

# **PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 1996**

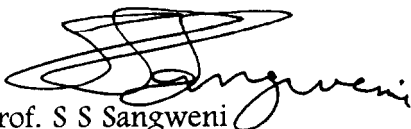
# FOREWORD BY THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

The year 1996 has been a milestone in the history of the Public Service Commission. It has been marked by a fundamental redefinition and restructuring of the traditional role of the Commission.

The South African Public Service Commission was established in 1912 with the broad responsibilities of a traditional centralised personnel institution for the public service. The Public Service Commission was vested with executive and decision-making powers, and as such the Commission played an essential key role in the functioning of the public service.

With the unbundling of the functions of the Commission on 12 April 1996, however, its executive role was in effect transferred to the Minister for the Public Service and Administration. The role of the Public Service Commission was transformed to one of monitoring and advising on merit and equity, promoting the values and principles of sound public administration in the public service, including a high standard of professional ethics, and promoting efficiency. This new model of state administration enshrined the independence and impartiality of the Public Service Commission and prepared the way for the implementation of the new Constitution.

The process of unbundling the functions of the Commission is fully described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3 of this Report, with Chapter 1 devoted to the role of the Commission under the Interim Constitution and Chapter 2 to its role envisaged in the new Constitution. Chapter 4 is devoted to the activities of the Commission during the reporting year under the Interim Constitution, whereas Chapter 5 is devoted to activities in terms of its new role.



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# CHAPTER 1

## THE ROLE, FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION UNDER THE INTERIM CONSTITUTION

Under the Interim Constitution, the Public Service Commission, as a statutory and apolitical institution, had the role of regulating transversal systems, including appointment procedures, conditions of service, departmental functions and efficiency improvement.

The Commission furthermore seined as a counterbalance within the system of government and administration, in order to ensure fairness and equity in the public service. In discharging its responsibilities, the Commission was guided by two essential principles, merit and efficiency.

The role and functions of the Commission were derived from section 209 (1) of the Interim Constitution, which required that the Commission should be accountable to Parliament in performance of its powers and functions. In terms of the Interim Constitution the President appointed the five members of the Commission and designated one of them as the Chairperson.

Within the above parameters the Commission could make recommendations and/or give directions on four broad categories, namely:



- The establishment, functions, organisation and post establishment of public service institutions.
- The promotion of efficiency and effectiveness in public service institutions.
- The service dispensations “(terms and conditions of service and personnel practices) applicable to public servants.
- The career incidents of public servants ranging from appointment, evaluation, promotion, disciplinary action, etc., to termination of service.

The nature and scope of the Commission's functions were circumscribed in the following areas:

- The Commission was excluded from establishment and organisation matters and career incidents of public servants employed by the provinces, as provincial service commissions had been established for each of the nine provinces in terms of section 213(1) of the Interim Constitution. Provincial service commissions, however, had to function within the norms and standards applying nationally as set by the Commission.
- The Commission was tasked to promote efficiency and effectiveness in the public service. This should, however, be understood within the context of section 7(3) (b) of the Public Service Act, 1994, which provides that: “A head of department shall be

responsible for the efficient management and administration of his or her department, including the effective utilisation and training of staff, the maintenance of discipline, the promotion of sound labour relations and the proper use and care of state property, and he or she shall perform the functions that may be prescribed”. The Commission could therefore not assume direct responsibility for the effective and efficient management of departments, as this would negate the basic principles of managerial responsibility and accountability envisaged in the statutes.

- With regard to service dispensations, the powers of the Commission were circumscribed by the provisions of the Public Service Labour Relations Act, 1994. A wide spectrum of measures pertaining to terms and conditions of service and personnel practices applicable to public servants are regarded as matters of mutual interest, and are therefore subject to an agreement between the State as employer and the employee organisations admitted to the Bargaining Council. Any change to these measures is subject to the prescribed consultation and negotiation procedures and has to be preceded by an agreement.

Departments at the national level of government had been furnished by the Commission with extensive delegated powers to inter *alia* make appointments and organise their departments internally. Such delegations had to be exe-

cutted subject to the provisions of the Public Service Act, 1994, the Public Service Regulations and Public Service Staff Code as well as conditions attaching to a particular delegation.

The Interim Constitution provided the framework for the delicate and complex transition to full democracy and the Commission, together with the provincial service commissions, have played an essential part in stabilizing the transition to a new public service for South Africa. The strong executive powers assigned to the Commission by the Interim Constitution vested the Commission with a strong leadership

role to rationalise the public service, In this regard, the impartiality and independence of the Commission and the provincial service commissions as statutory bodies were essential in supporting the legitimacy of the rationalisation process and in ensuring the necessary confidence in its outcome.

The rationalisation process itself and the role played by the Commission and others in this process, are fully documented in an independent report entitled "Report on the Rationalisation of Public Administration", which is tabled with this report.



# CHAPTER 2

## THE ROLE, FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION 'UNDER THE NEW CONSTITUTION

The new Constitution was adopted by the Constitutional Assembly on 11 October 1996 and signed by the President on 10 December 1996. This was preceded by a process of consultation, during which several detailed inputs were made by the Public Service Commission and the provincial service commissions on Chapter 10 pertaining to public service and the new Public Service Commission.

Section 195 of the new Constitution calls for a public administration in South Africa governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution, including the following principles:

- A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.
- Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted.
- Public administration must be development-oriented.
- Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.
- People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making.
- Public administration must be accountable.
- Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.
- Good human-resource management and career-development practices must be cultivated to maximise human potential.
- 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.

Section 196 of the new Constitution further provides for a single independent and impartial Public Service Commission for the Republic in the interest of the maintenance and pro-

motion of effective and efficient public administration and a high standard of professional ethics in the public service. The Commission is accountable to the National Assembly and must be regulated by national legislation.

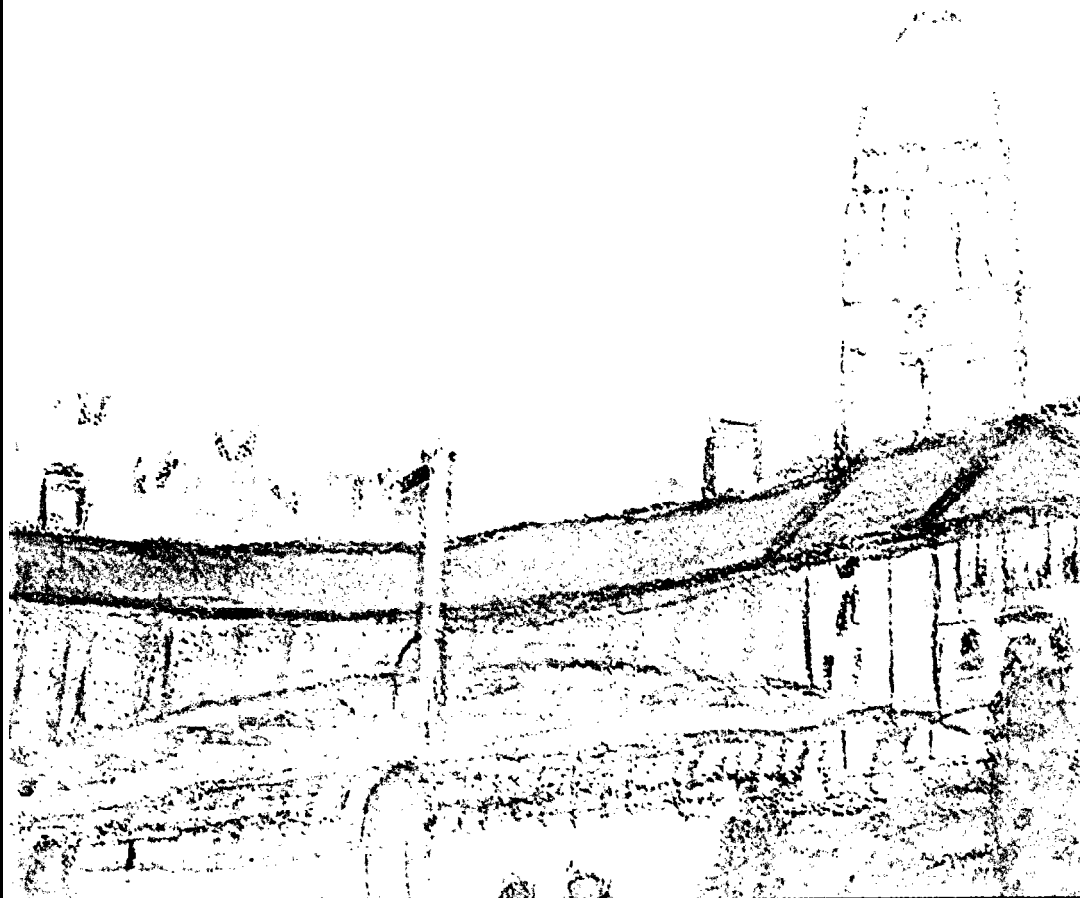
More specifically, the new Constitution assigns the following powers and functions to the Commission:

