.</p> <p>In general insufficient information on the short-listing process followed was provided and the PSC must conclude that the Department does not apply a structured short-listing process.</p>
Final Selection	In some cases the submissions for approval of the recommendations of the Selection Committee was not signed by the Chairperson of the Committee but by the Human Resource Manager. The Chairperson of the Committee therefore was not enabled to verify the recommendations made to the delegated authority. In all instances, however, the delegated authority approved the appointments.

As outlined in the findings the department experiences serious shortcomings as far as their recruitment and selection processes are concerned. The lack of job information and selection criteria in particular casts doubts about the department's ability to appoint persons with the desired skills and competencies.

4.2.8 Gauteng Department of Health

The PSC observed various deficiencies in the recruitment and selection processes applied by the Gauteng Department of Health. The specific findings in this regard are reflected in **Table I I**.

Table I I: Audit of selection processes in the Gauteng Department of Health

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>The Department did not have any job descriptions for the posts audited. The Department also only managed to provide the project team with the job evaluation results of one post (Chief Executive Officer of Dr. George Mukhari Hospital). The Deputy Director: Human Resource Administration & Management (DD:HRA&M) and Assistant Director of the same unit informed the PSC that it is a standard practice in the Department to evaluate all newly created posts, and those on levels 9 and above before they are advertised. However, without documentary evidence to this effect the PSC must conclude that job evaluations for the posts that formed part of the audit were not conducted.</p> <p>The unavailability of job descriptions made it impossible to determine whether the advertisement of posts was aligned to job descriptions. However, it was found that the Department complies fully with the requirements of the Public Service Regulations in as far as job advertisement is concerned. Jobs are also advertised internally, nationally in the Public Service Vacancy Circular as well as in the newspapers.</p> <p>The PSC was also informed during the interview with officials from the human resource management component that line managers discuss the need to advertise posts with their respective supervisors and then sent a request the Gauteng Shared Services Center for the post to be advertised. There is no formal process of approval for advertisements.</p>
Sifting of Applications	<p>The PSC was informed that the need for a sifting exercise depends on the number of applications received. In cases where not too many applications are received, sifting would not occur but the selection committee, which is chaired by the relevant line manager or his/her delegate would conduct short listing and sifting as a single process. The criteria for sifting and short listing are based on the entry requirements as stated in the advertisement.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Short-listing	<p>It was evident from the documentation that was received that in all cases the Department formulates the short listing criteria in writing. The selection committees draw schedules of all applications received and score the applicants on the basis on how they comply with the advertised criteria as well as other considerations such as employment equity requirements.</p> <p>It was noted from copies of the advertisements as well as the schedules of applications that were provided that the Department does not include the requirements of South African citizenship and good character as part of its selection criteria. The project team was, however, informed that the Department has the prerogative to appoint foreign health professionals at institutions. This would, however, depend on the scarcity of skills within the country. As a result preference is usually given to qualified South Africans. The Departments relies on security clearance and reference checking to determine whether a person is of good character or not. Although the requirement of good character is stated in the departmental policy, it is not recorded during the sifting and short listing exercises as people are inclined not to disclose their character when applying for jobs.</p> <p>The filling of one of the posts did not follow the normal recruitment and selection process. The incumbent of this position was appointed on a six-month fixed period following a motivation made to the Acting Human Resource Director. As a result no sifting or short listing was conducted. The Department acknowledged that there are no prescripts that empowered it to fill this position without advertising it, albeit on a fixed term contract basis.</p>
Final Selection	<p>The audit revealed that the Department used structured questionnaires to interview candidates for the final selection process. Spaces were provided in most of the questionnaires for remarks by the selection committee members. Some of the questionnaires contained model answers or examples of areas that the candidates needed to elaborate on to enable the panel to score them appropriately. Rating scales were also used to score the candidates on the basis of how they responded to questions.</p> <p>At all interviews there was a representative from the human resource management component who acted as a scribe. The deliberations by the panel member were also captured in the submissions to various persons who have delegated powers to approve appointments.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>The interview proceedings are not electronically recorded. It was noted from the said submissions that in most cases appointments were approved at the level of Director. The appointment of the Chief Executive Officer at Dr. George Mukhari Hospital (level 14) was, however approved by the Member of the Executive Council (MEC). The Department did not provide the submission, in which the appointment of the Chief Information Office at Central Office (Level 13) was motivated. The project team was therefore unable to determine whether this appointment was approved by a person with the appropriate level of authority.</p> <p>The Department indicated that approval can be granted by any person who occupies a post that is at least a level higher than the one that is filled. However appointments in respect of post on levels 14 and 15 are approved by the MEC, while the Premier approves those at level 16. In the absence of documentary proof to this effect, the PSC is not able to assess whether the persons that approved the filling of the sample of posts were authorised to do so. In addition, from an accountability perspective it appears irresponsible to delegate the authority to approve appointments to the levels as suggested.</p> <p>The departmental policy requires members of the selection committees to recuse themselves if members of their families are being interviewed. There was no evidence of the delegated authority deviating from the recommendation of the selection committees.</p>

The extent to which the department has delegated the authority to approve appointments to lower levels is of particular concern from an accountability perspective. The process dilutes management responsibility as the implication of the delegations is that authority to appoint an official can rest with the immediate supervisor. Senior management in this scenario do not have control over the quality of persons appointed in their components.

4.2.9 Mpumalanga Department of Health and Social Services

The Department of Health and Social Services in Mpumalanga failed to submit crucial documentation to the PSC, especially in relation to the short-listing process. The PSC was therefore not in a position to assess whether the Department applies relevant criteria for the selection of candidates. This may impact negatively on the identification of candidates most suitable for positions and may also result in persons being selected that do not possess the necessary skills and competencies. The findings of the PSC on recruitment and selection processes applied by the department are reflected in **Table 12**.