- to promote the values and principles referred to above throughout the public service;
- to investigate, monitor and evaluate the organisation and administration, and the personnel practices, of the public service;

to propose measures to ensure effective and efficient performance within the public service;

to give directions aimed at ensuring that personnel procedures relating to recruitment, transfers, promotions and dismissals comply with the values and principles referred to above;

to report in respect of its activities and the performance of its functions, including any finding it may make and directions and advice it may give, and to provide an evaluation of the extent to which the values and principles referred to above are complied with; and





- either of its own accord or on receipt of any complaint -

to investigate and evaluate the application of personnel and public administration practices, and to report to the relevant executive authority and legislature;

to investigate grievances of employees in the public service concerning official acts or omissions, and recommend appropriate remedies;

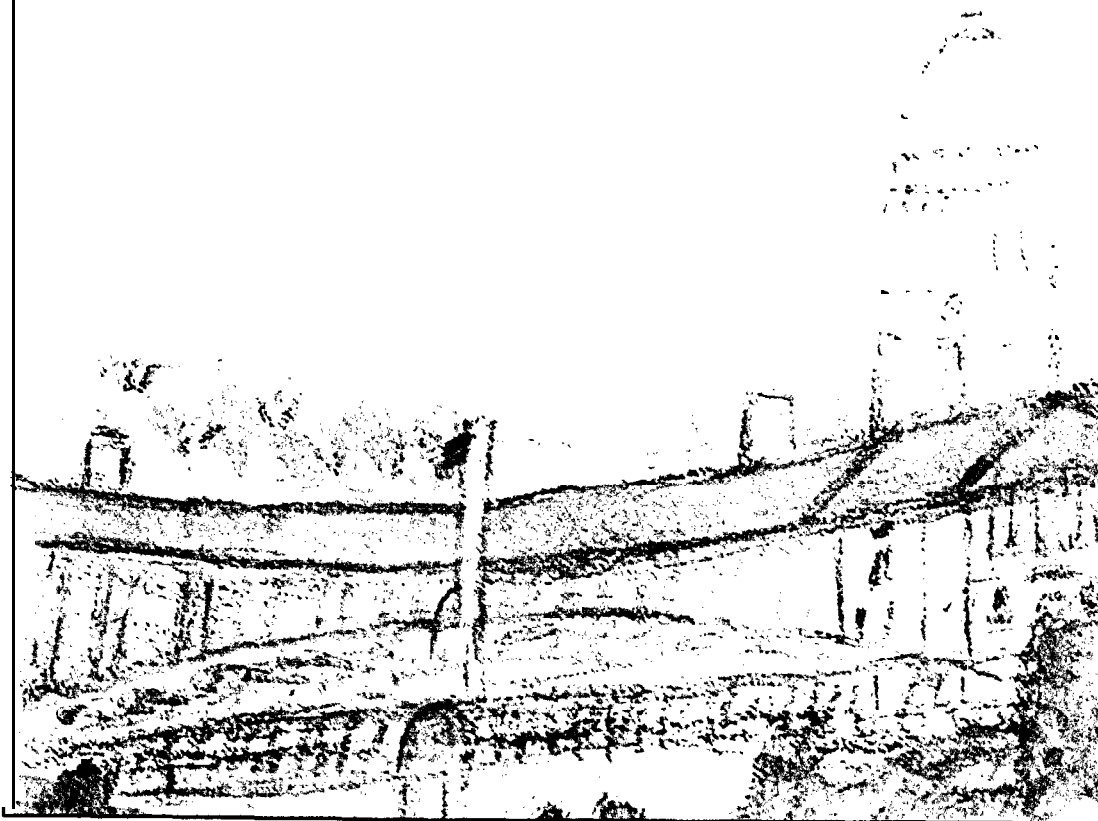
to monitor and investigate adherence to applicable procedures in the public service; and

to advise national and provincial organs of State regarding personnel practices in the public service, including those relating to the recruitment, appointment, transfer, discharge and

other aspects of the careers of employees in the public service.

A new Commission consisting of 14 Commissioners will be appointed by the President and will be composed of five commissioners approved by the National Assembly, and one commissioner for each province, nominated by the Premiers of the respective provinces after approval by the legislature of the relevant province.

The Commission as envisaged under the new Constitution is in essence an advisory and monitoring body. The Commission, according to paragraph 6.1.2 of the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, has been relieved of its role as "direct implementer of public service policies" and has been assigned the role of "independent monitor and arbiter of the activities, ethos and comportment of the public service".

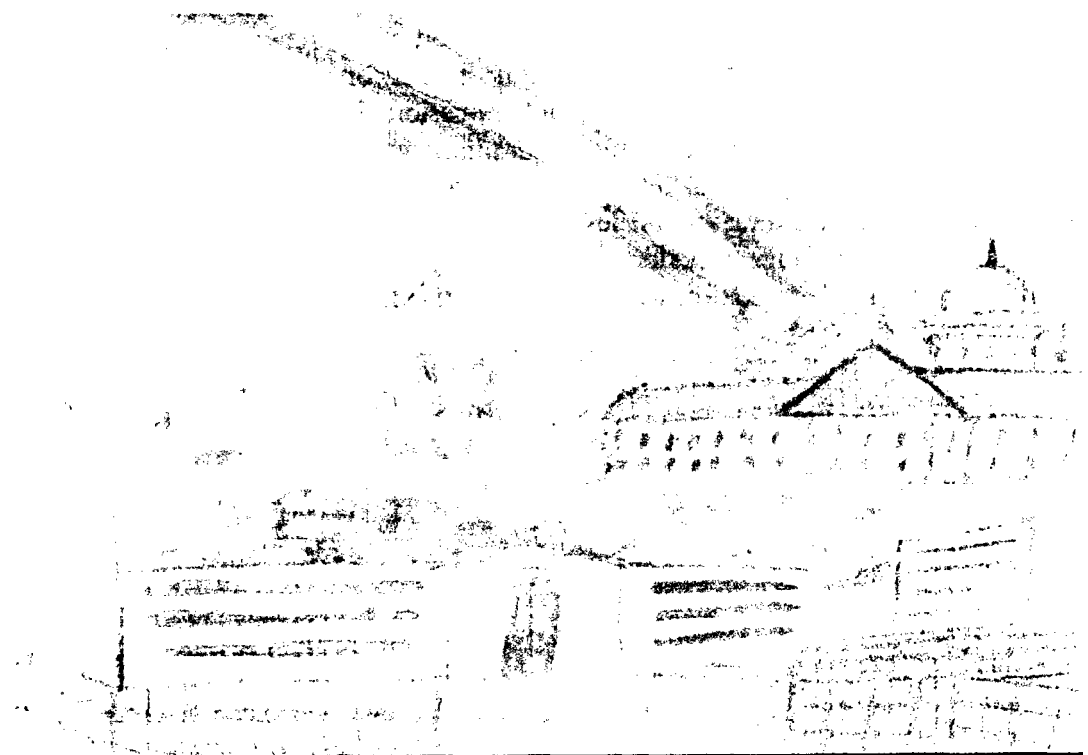


The change in the role of the Commission was underpinned by a philosophy of decentralised decision making leading to greater administrative efficiency. The Commission has been given the role to monitor whether the basic values and principles referred to above are being complied with in the public service. Furthermore, the Commission has also been assigned the role to advise the executive on the maintenance of effective and efficient public administration. The independence and impartiality of the Commission remain essential to fulfil its new role.

The creation of a single Public Service Commission for the Republic under the new Constitution implies a particular level of centralisation and cohesion. The presence of commissioners nominated by the provinces, on the other hand, suggests that some degree of decentralisation is envisaged. Considerable research has already been undertaken in finding an operational

model for the functioning of the Commission which would achieve a balance between centralisation and decentralisation. The Commission, working together with the Forum of Service Commissions, has taken a lead during the year under review in developing a model of co-operative governance. However, this will need to be refined further during implementation.