Table 12: Audit of selection processes in the Mpumalanga Department of Health

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>The department could not provide any job descriptions in respect of the posts audited. In terms of the departmental recruitment policy the line manager must after identifying the need for filling of a vacant post, provide the Human Resource Manager with a job description and job requirements. It is therefore clear that the Department is not only failing to adhere to the Public Service Regulations but also to its own policy.</p> <p>In terms of the Departmental recruitment policy, any post from salary level 9 upwards must be subjected to job evaluation prior to it being advertised. However, no documentation was provided to suggest that job evaluations were conducted for any of the selected posts. An official from the human resource branch indicated that conducting job evaluation remains a challenge in the department. The human resource branch is allegedly being instructed by management to fill posts without conducting job evaluations. This is in direct contravention of the Public Service Regulations with respect to newly created posts and posts on salary levels 9 and higher.</p> <p>Whilst adverts for all the posts were provided, there was record to suggest that the advertisements were approved by the requisite delegated authority. The PSC must therefore conclude that management oversight over the filling of posts is absent and that unfunded vacancies may in fact be advertised.</p>
Sifting of Applications	<p>Sifting is done through the compilation of a master list reflecting the personal particulars of all applicants. The list which normally includes race, gender, age, qualifications and experience, is compiled by the human resources branch and forwarded to the relevant line managers for short-listing.</p>
Short-listing	<p>The Department could not provide any information on the short-listing process applied in selecting potential candidates for final selection. The PSC must therefore conclude that the Department does not apply a structured process of short-listing to identify potential candidates that may be suitable for appointment.</p>
Final Selection	<p>Based on the information obtained from the Department, structured interview questionnaires and scoring sheets were only used for certain interviews. Panel members are also not required to disclose whether they have any conflict of interest in respect of their relationships with candidates being interviewed.</p>



Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>In terms of the departmental policy, panel members should possess the desired depth of knowledge and insight of the job content in respect of the post. However, the PSC was not able to determine whether the panel members used for the relevant posts possessed the necessary knowledge due to the inadequate information provided.</p> <p>The human resource management component takes minutes during interviews. In all cases audited, submissions were prepared recommending suitable candidates for appointment which were subsequently approved by the appropriate delegated authority or the Executing Authority in the case of the SMS.</p>

Based on the information provided to the PSC, this Department is in breach of the requirements of the Public Service Regulations on a number of grounds. No job descriptions exist for the selected posts and no evidence could be found that job evaluations were conducted for any of the posts. The absence of a structured short-listing process is further, of major concern to the PSC as it implies that the Department haphazardly chooses candidates from those that have applied for final selection. Given the deficiencies identified there must be serious doubts about the ability of the Department to recruit persons with the desired skills and competencies.

4.2.10 KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health

As discussed in **Table 13**, areas of concern regarding the recruitment and selection processes applied by the Department of Health in KwaZulu-Natal are the lack of job information on the selected posts and non-compliance to the regulatory requirement that posts above salary level 9 have to be job evaluated prior to advertisement.

Table 13: Audit of selection processes in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>The department could only provide job descriptions for six of the posts selected. These job descriptions contained sufficient details on job content, outputs to be delivered and inherent requirements to enable advertisements to be compiled. It is, however, not clear on what basis the advertisements for the remaining three posts were compiled.</p> <p>Only three of the selected posts were job-evaluated. All three these posts are at SMS level.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement (continued)	<p>Whilst the posts below salary level 9 were not newly created and therefore did not have to be evaluated, the three posts between salary levels 9 and 12 should have been subjected to job evaluation prior to advertisement. In this regard the Department therefore did not adhere to the provisions of the Public Service Regulations.</p> <p>All of the selected posts were advertised. However, in respect of eight of the posts the Department could not provide copies of approvals for the posts to be advertised. The only post in respect of which approval for advertisement could be found was that of a Chief Medical Officer. In terms of the departmental delegations, the authority for the advertisement of promotion posts at Hospitals, except for Hospital Manager, is delegated to the Human Resource Manager. However, the decision to advertise the post of Chief Medical Officer was taken by EXCO and no reasons for this decision could be provided.</p>
Sifting of Applications	<p>The human resource management component is responsible for identifying the sifting criteria and doing the actual sifting. The sifting process takes into consideration the inherent requirements for appointment to the post. A long list of candidates is compiled by the human resource management component following the sifting process and submitted to the relevant line manager for short-listing purposes.</p>
Short-listing	<p>The department follows a structured process of short-listing that involves the selection committee chaired by the relevant line manager. During the short-listing process criteria are applied by the selection committee based on the requirements as set out in the advertisement. These criteria include qualifications, training, knowledge, skills and experience.</p>
Final Selection	<p>The Selection Committees develop structured questions based on the requirements for the relevant posts to be used during the interview.</p> <p>In terms of paragraph 7.1 of the Departmental Recruitment and Selection Policy, all members of the Selection Committees must complete and sign a document to declare to the Chairperson (before the interviews commence) any relationship he/she has in respect of any of the candidates that may be viewed as a conflict of interest. In respect of the sample of posts audited, all the panel members completed and signed this document but there was no declaration of any kind of relationship that the panel members had with any of the short-listed candidates.</p>



Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>The selection panels were appropriately constituted as required by the Public Service Regulations in terms of the number and grading of members as well as representation of historically disadvantaged persons.</p> <p>The Department recorded the deliberations by the panel members on their assessments of the various candidates' suitability and the reasons why a certain candidate was found suitable for the post. The recommendations on which decisions were taken were captured in a submission. In terms of the departmental delegations of authority, the Human Resource Manager has the delegated authority to approve appointments in vacant posts below salary level 9, the Hospital Manager for vacant professional posts up to and including salary level 12 and the Executing Authority has the authority to approve appointments in all vacant SMS posts. In all instances, appointments were approved by the correct delegated authority.</p>

A good practice that emerged from the recruitment and selection process applied by this department is the completion of a document by selection committee members in which they declare conflicts of interests in respect of their relationship with candidates to be interviewed. This practice ensures that nepotism in the recruitment and selection process is avoided.

4.3 Audit of Recruitment and Selection Processes in Departments of Public Works

The recruitment and selection processes applied in the departments of Public Works at National and Provincial level were audited to measure compliance with the national norms and standards and the principles contained in the PSC's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit³⁰. As indicated in the discussion on limitations in Chapter 1, the departments of Public Works in the provinces of Gauteng and the Eastern Cape did not provide the PSC with the requested information and were therefore excluded from the Audit. **Table 14** provides a synopsis of the extent to which the participating departments complied with the national norms and standards and applied best practice in all aspects of the different phases of the recruitment and selection process.

30 Republic of South Africa. Recruitment and Selection Toolkit. Public Service Commission, 2004.

Table 14: Extent to which departments of Public Works complied with national norms and standards and applied best practice in the recruitment and selection

Recruitment Process	National		Northern Cape		North West		Western Cape		Limpopo		Free State		Mpumalanga		KwaZulu-Natal	
	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply	Complied	Did not comply
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	C			DC		DC	C			DC	C			DC		DC
Sifting	C			DC	C		C			DC	C		C		C	
Short-listing	C			DC		DC	C			DC		DC	C			DC
Final Selection		DC	C		C		C			DC	C			DC		DC

Legend:

C: Complied with the national and norms and standards and applied best practice in the recruitment and selection process

DC: Did not comply with the national and norms and standards or did not apply best practice in the recruitment and selection process

Based on the findings of the Audit only three departments, the National Department and the provincial departments of Public Works in the Western Cape and Mpumalanga, complied in all respects with the national norms and standards and best practice as far as job information, evaluation and advertisement is concerned. The basis upon which the remaining five departments compiled their advertisements and ensured that posts are filled at the correct salary level is therefore uncertain. Without sufficient and updated job information, the relevant departments could not be in a position to ensure that the right candidates for the relevant posts are employed.

Six departments applied a thorough sifting process whilst only three departments complied in all respects to the norms and standards and best practice as far as short-listing is concerned. The lack of short-listing criteria in six of the departments raises concern about the extent to which these departments are able to identify candidates with the necessary skills and competencies for the relevant posts. This deficiency may also result in competent candidates being eliminated prior to the final selection process.

The final selection process complied with national norms and standards and best practice in only three of the departments.

As in the case of the Departments of Health inadequate documentation was provided by departments and where such documentation could not be presented, the PSC had to assume that they were non-existent.

The analysis as provided in **Table 14** was informed by the PSC’s audit of each of the nine posts identified per department. The findings per department in respect of the four focal areas of the investigation are reflected below.



4.3.1 National Department of Public Works

Out of the nine appointments selected for this department, one appointment was for the Special Advisor (post level 16). The appointment of the Special Advisor in the department was done in accordance with section 12A of Public Service Act.1994 which clearly states that “*an executing authority may appoint one or more persons under a special contract*”. This appointment was effected in terms of *Annexure F* of the Ministerial Handbook and complied in all respects therewith. The extent to which the recruitment and selection processes of the other selected posts complied with national norms and standards and best practice are discussed in **Table 15**.

Table 15: Audit of selection processes in the National Department of Public Works

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	The Department embarked on a major job evaluation project during 2006/2007 financial year where all the posts in the staff establishment were evaluated. All the adverts were aligned to the job descriptions and were in compliance with the Public Service Regulations as well as the Department’s Recruitment and Selection Policy. The advertisements contained sufficient detail on the contents and requirements for a specific post and should therefore have ensured that the desired pool of candidates is reached.
Sifting of Applications	The sifting criteria and the actual sifting are done by a panel. The panel is selected by the line manager and approved by the Director: Human Resources Management for levels 1-12, and approved by the Minister for levels 13 and above. This is in line with the Department’s Recruitment & Selection Policy. The panel is normally constituted of the line manager, a representative from the Human Resources Department and other members as selected by the line manager. During the sifting process candidates that do not meet the minimum entry requirements as set in the advert are eliminated.
Short-listing	The selection committee is involved in all instances with the short-listing of candidates for final selection. Preset criteria are developed based on the requirements as contained in the advertisement and a scoring mechanism is used to short-list and eliminate candidates. The scoring mechanism is not uniform to all posts but takes into consideration the unique demands of each post.
Final Selection	The Department uses interviews by the same selection committee responsible for short-listing as the final selection tool for selecting the most suitable candidate for the post. In all instances, officials who formed part of the committee were conversant with the job content.

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>The department uses the minimum requirements contained in the advert to formulate questions. The responses of candidates are rated through a scoring mechanism in respect of posts on salary level 12 and below. For posts above salary level 12, a scoring mechanism is not used. The elimination of candidates must be done in a justifiable manner and the use of a scoring system could avoid subjectivity in the selection process.</p> <p>The department does not use a structured interview questionnaire for purposes of final selection. Questions are mostly formulated on the morning of the interview by members of the panel. This practice raises concerns in that the questions to be posed of candidates may not be carefully considered and may therefore not elicit the responses required to take an informed decision on the candidature of persons interviewed.</p> <p>The Department does not verify whether panel members have any kind of relationship with one or more of the short-listed candidates that may be viewed as a conflict of interest. This may result in allegations of nepotism where panel members have not declared such relationships.</p> <p>In all instances, the interview proceedings were recorded by means of electronic recording as well as by means of the services of a human resource practitioner. The recommendations were captured in a submission and approval was according to the recommendations of the panel and by the correct delegated authority. The recommendations were not deviated from.</p>

The final selection phase applied by the department is of concern. The process during interviews appears not to be structured and may lead to candidates that do not have the necessary skills and competencies being appointed. The selection committee when doing the short-listing should be based on the criteria developed for this purpose also be in a position to develop structured questionnaires for use during the interview process.

4.3.2 Northern Cape Department of Transport, Roads and Public Works

The short-listing process applied by the Northern Cape Department of Transport, Roads and Public Works was found to be inadequate. The Department was not able to provide any documentation to support how the short-listing process is conducted and the PSC has to conclude that the identification of candidates for final selection is done in a haphazard manner. The extent to which the Department has complied with national norms and standards and applied best practice in its recruitment and selection processes are further elaborated upon in **Table 16**.