Apart from the Public Service Commission, the Constitution provides for other impartial and independent statutory institutions, including the Auditor-General, Public Protector, Human Rights Commission and the Financial and Fiscal Commission to act as checks and balances (constitutional safeguards) on the exercising of executive powers. The complimentary nature of the responsibilities of these institutions will in practice necessitate continuous consultation and co-operation between them and the Commission.



# CHAPTER 3

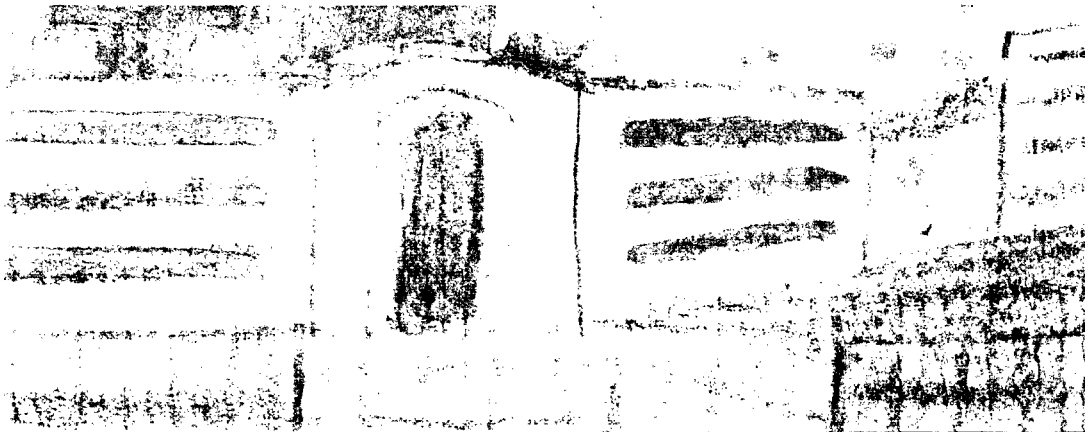
## THE TRANSITION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION FROM THE INTERIM CONSTITUTION TO THE NEW CONSTITUTION

The process of transforming the Public Service Commission from a body functioning under the Interim Constitution to one functioning according to the new Constitution already commenced near the end of 1995 with the Commission proposing a new role for itself within a new model of state administration. These proposals were adopted by Cabinet on 21 February 1996.

The new state administration model, in preparation for the proposals of the new Constitution, transferred the executive functions of the Commission under the Interim Constitution to the executive and provided for greater managerial autonomy to be granted to executing authorities and heads of department, functioning within policy frameworks laid down by

the Minister for the Public Service and Administration.

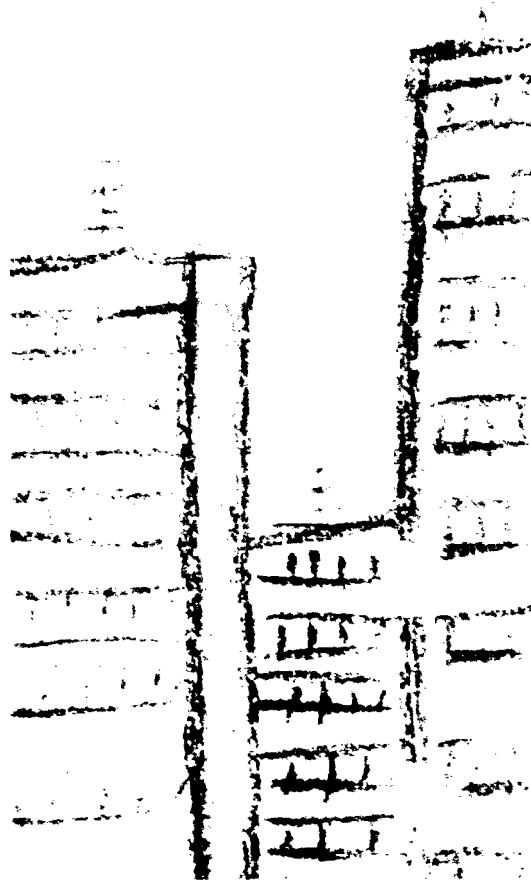
This dramatic step was taken during the lifespan of the Interim Constitution in order to streamline administrative efficiency, given the unprecedented volume and scope of rationalisation. However, the fact that the Interim Constitution was still in operation at that time implied that the Commission still had to perform its statutory responsibilities. Thus, with the implementation of the new state administration model on 12 April 1996, the Commission had to fulfil two roles simultaneously: the model of administration assigned by the Interim Constitution, and the other as envisaged by the new Constitution. This situation will continue to prevail until



legislation has been promulgated by Parliament to establish the new Commission.

In implementing the new administration model, a number of interim arrangements were put in place, including:

- The Department of Public Service and Administration assumed its functions under the direction of the Minister for the Public Service and Administration.
- The Office of the Public Service Commission was unbundled and staff and other resources were assigned between the Office of the Public Service Commission and the Department of Public Service and Administration according to the new functions that they will have to perform.
- The Commission continued to fulfil its obligations under the Interim Constitution.
- The Office of the Public Service Commission was restructured to support the Commission in its new role.
- The Commission delegated most of its powers under the Interim Constitution, as set out below, to heads of department at national level and officers in the Department of Public Service and Administration.
- Departments at national level were requested to position themselves to function effectively within the new model by estab-



lishing the capacity to deal with a greater degree of managerial autonomy and responsibility.

In preparation for the implementation of the new administration model and in order to improve administrative efficiency, the Commission recommended during February 1996 that its standing delegations to heads of department at national level be further extended. These included the filling of advertised posts to improve representativeness, up to the level of Chief Director. This was followed by a second series of delegations during April 1996 which included:

- The determination of internal organisation and post establishment.

- The establishment and extension of financial incentive schemes.
- The filling of advertised posts up to the level of Deputy Director-General.
- The relaxation of appointment requirements prescribed in the relevant personnel administration standards.
- Employment in terms of the provisions of section 15(2), 15(3) and 15(4) of the Public Service Act, 1994.
- The appointment of officials on contract up to the level of Deputy Director-General.
- The re-appointment of former officials who were discharged for medical reasons.
- The granting of salaries higher than those provided for in the salary recognition measures prescribed in the relevant personnel administration standards.
- The re-instatement of former officials whose services were terminated as a result of absconding.
- The transfer of an official employed by a provincial administration to a national department in terms of the provisions of section 14(2) (d) of the Public Service Act, 1994, up to the level of Deputy Director-General.
- The employment of officials additional to the fixed establishment.
- The protective promotion of officials and the backdating of promotions.
- The retirement of officials in terms of the provisions of section 16(4) and 16(6) (a) of the Public Service Act, 1994, up to the level of Deputy Director-General.
- The discharge of officials in terms of the provisions of sections 17(2) (a), 17(2) (b), 17(2) (c) and 17(4) of the Public Service Act, 1994, up to the level of Deputy Director-General.

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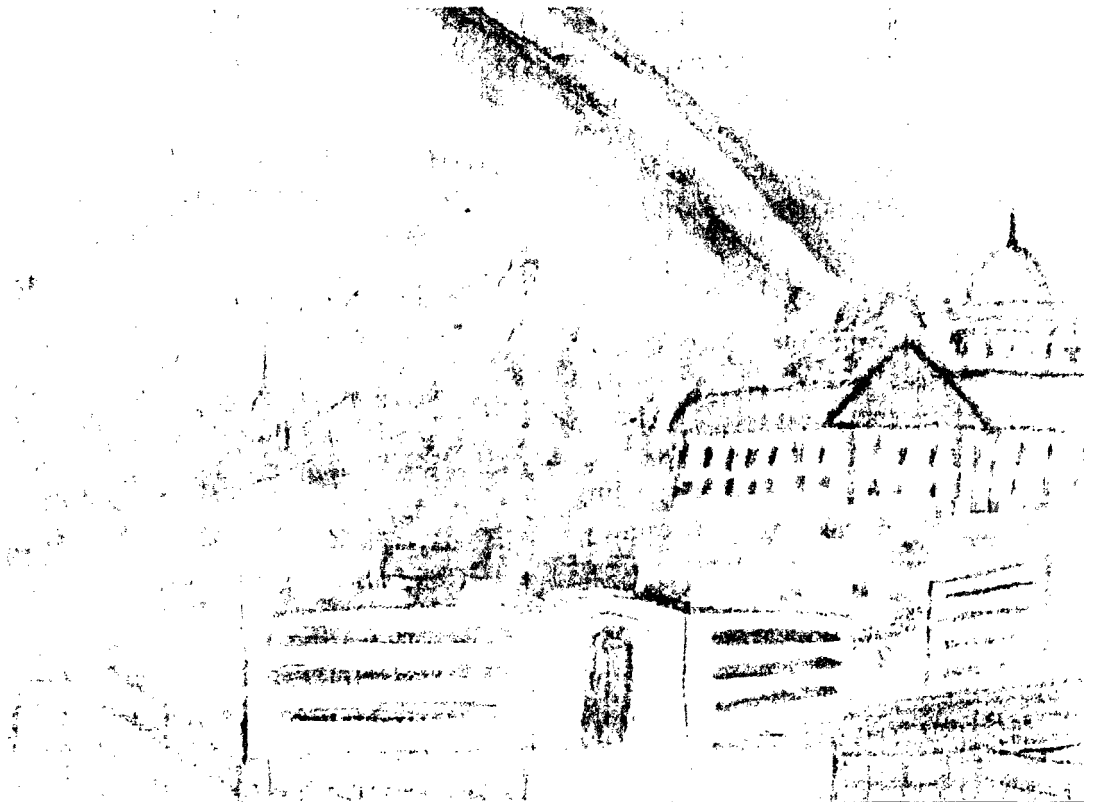
- The granting of special recognition awards to officials in terms of the provisions of section 37(2)(c) of the "Public Service Act, 1994.

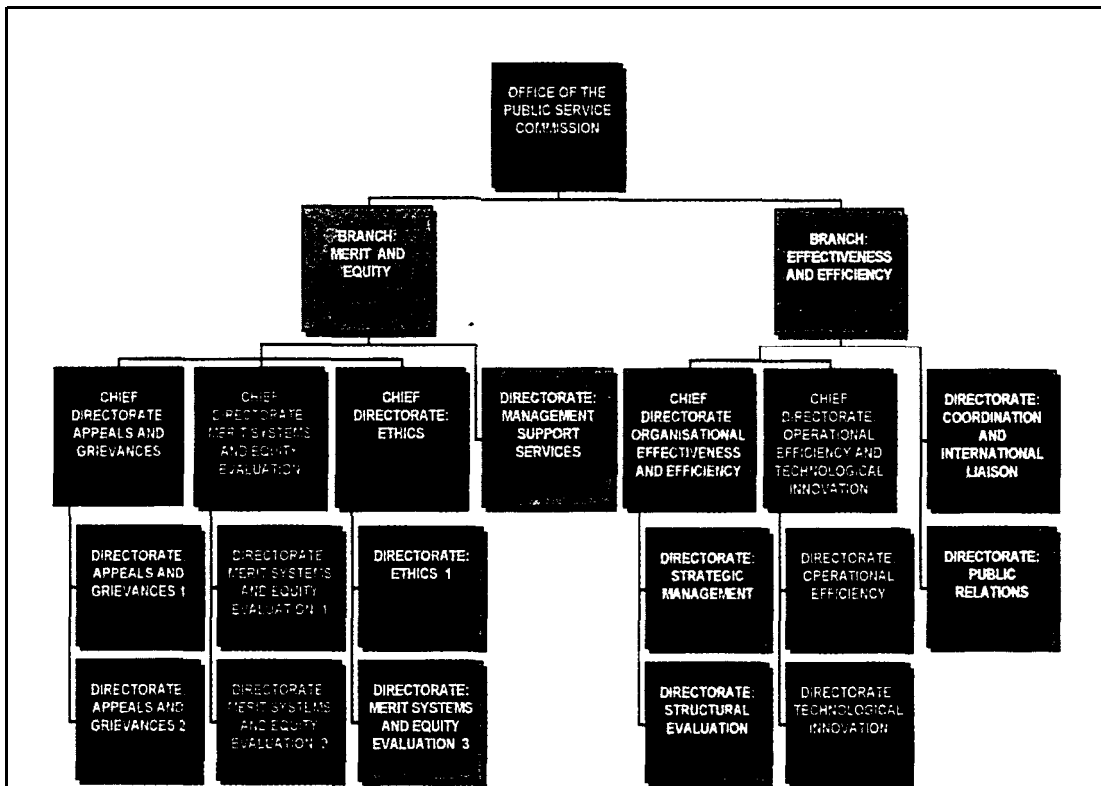
These delegations to heads of department at national level were extensive and far reaching, and empowered national departments to decide on all personnel matters within pre-set policy frameworks. In terms of the new legislation, these delegations will resort under the Department of Public Service and Administration.

Preliminary indications are that these delegations have streamlined the administration of personnel matters considerably and have eased the administrative burden on the Department of Public Service and Administration significantly. Further indications are that national departments are developing the necessary capacity to exercise the delegations and to assume full accountability.

It should be pointed out that these delegations from the Commission only apply to departments at national level. Provincial service commissions were advised to simulate the new model at provincial level. However the extent of delegation varied depending on conditions in each province.

The unbundling of the functions of the Commission during April 1996 had a significant impact on the Office of the Public Service Commission due to a transfer of functions, personnel and other resources to the Department of Public Service and Administration. For example, the post establishment of the Office was reduced from 611 to 184, with 260 posts transferred to the Department of Public Service and Administration and 125 assigned to the South African Management and Development Institute (SAMDI). The remaining 42 posts were abolished.





The new organisational structure (shown above) and post establishment of the Office was developed to support the Commission in its role envisaged under the new Constitution. This was informed by a study of the operation of similar institutions in Canada, UK, Australia, USA, New Zealand, Malaysia, Zimbabwe, Germany, Malta, Trinidad-Tobago, Singapore and Namibia.

The organisational structure of the Office consists of two branches, one dealing with merit and equity issues within the domain of human resource development, and the other dealing with effectiveness and efficiency. These are central to the new brief of the Commission. Five Chief Directorates deal with the line function activities of the Office and three Directorates are provided to deal with corporate activities.

The responsibilities of the five Chief Directorates and the three corporate services Directorates are the following:

- Chief Directorate: Merit Systems and Equity Evaluation
  - Appraises human resource practices, including the promotion of merit and equity in the public service.
- Chief Directorate: Appeals and Grievances
  - Investigates the grievances and appeals of public servants in respect of misconduct and inefficiency.
- Chief Directorate: Ethics
  - Appraises the standard of professional ethics and specific human resource practices in the public service.

- Chief Directorate: Organisational Effectiveness and Efficiency

Appraises the deployment of functions in the public service, as well as strategic management.

- Chief Directorate: Operational Efficiency and Technological Innovation

Investigates the efficient, economic and effective use of resources and advises on information technology innovations in the public service.

- Directorate: Management Support Services

Provides financial management and miscellaneous administrative support services to the Office.