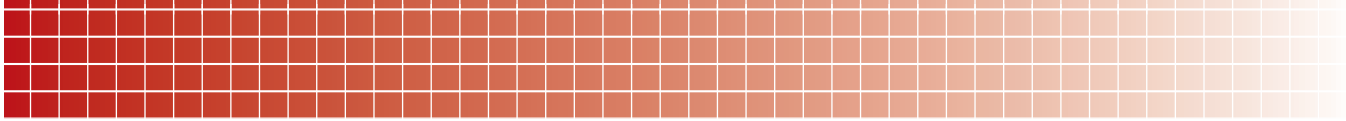


Table 16: Audit of selection processes in the Northern Cape Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>The department provided copies of the job descriptions for all the positions audited on production level (salary levels 3 to 6) as well as middle management service (MMS) level (salary levels 9 to 12). The job descriptions were found to be detailed and contained extensive information on job content, knowledge and skills required and outputs to be achieved by the incumbent. The data contained in the job descriptions of these posts were sufficient to develop detailed advertisements.</p> <p>According to the officials interviewed, employees within the SMS do not have job descriptions similar to the rest of the Department. Their job descriptions are captured in the Performance Agreements (PAs) signed by the individual members. This in contravention of the Public Service Regulations which provide that executive authorities shall establish job descriptions for all posts within departments.</p> <p>According to the Department, if a post on level 9 and above or a newly created post is advertised, job evaluations are conducted in most instances. An exercise was concluded during the 2005/2006 financial year during which all positions on the establishment of the Department were subjected to job evaluations. However, as job evaluation in the Province is primarily a centralized function executed by the Efficiency Services Unit in the Office of the Premier, it is not always regarded a practical arrangement to have job evaluations done. Lengthy time periods lapse before the said Unit actually conducts the evaluations resulting in delays. Should the Department have to fill a position urgently which requires an immediate job evaluation, it will in an attempt to save time benchmark the position against a similar position already job evaluated by the Efficiency Services Unit and utilize the results and information so acquired. The fact that all posts were evaluated in 2005/2006 financial year means that the posts that were selected for this Audit complied with the provisions of the Public Service Regulations. It is, however, of concern that newly created posts in future may not be evaluated timeously due to the constraints as discussed.</p> <p>All advertisements were aligned to the appropriate job descriptions. Officials interviewed indicated that it is standard procedure to conduct an interview with the relevant line manager to establish whether any additional information should be included in the advertisement.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement (continued)	In line with the departmental policy on recruitment and selection, the widest possible pool of candidates should be reached through the advertisement of posts. Positions from levels 1 to level 8 are advertised within the Department as a minimum, utilising all reasonable avenues to ensure maximum exposure to the relevant advertisement. Positions from salary level 8 and higher are advertised externally as well as internally. SMS posts are advertised nationally as well as inside the Public Service.
Sifting of Applications	Sifting is done through the utilisation of a computer program in which all applications are captured. This long-list of applicants is then submitted to the interviewing panel who conducts the actual short-listing. Requirements such as South African citizenship, good character (no criminal record as captured in item 4 of Form Z83), training, knowledge and skills are not included in the criteria used to compile the long-list of candidates.
Short-listing	<p>No documentary evidence indicating the set criteria used in determining which applicants should be short-listed or the grounds on which applicants are eliminated from the long-list could be provided to the PSC as proof of the procedure. The selection panel, of which the appropriate line manager is a member, is responsible for identifying the final selection criteria used during the interview as well as to make a recommendation on the candidates to be short-listed to the MEC. This information is then captured in a submission to the MEC to have the short-list approved.</p> <p>The PSC must conclude that, in the absence of specific criteria for short-listing, candidates are selected in a haphazard way and that candidates with the necessary skills and competencies may be eliminated as a result.</p>
Final Selection	<p>A structured interview questionnaire is used during the interviews. All candidates are requested to respond to the same questions in order to ensure fairness and consistency. However, the Department does not keep copies of such questionnaires. As is the case in the Northern Cape Department of Health, it is immediately shredded after the interviews are conducted. No substantiating documents could therefore be provided.</p> <p>Panel members are, before the interviews take place, requested to declare if participation in the interview panel will result in improper personal gain or whether there are relatives and/or friends who are amongst the candidates to be interviewed. Panel members are also requested to sign a confidentiality agreement.</p>





Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>Should a conflict of interest be disclosed, the panel member in question is requested to recuse him or herself from the interview panel. However, records of the process are only kept for the period during which interviews are conducted and destroyed immediately after the completion of the interview process. In the absence of records in this regard, the recruitment and selection process may be subject to scrutiny and review.</p> <p>It is imperative that members of the selection panel possess the required knowledge and insight of the job content of the advertised post to evaluate a candidate's suitability. Should this not be the case, officials are briefed before the interviews. However, the Department does not keep any record of such briefings.</p> <p>The Department records by means of a scribe the responses provided by the candidates, the deliberations by panel members on their assessment of the various candidates and their suitability to fill the advertised position as well as the reasons why a certain candidate is regarded as being the most suitable. The recommendations are captured in a submission addressed to the Member of the Executive Council for Transport, Roads and Public Works, as the power to appoint has not been delegated. The final decision is then taken by the MEC. The final decision on all cases audited was in line with the recommendations made by the selection panels.</p>

Apart from the concerns regarding the lack of short-listing criteria, already raised, the fact that the Department does not keep records of the declaration of conflicts of interest by panel members is also of concern. In the PSC's opinion this defeats the whole objective of declaring conflicts of interests as there is no record that the department can refer to should a dispute be declared by an unsuccessful candidate alleging the undue influence of a panel member that has a relationship with the successful candidate.

4.3.3 North West Department of Public Works

The problem of inadequate documentation on the files provided by departments was again observed in respect of the North West Department of Public Works. Based on the documentation presented, the following findings as indicated in **Table 17** were, however, made in respect of the extent of compliance to national norms and standards and the application of best practice in the recruitment and selection processes.



Table 17: Audit of selection processes in the North West Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>The Department only provided copies of advertisements in respect of six of the posts selected. Job descriptions were provided for all posts below the SMS. However, no job descriptions were provided in respect of the posts at SMS level. The PSC must therefore conclude that no job descriptions exist for these posts. There was evidence of job evaluation carried out in only one of the three posts at SMS level. The Department is therefore in breach of the provisions of the Public Service Regulations.</p> <p>All the posts in respect of which copies of advertisements were obtained, were advertised in the national newspapers as required by the Public Service Regulations (PSR) and the Departmental policy on Recruitment and Selection. However, no evidence could be found to the effect that such advertisements were approved by the correct delegated levels.</p>
Sifting of Applications	<p>In all the cases, approved selection panels are responsible for sifting through the applications to identify suitable candidates for short-listing, using the minimum entry requirements reflected in the relevant advertisements. The appropriate line manager is always part of the process in this regard, though not necessarily as the chairperson.</p>
Short-listing	<p>Certain information could not be found in some files because regional offices conduct their own interviews and whilst the requirement is that all documents must then be sent to head office for filling, this is not always the case. The entry requirements that were found to be common in the advertisements included qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience. No mention was made of South African citizenship and good character (as per item 4 of form Z83).</p>
Final Selection	<p>It was established during an interview with one of the human resource management officials that it is standard procedure for the Department to check beforehand that panel members do not have any kind of relationship with any of the short-listed candidates, to ensure that there is no conflict of interest. In the event that there is, that particular panel member would be expected to recuse him/herself from interviewing that candidate(s). This important process however, is not recorded.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>The Department uses the services of officials from human resource management to take minutes during interviews. The approved selection panels are usually guided by the minimum entry requirements reflected in the advertisements to eliminate those applications that do not meet the requirements. There are no separate entry requirements (i.e. additional criteria) that are formulated by the panels apart from those in the relevant advertisements.</p> <p>In all cases, the approved selection panel utilized a structured interview score sheet to interview short-listed candidates.</p>

4.3.4 Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works

The Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works provided comprehensive documentation to the PSC in relation to the recruitment and selection processes applied in respect of the nine selected posts. As indicated in **Table 18**, the recruitment and selection processes complied in most respects with national norms and standards and except for verifying possible conflicts of interest of selection committee members also applied best practice.

Table 18: Audit of selection processes in the Western Cape Department of Transport and Public Works

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>The PSC found evidence of updated job descriptions with sufficient updated detail on the job content. The purpose of the posts is clearly described and the activities are stated under each Key Performance Area (KPA). The expected outputs are quantified in terms of products and services that should be delivered. Performance standards are linked to each KPA and/or activity. The job description provides for critical information such as the required qualifications, prescribed KPA's, employment equity requirements, required knowledge, skills, etc. Posts on level 9 and above were job evaluated, prior to them being advertised, however, most of the posts were job evaluated about four years prior to the date of the investigation.</p> <p>The advertisements contained all the critical recruitment and appointment information as captured in the approved job descriptions. The advertisements complied with the requirements of the PSR to attract potential applicants.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement (continued)	These include amongst others, the inherent requirements of the job, job title and core functions, Employment Equity requirements, etc. The advertisements for various posts are approved in terms of the delegated authority.
Sifting of Applications	The Department screens candidates in terms of minimum entry requirements which were developed and captured in a working paper prior to the sifting process based on the job description and information contained in the advertisement. The line manager is responsible for drawing up the sifting criteria as well as conducting the actual sifting process, whilst the Human Resources component assisted and advised.
Short-listing	It is evident that the short-listing process is aimed at identifying a predetermined and manageable number of the best suited candidates for purposes of final selection from amongst all qualifying applications. For this purpose, short-listing criteria was formulated on paper, which motivated why only certain applications would be selected for final consideration. There was consistency in applying the short-listing criteria, which were aligned with the requirements of the advertisement. A scoring mechanism was utilized to identify the best-suited candidates. The selection committee was responsible for identifying the short-listing criteria, as well as conducting the actual short-listing process, and they were assisted and advised by HR. In all cases, the line manager had been part of the selection committee.
Final Selection	<p>The department utilised the final selection process to identify, from amongst the short-listed candidates the one candidate that is the most suitable to fill the post. This final selection phase consisted of a selection interview. In some instances the selection interview was augmented by a competency test.</p> <p>The Department also formulated final selection criteria on paper to motivate the basis on which the most suitable candidate will be identified. The selection criteria included qualifications, training, knowledge, skills and experience, and was applied consistently and fairly. Scoring was done in accordance with the structured interview questionnaire and predetermined scoring standards in this regard, in order to identify the most suitable candidate. The selection committee was responsible for formulating the final selection criteria and conducting the actual final selection process. The line Manager formed part of the selection committee, and HR advised and assisted.</p>



Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>The departments did not check beforehand that the panel members do not have any kind of relationship with one or more of the short-listed candidates, which may have been viewed as a conflict of interest, though HR ensured that the members were aware of the prescripts in this regard.</p> <p>The services of the human resource component to record the proceedings on paper is used. The record on file includes the responses provided by candidates, panel members assessments and their deliberations after the interview as well as their motivation of why a certain candidate was identified as most suitable. The submission, including the recommendation of the panel, and all supporting documentation is captured on file. In all 18 cases that were scrutinized, the decision that was taken by the appropriate delegated authority was in line with the recommendations of the panel.</p>

4.3.5 Limpopo Province Department of Public Works

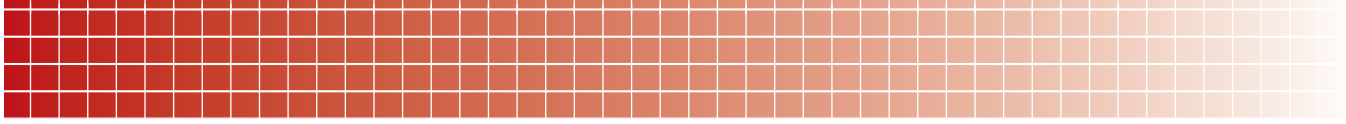
A serious matter of concern in the Limpopo Department of Public Works was the lack of information on the short-listing of candidates for selection. This step in the recruitment and selection process is crucial in deciding on the candidature of those that have applied to be subjected to the final selection. The findings in respect of the selected nine pots are discussed in detail in **Table 19**.

Table 19: Audit of selection processes in the Limpopo Department of Transport and Public Works

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>Although nine (9) posts were identified, the Department provided information for eight (posts). Out of the eight (8) posts analyzed, the Department provided copies of job descriptions in respect of five (5) posts. The job descriptions submitted contained sufficient detail relating to the job content, outputs to be delivered, minimum requirements as well as the expected knowledge, skills and experience for the incumbent to successfully master the job. Furthermore, the job descriptions contained sufficient detail to develop selection criteria for purposes of recruitment and selection.</p> <p>With regard to the post of Chief Financial Officer (CFO), the Department provided a document with a title “Draft Job Description”.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement (continued)	<p>The required details were clearly stated in the said draft job description. However, since the document is in draft form, it is therefore the view that the post does not have an updated job description and as such, the Department did not comply with Public Service Regulations.</p> <p>None of the eight posts reviewed, was newly created. Out of six (6) posts for which the PSR require job evaluation (Levels 9 and higher), the Department provided evidence of the job evaluation results in only two posts, i.e. Manager: Service Delivery Improvement (SDI) and Senior Manager: SDI. Both posts were evaluated in 2001 and were found to be on levels 11 and 13 respectively. The post of Manager: SDI involved a transfer from another department. Analysis of documentation submitted indicated that the incumbent was previously appointed on level 11, but was upon transfer appointed on level 12. The post became vacant when the previous incumbent was appointed in a senior post in another department.</p> <p>In a Memorandum to the MEC in which approval was sought for the transfer, it was indicated that the incumbent was appointed on salary level 11 in her previous department and that the transfer would not have any financial implications. No indication was provided as to how the incumbent came to be appointed on salary level 12 upon transfer. The Public Service Regulations require that a job evaluation be conducted if a post is to be upgraded. Since no subsequent job evaluation results were provided to indicate the upgraded level for this post, it is the view that the appointment was not correctly handled and therefore, not in accordance with the Public Service Regulations. The Department could not provide information whether the other four (4) posts above salary level 9.</p> <p>The Department submitted proof of advertisements in respect of five (5) posts out of the eight reviewed. Two posts of level 13 were advertised within the Limpopo Provincial Government as well as nationwide in the print media in line with the PSR. The other two posts were below SMS and were advertised internally in accordance with the provisions of PSR. Confirmation regarding the advertisement of the post of CFO could not be provided. Being a level 14 post, it was required of the Department to advertise this post nationwide prior to filling it. The position of CFO plays a critical role in ensuring effective and efficient use of State funds and therefore, requires a person with a strong financial acumen.</p>