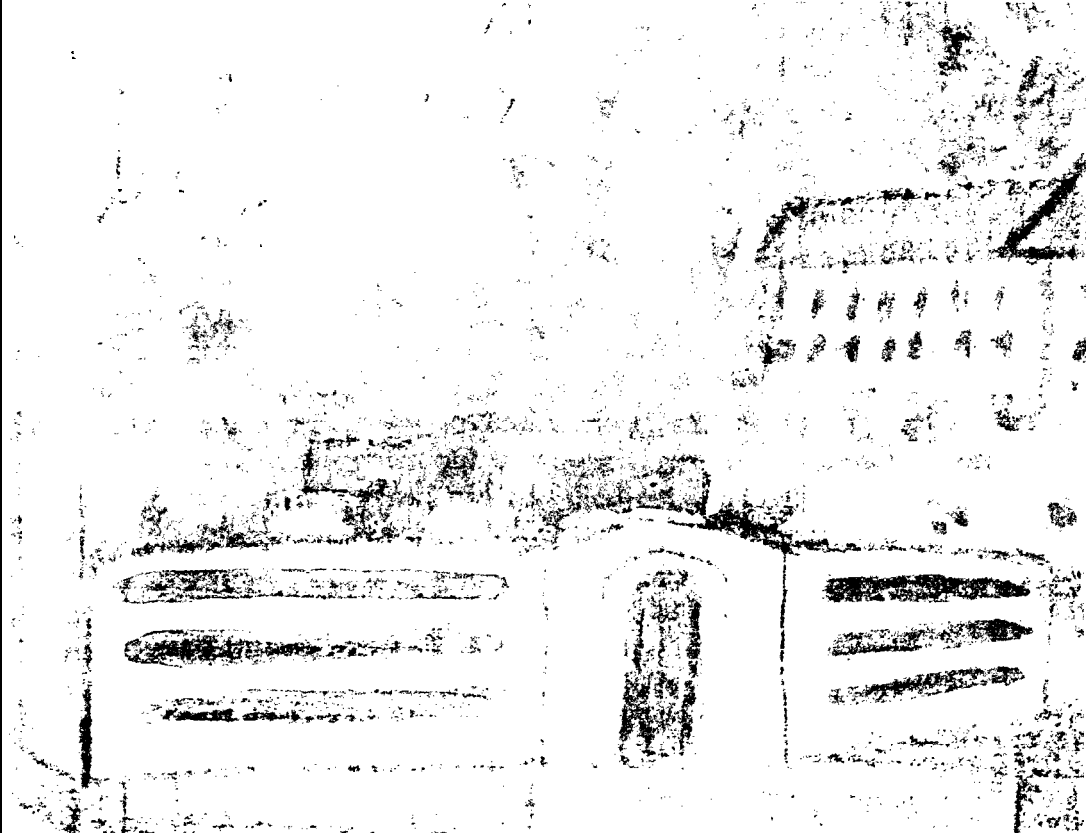
- Directorate: Public Relations

Provides public relations services to the Office and the Commission.

- Directorate: Co-ordination and International Liaison

Provides for the necessary co-ordination in all support activities in the Office which need to be co-ordinated.

During the year under review the realignment of the Office to support the Commission's new role was to a large extent accomplished successfully. This, however, will have to be reviewed when the new Commission comes into place under the new Constitution. Such a review will need to consider seriously the additional resourcing of the Commission, given that it will have much broader responsibilities encompassing national departments and provincial administrations, totalling about 126 departments, creating a need for more staff and restraining of that staff in line with the new functions.





# CHAPTER 4

## ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION PERFORMED IN TERMS OF THE INTERIM CONSTITUTION

During the reporting year the Commission dealt with a variety of matters related to its mandatory role in terms of the Interim Constitution. Up to the unbundling of its functions on 12 April 1996, the Commission was supported administratively in dealing with these matters by its own Office, and thereafter by the Department of Public Service and Administration. The extensive delegations which were issued at the same time alleviated the administrative burden on the Commission and the Department significantly. The most important matters dealt with by the Commission in the reporting year are discussed below.

### Assignment of political executive powers for the administration of laws

During 1996 a total number of nine proclamations were issued by the President in terms of section 235(8) of the Interim Constitution in assigning the administration of existing laws to the provinces. The administration of 17 laws, or parts thereof, was assigned to provinces in terms of these proclamations.

Since June 1994, a total of 70 proclamations which assigned the administration of laws to provinces had been issued in terms of section 235(8)

of the Interim Constitution, 1993. Approximately 670 laws have thus been assigned to the provinces.

The Commission conducted a survey on the number of laws still being considered by national departments for possible assignment to the provinces. On 30 April 1996, a total of 23 laws were in the process of assignment, whereas 71 laws were still being investigated or considered for possible assignment.

### Organisational restructuring and rationalisation

At the beginning of 1996, the Commission developed measures to exercise constraint on the size of the post establishments of departments, especially during the rationalisation period. Proposals were tabled by the Commission and, during February 1996, Cabinet accepted the Commission's proposals for a comprehensive system to manage the size of the public service. The main features of the system

- a comprehensive data-base covering national departments and provincial administrations;
- a systematic and ongoing analysis of information in the data-base;

- development of staff provisioning norms;
- an annual determination by Cabinet of an overall target for the size of the public service as part of the budgetary process;
- specified targets per function, implying either the maintenance, reduction or increase of a particular staffing level; and
- the application of appropriate staff reduction mechanisms, where required.

Additional measures to right-size the public service were required to make the new salary grading more affordable.

In order to reduce the overall number of public servants whilst creating room for the absorption of supernumary officials, the Commission recommended the implementation of a voluntary severance package and comprehensive measures regulating the filling of vacant posts.

During the reporting year the Commission also approved new organisational structures and post establishments for the departments of Trade and Industry, Mineral and Energy Affairs, Agriculture, Water Affairs and Forestry, Public Service and Administration, as well as for the Office of the Public Service Commission, the Independent Complaints Directorate and the South African Management and Development Institute. Two organisational components were abolished, namely the Office of the RDP and the Office of the Executive Deputy President from the Largest Minority Party.

## Improvements in conditions of service

A high priority was given by the Commission during 1995 and 1996 to a review of salary determination in the public service. In accordance with an agreement reached in the Central Chamber of the Public Service Bargaining Council for the 1995/96 financial year, a new salary grading system was developed. The new system is intended to address a multitude of salary related problems such as the backlog in salaries, multiple salary key scales, inappropriate career pathing, unaccountable differences in salaries in the public service, the large wage gap between the lowest and highest paid public servants, and salary disparities with other public sector institutions. The complex remuneration system with its multitude of different salary scales and allowances, which had been utilised in the past, complicated wage negotiations and perpetuated disparities between occupational classes of equal standing. With the unbundling of the Commission's functions, the final negotiations and implementation of the new salary grading system became the responsibility of the Department of Public Service and Administration. Phase 1 of the proposed three year plan was implemented with effect from 1 July 1996 and it is envisaged that the system will be fully implemented by 31 March 1999.

As required by law, the Commission also continued to advise the Minister of Finance with regard to the conditions of service of various parastatal institutions and statutory bodies to promote overall consistency within the public sector at large.

## Pension funds and benefits

To comply with the Constitutional provisions of equity, it was necessary to create a unified pension dispensation for the public service. To this end, a project was launched during 1994, with a project team consisting of representatives of the State as employer, employee organisations and other interest groups, as well as private sector experts. The first phase of the project was to rationalise the various existing pension funds into a single pension fund with a uniform benefit structure for all public servants. This phase culminated in the promulgation of the Government Employees' Pension Bill in April 1996, which repealed all the previous pension acts, and the establishment of the new Government Employees Pension Fund on 1 May 1996.

## Promotion of sound labour relations

After the unbundling of the Commission's functions, the labour relations functions of the Office of the Public Service Commission, including those relating to labour relations training, were transferred to the Department of Public Service and Administration. However, owing to insufficient capacity in the Department, Commission personnel continued to assist the Department in this regard for a limited period.

To prepare for the introduction of the new Labour Relations Act, a total of 15 one-day information sessions for personnel in the management' echelon of departments/administrations were presented by personnel of the Office. During these sessions the main principles and procedures provided for by the

Act with specific reference to the public service were addressed. The objective was to provide managers with a basic understanding of the new Act and what would be expected of them once it was introduced. As appropriate training material did not exist at that time, a full set of in-house training modules on aspects addressed by the Act was developed. Approximately 1400 public servants from the management echelon attended these sessions. Three one-week workshops were also presented to approximately 300 training and labour relations officers from departments/administrations, with the objective of disseminating information in the departments through advice or purpose-designed training.

The foundation for the establishment of the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council has to a large extent been laid. This will eventually allow three sectors, namely the Public Service, the Educators and the South African Police Service, to negotiate on transverse conditions of service within a single bargaining forum.

A Joint Labour Relations Task Team was also established by the existing negotiating fora to solve problems arising from the implementation of the new Labour Relations Act, including problems in the process of negotiation itself, a better system of trade union representation and workplace participation.

### **Promotion of a public service broadly representative of the South African population**

A policy framework to give effect to the constitutional directive that the public

service shall be broadly representative of the South African community was developed by the Commission in 1994, and implementation continued during the reporting year by means of a two pronged strategy:

- The establishment and staffing of "Special Programmed" components within departments/administrations and the development of departmental programmed to specifically address the imbalances existing within their structures.
- The monitoring of the composition of the public service by maintaining and updating a central database.

This enabled the Commission to monitor progress towards a broadly representative public service through statistics provided from the central database. Data is available to reflect the composition of the management echelon and also in broad salary bands across the public service as a whole.