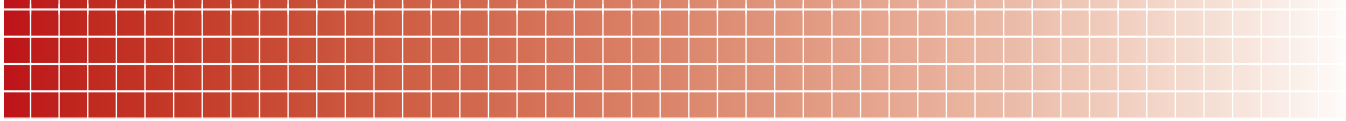


Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement (continued)	<p>It is expected that the filling of such a position should emanate from a rigorous and careful decision process. The Department indicated that this post was advertised nationally through the print media and internally through the Vacancy Circular No 4 of 2005. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA)'s Vacancy Circular No 4 of 2005 do not contain any advertisements for the Limpopo Provincial Government. In the absence of proof of the advertisement The PSC must conclude that the post was not advertised.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the advertisements that were provided indicated the inherent requirements of the posts concerned as required by the PSR. Departmental delegations were also provided to confirm that the advertisements were approved by the relevant delegated authority.</p>
Sifting of Applications	<p>The Department's Recruitment Policy determines that screening of applications must be done prior to interviewing and that the same criteria must be applied in a consistent manner to depict the inherent requirements of the job.</p> <p>Out of the posts audited, the Department provided evidence in only one post (Registry Clerk on level 5) in respect of which criteria was formulated for the purpose of sifting applications. In the other cases, the Department indicated that it used the minimum entry requirements contained in the advertisement.</p> <p>Schedules of applications were submitted, however, reasons as to why certain applications did not qualify for the next stage of the selection process were not provided. This may place the Department in a difficult position should disputes arise wherein reasons would be required why certain applications were disqualified.</p> <p>Save for cases where advertisements were provided, it could not be determined whether applications of incumbents of the reviewed posts may have been allowed to proceed to the next stage undeservedly. It was noted however that in the case of the five posts for which proof of advertisements were provided, all of them met the minimum specified requirements such as qualifications, training, knowledge, skills and experience.</p> <p>Scrutiny of documentation indicated that the sifting of applications is carried out simultaneously with the short-listing process, and is conducted by an appointed selection panel.</p>



Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Sifting of Applications (continued)	This may be a tedious process especially when many applications were received, and may result inappropriate candidates being short-listed.
Short-listing	<p>The Department indicated that it has developed criteria for short-listing based on the minimum requirements of the posts. However, information confirming the formulation of short-listing criteria was only provided in the case of the post of Registry Clerk (Level 5). The said criteria were developed in line with the requirements as indicated in the advertisement. The departmental policy on recruitment has not made provision of how short-listing should be conducted, except to indicate that a short-list must be compiled for the purpose of interviews.</p> <p>The information provided by the Department regarding the short-listing process did not indicate how applications were short-listed, nor were reasons provided why certain applications were found suitable for the final selection. Despite the requirement in the SMS Handbook that a scoring matrix be used for determining the most suitable candidates, the Department failed to provide a scoring mechanism even for the SMS positions filled. The Department's policy was also silent on this aspect.</p> <p>Save for the post of Manager: SDI (Level 12) and Deputy Manager: Disposal Management (Level 9) submissions or memoranda for approval for appointing successful candidates indicated that selection panels were appointed to conduct the short-listing. The composition of such panels consisted of the line managers as well as would-be scribes from Human Resource (HR). Records of the short-listing process, including minutes, indicating reasons for certain applications to proceed to the next stage was not provided in all the cases reviewed.</p> <p>The post of Manager: SDI was filled through a departmental transfer initiated by the incumbent. In the case of the post of Deputy Manager: Disposal Management, the Department only provided a letter of appointment. No indication was provided regarding the process leading to the appointment. Again serious concerns regarding document management and record keeping.</p>
Final Selection	The Department provided individual score-sheets in respect of the SMS posts reviewed, which indicated that specific areas were identified for probing during interviews.





Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	<p>The areas concerned broadly encompassed the post requirements. It appears that the specific areas were tested through interviews by the selection panel. Since the post of Manager: SDI was filled through transfer, the selection criteria did not apply.</p> <p>With regard to the post of Deputy Manager: Disposal Management (Level 9) no indication was provided of criteria used. In the case of the other posts scores allocated were indicated in the submissions for approval of appointment of the suitable candidates without any illustration or explanation as to what informed those scores. The Departmental policy has only stated that structured interviews must be conducted to assess the individual's suitability for a position.</p> <p>Individual score-sheets of the audited SMS posts were provided. Different key performance areas are probed, which carry specific weightings. The total score in respect of each candidate was on each score sheet. The candidate with the highest score was regarded as the most successful candidate. Based on the findings, the panel recommended the candidate with the highest score for the post.</p> <p>The Department indicated that it is standard procedure that the Chairperson of the evaluation panel would prior to the interviews, request panel members to declare any possible conflict of interests. No indication could be found in this regard in the Department's policy on recruitment, nor was evidence provided supporting this.</p> <p>In the majority of cases reviewed, the Department ensured that the selection panel comprised of members with direct knowledge and experience in the areas attached to the post.</p> <p>The Department did not provide for electronic recording of the proceedings in all the cases reviewed. In the majority of cases, no evidence that proceedings were recorded by any other means was provided. In the case of the post of Senior Manager: SDI, the Department provided the minutes of the selection proceedings, but these were not signed by the chairperson and /or selection panel to ensure their validity.</p> <p>Evidence was provided regarding submissions containing recommendations of the suitable candidates. These submissions were approved by the relevant delegated authorities as confirmed from the departmental delegations provided and there were no deviations.</p>



4.3.6 Free State Department of Public Works

The Free State Department of Public Works complied in most respects to the national norms and standards with regard to the recruitment and selection processes applied in respect of the nine selected posts. As indicated in **Table 20**, however, concerns were identified especially in relation to the short-listing of candidates.