An analysis of posts filled in the management structures of the public service reveals that good progress has been made towards achieving a higher level of representativeness. In 1994 the management echelon of the public service of the former RSA was dominated by Whites (94%). All the Directors-General were White. Less than five percent of the management echelon were females and there were no females above the level of Chief Director. By September 1996, the Black, Asian and Coloured population group comprised 36% of the management echelon and occupied 25 (54%) of the 46 Director-General posts. The proportion of women in management

was, however, still low at **11 %**. There were two female Directors-General and 8% of posts above the level of Chief Director were occupied by females.

The position of representativeness in the public service as a whole, according

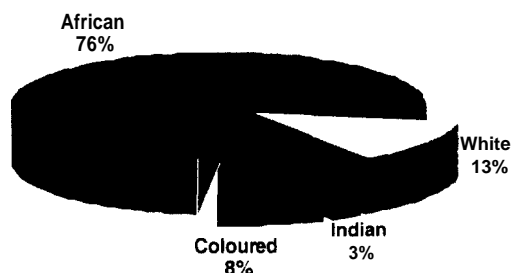
to information supplied by the Department of Public Service and Administration, is indicated in the table below. It should be pointed out that the figures quoted are still preliminary. The table nevertheless reflects some noteworthy trends.

REPRESENTATIVENESS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE 30 NOVEMBER 1996							
Salary Grading	Black/ African	Asian/ Indian	Coloured	White	TOTAL	Male	Female
Lower skilled	223503	5007	25336	17063	270909	159611	111298
Percentage	83	2	9	6	100	59	41
Skilled	196130	11 115	28933	72753	3 089 31	1 528 15	1 561 16
Percentage	63	4	9	24	100	49	51
Highly skilled production	323285	21952	53564	158336	557137	258153	298 984
Percentage	58	4	10	28	100	46	54
Highly skilled supervisor	11717	1643	2282	19262	34904	27296	7608
Percentage	33	5	7	55	100	7 8	22
Management*	1 156	116	92	2275	3639	3251	388
Percentage	<b>32</b>	3	2	63	100	89	11
Senior Management**	165	12	14	127	318	287	31
Percentage	<b>52</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	40	100	90	10
TOTAL	755956	39845	110221	269816	1 175 838	601413	574425
Percentage	65	3	9	23	100	51	49
National Population***	76	3	8	13	100	49	51

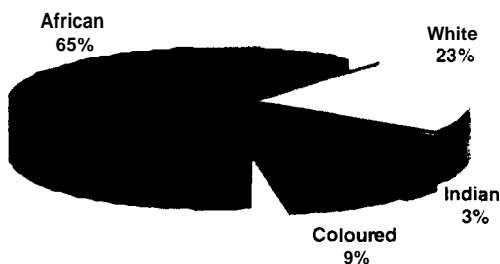
•Director and Chief Director  
 \*\* Deputy Director-General and Director-General  
 \*\*\* Central Statistical Service: Mid 1995 estimates (percentage)

**A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE RACIAL PROFILES OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN POPULATION AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

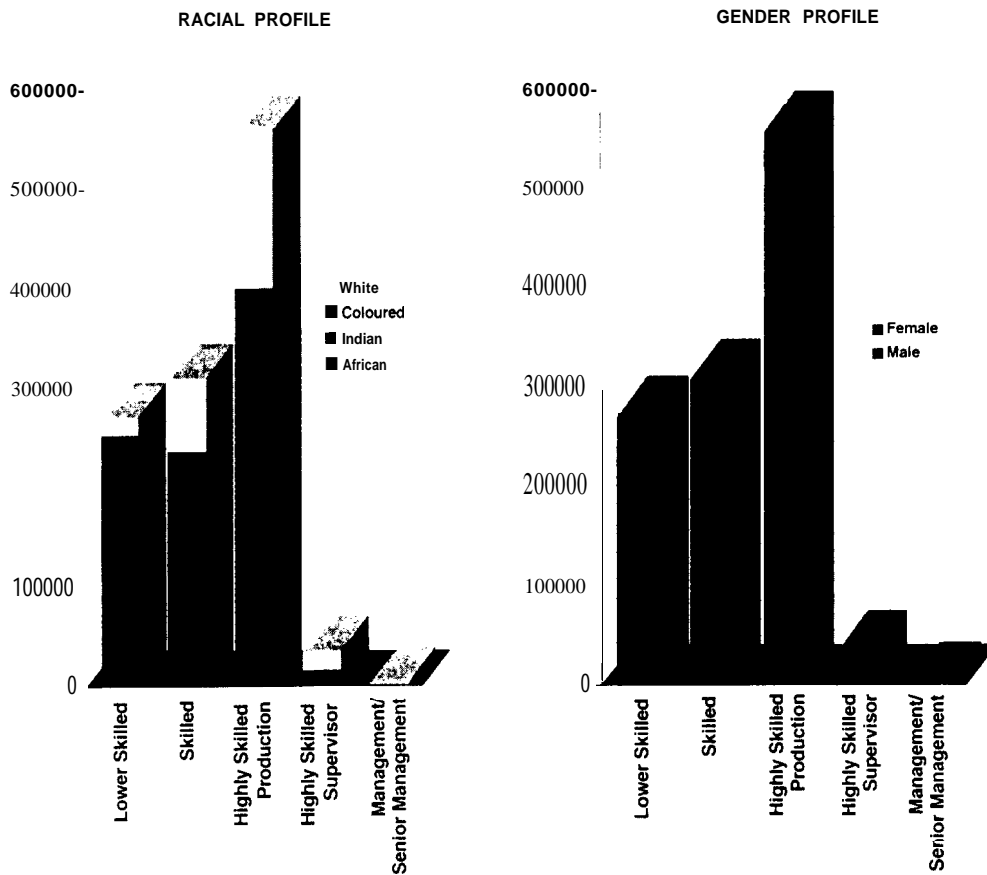
**THE SOUTH AFRICAN POPULATION**  
(Central Statistical Services 1995 household survey)



**THE PUBLIC SERVICE**  
(Payroll statistics as at 30 November 1996)



THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACCORDING TO BROAD SALARY CATEGORIES  
(Payroll statistics as at 30 November 1996)



While a state of broad representativeness overall was in sight as far as the Asian and Coloured population groups are concerned, the Black population group was still notably under-represented (64% against 76%), and the White population group notably over-represented (24% against 13%) when compared to each group's representation in the population at large.

Regarding gender representativeness, the proportion of male to female officials (51 % against 49%) was in inverse relation to their representation in the population at large (49% against 51%). While women were somewhat under-represented at the lowest grading level and well represented at the

highly skilled production level, they were poorly represented at the three higher grading levels.

### Advertising of posts in the management echelon

All posts in the management echelon, including the level of Director-General, are advertised both within and outside the public service in order to ensure open competition. During the period 1 January 1996 to 11 April 1996, a total of 161 posts in the management echelon of national departments were advertised. As from 12 April 1996 departments at national level advertised these posts under delegated authority.

## Promotions and filling of posts in the management echelon

Apart from dealing with the filling of posts below the management echelon, within certain guidelines, departments also had the power to finalise the filling of management echelon posts in the rationalised structures of the public service, up to and including the level of Chief Director. With the expiry of Chapter B (Special) of the Public Service Staff Code which regulated the filling of posts on the rationalised structures of departments, the Commission recommended that, with effect from 12 April 1996, departments could fill such posts up to and including the level of Deputy Director-General. For the period 1 January 1996 to 11 April 1996, the Commission was therefore called upon to furnish recommendations in respect of the filling of posts up to the level of Deputy Director-General and in cases where circumstances did not permit the handling of promotions within the guidelines. The Commission thus recommended the filling of 12 posts in the management echelon over this period, one at Deputy Director-General level, 10 at Chief Director level, and one at Director level.

## Advertising and filling of posts of Director-General

As the Commission's powers relating to career incidents of public servants were delegated only up to the level of Deputy Director-General, the Commission was still left with the responsibility of dealing with the career incidents of Directors-General. By the end of the year under review, seven posts of Director-General were advertised, of which six had been filled, with one nominee assuming office on 1 January 1997.