Table 20: Audit of selection processes in the Free State Department of Transport and Public Works

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	Job descriptions were in place for all posts audited and contain sufficient detail to inform advertisements. All posts on salary level 9 and above audited were also job evaluated. The advertisements were aligned to job descriptions and were approved by the correct delegated level.
Sifting of Applications	The sifting of applications is the responsibility of the Selection Committee supported by human resource management.
Short-listing	<p>The short listing criteria which is aligned to the advertisement, is determined by the Selection Committee and is pre-approved by the Head of Department. All applicants are evaluated against the pre-determined criteria. There is no standing procedure to check beforehand that the panel members do not have any kind of relationship with one or more of the short-listed candidates that may be viewed as a conflict of interest.</p> <p>There is no procedure to check whether panel members possess the desired depth of knowledge and insight of the job content in respect of which they have to evaluate the candidates' suitability. One hour before the commencement of interviews, the panel members meet to discuss the modus operandi, scoring and questions. This is of concern as the questions identified may not be carefully thought through and may not elicit the required responses.</p> <p>The proceedings of the interviews are captured by a human resource management official.</p>
Final Selection	The recommendations of the panel are approved and implemented by the HoD for levels below SMS and the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for SMS members. In all instances the recommendations of the panel were accepted by the HoD and MEC.

4.3.7 Mpumalanga Department of Public Works

In the case of the Mpumalanga Department of Public Works it was found that there was a lack of job information on the nine posts that were selected for the audit. The findings and the recruitment and selection processes applied by the department is provided in **Table 21**.

Table 21: Audit of selection processes in the Mpumamalnga Department of Transport and Public Works

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>The Department could not provide the PSC with copies of job descriptions in respect of the sample of posts audited. However, the PSC found that all these posts were evaluated prior to being advertised. One of the requirements for job evaluation is that there must be job descriptions. The department therefore either failed to file the job descriptions or the job evaluation process did not comply with the regulatory requirements.</p> <p>All posts were advertised as required by the Public Service Regulations. No record could, however, be provided that the advertisements were approved.</p> <p>The proceedings of the interviews are captured by a human resource management official.</p>
Sifting of Applications	<p>According to the Department, sifting is done by means of profiling of all applications through the utilization of a computer program in which all applications received are captured.</p>
Short-listing	<p>The Line Manager of the component within which the vacant post is located recommends names of members of the short listing panel and submits the short list to the HoD for approval. The same persons that short listed applicants also form the selection panel during interviewing process.</p>
Final Selection	<p>Structured interview questionnaires are used during the interviews and copies of questionnaires are kept separately in a master file at human resource management component after completion of the interviewing process.</p> <p>The department does not apply a process in terms of which conflicts of interest in the relationship between panel members and candidates are declared and managed. Due to a lack of information provided, the PSC could not determine whether or not members of the selection panel possessed the required knowledge of the job content of the advertised post.</p>

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Final Selection (continued)	Officials from the human resource management component take minutes during the interview process. The final decision on all of the cases audited was captured and in no instance was the recommendations of the panel deviated from.

4.3.8 KwaZulu-Natal Department of Works

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Works did not submit any information regarding four posts, including the post of the Head of Department. The findings in respect of the recruitment and selection processes applied for the remaining five posts are reflected in **Table 22**.

Table 22: Audit of selection processes in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Works

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Job Information, Evaluation and Advertisement	<p>Of the five posts analyzed, only one had an updated job description that contains sufficient updated detail on the job content and inherent requirements necessary to develop selection criteria for recruitment and selection purposes. The advertisement for the post was aligned to job the description and the post was advertised nationwide.</p> <p>All posts were advertised in line with the requirements of the Public Service Regulations (PSRs), 2001. The Department could not provide a record of the approval for the advertisements to determine if they were approved by the correct delegated level.</p>
Sifting of Applications	The minimum entry requirements were captured in the sifting criteria. For one post, the Selection Committee and HR were responsible for identifying the sifting criteria and doing the actual sifting. For three posts the Department did not provide the minutes of the sifting process. The entry requirements formulated to motivate why certain applications would be disqualified could, therefore, not be established.
Short-listing	In respect of four of the five posts analyzed, the short-listing criteria applied were aligned with the requirements of the advertisement. The Selection Committees were responsible for identifying the short-listing criteria and doing the actual short-listing. It could not be established if the short-listing criteria were cleared beforehand with the appropriate line manager, except for one post where the line manager was the chairperson of the selection committee.

Recruitment and Selection Process	Findings
Short-listing (continued)	<p>The Department did not provide the minutes of the short-listing process for one of the sampled posts. The short-listing criteria to motivate why certain applications would be selected for final consideration could, therefore, not be established.</p>
Final Selection	<p>The Department used a structured set of questions designed to identify knowledge, skills and competencies required for the post to motivate the basis on which the most suitable candidate would be identified in respect of all the sampled posts.</p> <p>It could not be established whether the Department checked beforehand that the panel members did not have any kind of relationship with one or more of the short-listed candidates that may be viewed as a conflict of interest.</p> <p>In three instances, the Department recorded the deliberations by the panel members on their assessments of the various candidates' suitability and the reasons why a certain candidate was found suitable for the post. In two instances the Department did not provide the minutes of the interview to determine if the proceedings thereof were recorded, either by means of electronic recording or services of a scribe; and whether the decision was in line with the recommendations of the panel. In all instances the recommendations were captured in a submission on which a decision was taken.</p> <p>In terms of the departmental delegations of authority, the authority for appointments to vacant posts on salary levels 9 to 12 is delegated to the Head of Department and the authority for appointments to all vacant SMS posts is vested with the Executing Authority. In all instances the department adhered to these delegations.</p>

4.4 Summary of Main Findings

It is clear from the findings of the Audit that there are major deficiencies in the selection processes applied by departments. The following issues are of specific concern to the PSC:

- The majority of departments did not have job descriptions for posts that have been advertised. Without approved job descriptions it is not clear how departments link the actual contents of the posts to the advertisements. This may have a negative consequence in that advertisements may not address the specific requirements for a post and may lead to the selection of candidates that do not possess the required qualifications, skills and experience.

- Job evaluation is not in all instances conducted prior to the advertisement of posts as required by the Public Service Regulations. As a result of this omission, departments do not establish whether the posts advertised are graded at the correct levels. This may have further negative consequences where a post is evaluated after it has been filled only to find that the post should be graded at a lower level. In such instances the department will have to down-grade the post and the incumbent will have to be transferred to a post of equal grading.
- Advertisements were generally placed in line with the requirements of the Public Service Regulations in national newspapers. However, in very few instances were the advertisements approved prior to publication. This raises concerns regarding accountability as managers must satisfy themselves of the need to fill a particular post before it is advertised.
- The sifting process applied by many departments is not structured and does not assist the process of short-listing. Only in a few instances are master lists compiled to assist managers and Selection Committees in perusing the applications.
- In most instances selection committees were responsible for short-listing candidates. It is of concern, however, that the short-listing criteria in many instances are not documented and that there appears to be no consistency in the application of scoring systems for short-listing purposes. The discussions and motivations used during the short-listing process are also not captured in the majority of instances, which has the net result that the reasons for short-listing candidates and disqualifying others are not recorded.
- The Selection Committees are in general properly constituted. However, it is of concern that there is no process of disclosure of conflicts of interests by Committee members in their relationship with candidates in most departments. This omission could give rise to allegations of nepotism if not addressed.
- The discussions of Selection Committees are recorded in writing and formally submitted to the requisite delegated authority for approval. However, in many instances the relevant delegations could not be provided to the Office and as such there is a real risk that the appointment of persons is approved by officials that do not have the requisite authority to do so. In such instances the appointments made will be *null and void*.
- The most glaring deficiency found by the PSC is the lack of proper record keeping by departments. Copies of job descriptions, results of job evaluations, advertisements, short-listing minutes and minutes of selection interviews were in many instances not filed. The PSC must assume that such documents do not exist and that departments are therefore transgressing the Public Service Regulations.

Chapter Five

Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The findings of this Audit have highlighted serious concerns regarding the selection processes applied by departments and the procedures that must be followed in support thereof. It is clear that urgent attention must be given by departments to rectify this unacceptable situation. Of specific concern is the flagrant disregard for compliance to national norms and standards. The PSC therefore deems it of utmost importance that the following recommendation be implemented as soon as possible by departments and the institutions mentioned in the recommendations.

5.2 Approved and Detailed Policies

In order to avoid haphazard recruitment and selection practices, departments should develop detailed and clear policies. They should further ensure that those policies are approved as most departments that were audited revealed that they still used draft policies. The policy should outline the procedures and responsibilities attached to the recruitment and selection process.

The findings also revealed that there were instances where departments had to resort to headhunting as a means of recruitment, particularly for posts that required scarce skills. In all cases of headhunting there was no policy guideline as how it should be done. This could, if not properly managed, lead to corruption and unethical behavior. Departments should ensure that this matter is clearly addressed in their policies.

The PSC's Toolkit on Recruitment and Selection, gives a clear guideline on the development of a departmental recruitment and selection policy. It is advisable for the departments to use this Toolkit as a resource document in developing and reviewing their policies.

5.3 Adhere to Departmental Human Resource Delegations

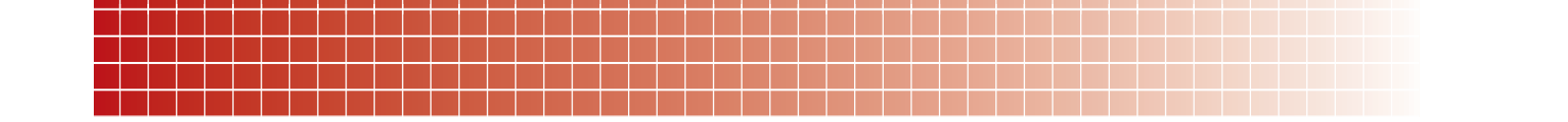
The delegations to approve the advertising of posts as well as the appointment of persons to posts must be clearly spelt out and should be made available to all managers. The human resource management components should monitor that the relevant delegations are adhered to at all times and that submissions for the approval of advertisements and the filling of posts are submitted to the persons with the requisite delegated authority to approve them.

5.4 Standardization of Procedures

Departments that have decentralized their human resource function should ensure that the recruitment and selection procedures and practices are standardized and consistent. This requires effective supervision and management especially by the human resource management component.

5.5 Ensuring Adherence to the Public Service Regulations

As indicated the extent of non-adherence to the Public Service Regulations by departments is unacceptable. It is recommended that the relevant provincial legislatures should task departments that participated during this Audit to task on the deficiencies as identified by the PSC. Detailed reports on each department can be made available by the PSC to the legislatures on request.



In addition, departments are requested to ensure that they comply with regulatory requirements in respect of each of the phases of the recruitment and selection process and that monitoring and evaluation systems be implemented to detect and address non-compliance.

5.6 Compulsory Disclosure/Declaration of Conflict of Interest by Panel Members

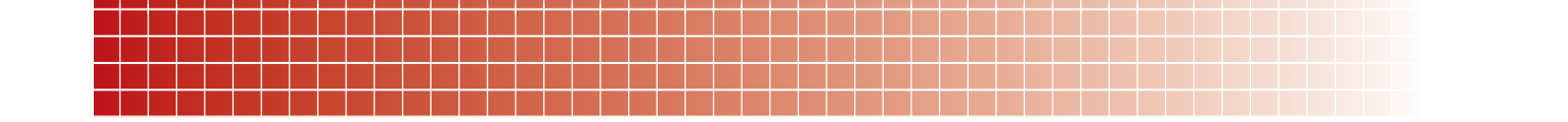
The disclosure of conflicts of interest in the relationship between selection committee members and candidates should become compulsory in all instances. It is recommended that such a provision be included in the Public Service Regulations and in departmental policies.

5.7 Improve HR Record Management Systems

The audits conducted revealed that a number of records that were supposed to be in the files were not there. This included job evaluation results, job descriptions, proof of HR delegations, copies of advertisements, copies of submissions approving the appointment and copies of the appointment letters. It is critical that departments must prioritize and properly manage the record-keeping of all recruitment and selection processes. Effective record-keeping is a regulatory requirement and must be adhered to.

Chapter Six

Conclusion



The current regulatory framework together with the PSC's Toolkit on Recruitment and Selection, more than sufficiently provides guidelines for departments to ensure effective recruitment and selection practices. The extent of deficiencies identified through this Audit, however, raises serious concerns about the ability of departments to exercise the authority to deal with the recruitment and selection of candidates for posts in an effective and accountable manner. This report supports previous findings of the PSC on the inability of departments to deal with devolved authority on human resource management and raises questions about their capacity to take on these responsibilities.

There appears to be a lack of continuous and planned involvement, guidance and monitoring by Human Resource (HR) managers in the steering of departmental selection processes. It appears that the processes and procedures comprising a specific departmental selection strategy, is often dealt with in a *laissez faire* manner not recognizing the impact thereof on the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the department's employment objectives.

The obsolete and often total lack of documentation substantiating and verifying all the relevant recruitment and selection processes is unacceptable. Sound record-keeping practices ensuring a structured, well organized and updated filing system that guarantees the availability of relevant and supporting documentation at all times, has been found as a serious stumbling block. Challenges in this regard not only relate to the non-availability of documents because of an inefficient and ineffective record-keeping system, but also to the fact that such documents have never been generated or drawn up in compliance with departmental processes and procedures.

It is trusted that departments will take the findings by the PSC through this Audit to heart and ensure that their efficiency in the area of recruitment and selection improves to ensure that good governance within the Public Service is promoted and maintained.

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