## Premature termination of services in the management echelon

During the period 1 January 1996 to 11 April 1996 the Commission considered requests and representations for the premature termination of services of officials in the management echelon and recommended that four be discharged due to rationalisation, (Section 17(2) (b) of the Public Service Act, 1994), and one be discharged in the interest of the public service (Section 17(2) (c) of the Public Service Act, 1994). No Directors-General were prematurely discharged. As from 12 April 1996, these powers of the Commission were delegated to national departments as regards officers up to and including the level of Deputy Director-General.

## Deviations from prescribed personnel administration standards in respect of appointments

Departments/administrations enjoy a large degree of managerial autonomy in effecting appointments at various levels. However, where departments wish to deviate from prescribed personnel administration standards in effecting appointments at any level up to and including the level of Deputy Director-General, they are required to obtain the Commission's recommendation. During 1996 the Commission considered 30 cases relating to appointments below the level of Director or equivalent grading. Of these, four involved the granting of salaries higher than those prescribed and 13 dealt with the acceptance of alternative qualifications or the relaxation of appointment requirements. As of 12 April 1996 this authority was delegated to heads of department.

### **Special recognition in terms of Section 37(2) (c) of the Public Service Act, 1994**

During the period 1 January 1996 to 11 April 1996, the Commission recommended, in terms of the provisions of section 37(2) (c) of the Public Service Act, 1994, that special recognition by way of adjustment to higher salary notches/grades be granted for excellent service and exceptional ability to one officer only. As from 12 April 1996 these powers were delegated to national departments.

### **Special bursary scheme**

The special bursary scheme was specifically directed at needy students who have enrolled for a university degree or technikon diploma. For the 1996 academic year 190 bursaries were awarded in various fields of study appropriate to the public service, such as Public Administration, Personnel Management and Economics. Bursar-

ies were awarded to 120 final year students. The administration of the special bursary scheme has been taken over by the Department of Public Service and Administration as from 12 April 1996.

### **Rationalisation of public administration: interim measures relating to the staffing of the rationalised structures of the public service**

As a result of various problems experienced, the Commission was approached by 16 departments/administrations during the course of 1996 to grant an extension of the due date for the completion of the rationalisation programme in terms of measures contained in Chapter B (Special) of the Public Service Staff Code. A further two departments and one provincial administration requested an extension beyond 1996 to enable them to complete their respective rationalisation programmes.



## Grievances

In accordance with the provisions contained in the Public Service Act, 1994, the Commission is required to make recommendations or give directions with regard to grievances submitted by former officers and employees, as well as recommendations with regard to grievances of serving officers whose dissatisfaction or discontent could not be settled at departmental level. During 1996, the Commission received 146 grievances. In 113 cases grievances received were referred back to the official, person or department concerned as either the prescribed

grievance procedure had not been followed or the Commission had no *locus standi* to consider the matter. The Commission made recommendations or gave directions in respect of 33 cases. In regard to the latter, 27 were referred to the Commission by departments, one case was referred by a third party, while the remaining five cases were submitted by former officers and employees. The Commission upheld departments' handling of grievances in 24 cases and in nine cases the representations of officers or former personnel were successful or partially successful.

HANDLING OF GRIEVANCES			
Origin of grievance		Outcome of grievance	
Referred by department	27	Commission upheld department's handling	24
Referred by third party	1	Representation of officer or former personnel successful/partly successful	9
Submitted by former officers or employees	5		
TOTAL	33	TOTAL	33

## Misconduct

In terms of the Public Service Act, 1994, the Commission's role in respect of the misconduct of officers entails the following:

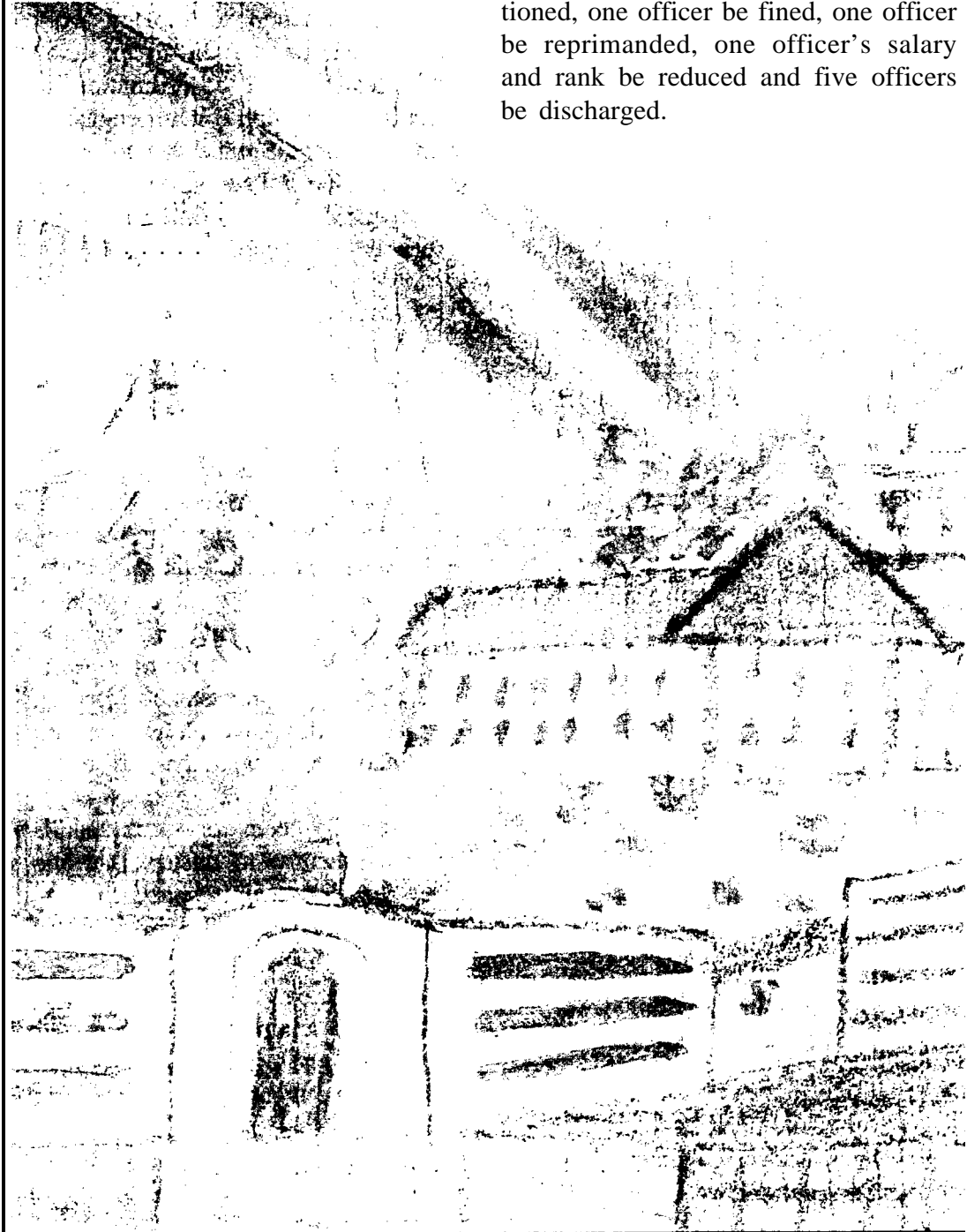
- Giving directions in respect of the appeal of an officer against a finding of guilt and/or against a decision of the head of department relating to disciplinary action.
- Recommending suitable action against officers who were found guilty of misconduct in terms of the now repealed prescripts which

were applicable to the public services of the former RSA, TBVC states and self-governing territories.

Altogether 19 cases of appeal were dealt with by the Commission. The Commission upheld decisions of heads of department in 15 cases. In the four remaining cases the Commission decided that the appeals be allowed, either in full or partly. Two of these cases were appeals against the findings of the presiding officers at the mis -

conduct hearings. The Commission in one instance decided that the appeal be allowed in full and in the other instance that the appeal be allowed partly. The other two were appeals against the disciplinary action decided on by the head of department, and in this regard the Commission directed that one officer be cautioned and one officer be reprimanded and fined.

In regard to misconduct cases in respect of which the Commission had to recommend disciplinary action in terms of the repealed prescripts which were applicable to the public services of the former RSA, the TBVC states and self-governing territories, 15 cases were submitted by departments. Of these cases the Commission recommended that seven officers be cautioned, one officer be fined, one officer be reprimanded, one officer's salary and rank be reduced and five officers be discharged.



## Utilisation of information technology consultants

As part of the process of rationalizing policy on information technology in the public service, a policy framework was developed by the Commission to regulate the utilisation of information technology consultants in the public service. The need to develop such a policy framework arose from the undesirable situation where information technology consultants were being employed by departments, but very often not adequately managed. The following aspects are being addressed by the said policy framework:

- Departmental self-sufficiency is underlined. This focuses on the establishment and the maintenance of an information technology capability to ensure efficient information technology service delivery, management, control and continuity. The need to utilise consultants for certain projects under certain circumstances is however recognised.
- Personnel provisioning and development, with special reference to the steps that should be taken into consideration to ensure that sufficient capacity is available to render the required services. This pertains to the management of the transfer of skills between own personnel and information technology consultants.
- The determination and the justification of the need for consultancy services, addressed in the Master System Plan.

- Issues pertaining to the procurement of consultancy services.
- The management and control of consultants.

## Information systems engineering

Various information technology work groups were conducted to promote communication and co-ordination in respect of information systems engineering in the public service. It was established that the following mechanisms were required and should be provided for in policy directives:

- A mechanism to integrate specific information from the various Master System Plans, with the objective to -
  - pre-actively determine duplications and interfaces as well as to promote co-operation between parties with the same objective;
  - provide planning information in respect of requirements regarding infrastructure such as Wide Area Networks and mainframe capacity; and to
  - identify needs for specific skills in advance to ensure that the necessary training can be initiated timeously.
- A mechanism or system to establish and maintain an integrated systems register intended to promote the re-use of systems, the sharing of resources and to keep an inventory of one of the strategic assets of the public service.

## Public service training

The South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI) was the responsibility of the Commission until 31 March 1996, after which it became an independent organisational component in terms of amendments made on Schedule 2 of the Public Service Act, 1994. Special attention was given during the first quarter of 1996 to the creation of new course material, the design of new courses and the estab-

lishment of a rationalised organisational structure in accordance with the requirements and expectations set out in the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development.

The seminars and courses presented during the first quarter of 1996 are shown in the table below. The core course for senior managers, presented in conjunction with the British Civil Service College at Klein Kariba, Warmbaths, was particularly well received.

COURSES PRESENTED BY SAMDI BETWEEN 1 JANUARY AND 31 MARCH 1996			
SEMINARS AND COURSES	NUMBER OF COURSES/ SEMINARS	NUMBER OF TRAINEES	TRAINEE DAYS
Contact Personnel	4	120	360
Core Enrichment for Senior Managers	2	40	120
Financial Management System Audit	1	40	320
Financial Management in the Private Sector	4	53	265
General Management Aspects	8	218	505
Instructors	1		50
Junior Managers	3	60	300
Legal Aspects	1	15	
Middle Managers	1	8	40
Negotiation Skills	1	28	84
Personnel Investigating Officers	2	17	146
Primary Course for Trainers	1	11	55
Private Secretaries	2	60	30
Project Management	1	22	440
Provisioning Administration 1	6	196	2 940
Provisioning Administration System	2	29	435
Special Services	1	22	440
Statistical Methods	1	16	50
Strategic Management/Planning	4	110	260
Training Skills	2	28	190
Training Task of the Supervisor	1	27	81
Workshops (Strategic Planning)	5	-	-
TOTAL	54	1 130	6 971

# CHAPTER 5

## ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION PERFORMED IN TERMS OF ITS ROLE ENVISAGED IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION

With the unbundling of its functions on 12 April 1996, the Commission was assigned the role already envisaged for it in the new Constitution, and to this end the Office of the Commission has undergone realignment as pointed out earlier. This being a totally new role, much of the reporting year has been spent in identifying and researching specific focal areas related to this new role and in reorientating the Office to deal with its new functions.

The projects discussed below have been initiated to give effect to this new role, and represent some of the most important activities undertaken during the reporting year.

### Assessment of the operational functioning of departments/provincial administrations

The Commission has identified certain minimum or basic requirements for sound public administration, and has initiated an investigation to assess the functioning of departments/provincial administrations in respect of these requirements. This assessment will provide information on problem areas within the public service and will allow the Commission to design and imple-

ment specific programmed to assist departments/provincial administrations to meet these basic requirements. This should also stabilise the massive changes brought about by the public service rationalisation process. The Commission is of the opinion that the values and principles of public administration laid down in the new Constitution can only be promoted if basic requirements are met by departments. In other words, a minimum level of administrative competency has to exist in the public service.

Minimum requirements (standards) have been identified in the following critical performance areas:

- **Corporate Plan**

The corporate plan sets out what the department intends to do in the next planning period, including how these objectives will be reached and with what resources.

- **Organisational Structure**

The organisational structure defines the division of work and formalises work relationships to enable the organisation to execute, co-ordinate and control work activities.

- **Quality Assurance/Control**

Quality assurance refers to the evaluation and control of the overall performance of operational processes to ensure that the desired quantitative and qualitative outputs are achieved.

- **Human Resource Management**

Human resource management refers to all decisions and activities of management in respect of human resource practices, to ensure the optimal provisioning, utilisation, maintenance and development of personnel.

- **Financial Management**

Financial management refers to all decisions and activities of management which impact on the control and utilisation of the allocated financial resources to achieve specified and agreed strategic outputs.

- **Information Technology Management**

Information technology management refers to all decisions and activities of management which impact on the utilisation of information technology as a resource.

- **Ethics**

Ethics refers to the principles that define right and wrong conduct in the public service.

- **Management Support Services**

Management support services refer to the provisioning of all the professional and administrative support services required by a department, such as personnel and financial administration, provisioning administration, etc.

The requirements or standards have been defined in such a manner that the administrative competency of a department can be assessed objectively against these standards. These standards are supplemented by a detailed questionnaire to aid the gathering of information in departments on the actual state of public administration practice. The results of the assessment will be reported to Cabinet and Parliament as well as the relevant provincial executive councils.

#### In-service **training** programmed for **new** appointees

The aim with this project is to formulate advice regarding the importance and value of a policy and practice pertaining to in-service training of new appointees to the public service.

Since May 1994, significant numbers of new people are being appointed to the public service at various levels.

Concerns have been raised that such new appointees are not always provided with a sound, planned, structured and formalised support base in terms of in-service training, and that in-service training is often approached in an *ad hoc* manner. No detailed prescripts and guidelines exist in this regard apart from some references to training in the present prescripts.

In-service training may be regarded as the most important function in the induction process of a new appointee to the public service as it provides the opportunity for an individualised human resource development programme. This critically important function, however, is often left to the supervisor who is not necessarily *au fait* with training techniques and the available courses that are presented by departmental training components or SAMDI. This may subsequently lead to poor or no training being provided to the new appointee.

The aforementioned scenario has numerous implications of which the most important are -

- personnel turnover, brought about by resignations, especially amongst new entrants where representativeness levels are to be expanded, could increase due to feelings of frustration and disillusionment with the public service as a career when people feel under-utilised or ill-equipped to perform their duties;
- service delivery and the performance of organisational units could be compromised both in the short and medium term, giving rise to less time being expended on training due to crisis management and new appointees being (further) marginalised in the process, albeit unintentionally;
- the upward mobility of the people in question could be retarded; and
- owing to poor work performance as a result of a lack of appropriate knowledge, people may not be appointed permanently after having completed probationary or extended probationary periods, and may as a result be discharged.

The study conducted under this project determines to what extent departments/administrations have devised a departmental policy and training programmes in respect of in-service training for new appointees. On the basis of these findings the Commission will formulate its advice to inform the

policy for in-service training, including aspects such as functional in-service training, management training, induction courses, on the job training, evaluation of training, monitoring of individuals and retraining or replacement.

### Probationary appointments in the public service

The aim with this project is to monitor whether the policy prescripts in respect of probationary appointments in the public service are applied in the spirit of the principles of merit and equity as embodied in the Constitution, and to formulate advice as regards the improvement of present practices.

The extension or termination of an officer's probationary appointment is regarded as a sensitive matter, *inter alia*, to be handled in accordance with the Code of Good Practice as contained in the new Labour Relations Act. It is therefore necessary that departments/administrations should abide strictly by the measures laid down in this regard. In view of the fact that many new appointees (as well as serving officials) are not conversant with the procedures in dealing with the confirmation, extension or termination of probationary appointments, it is deemed necessary to draw their attention to this important aspect of the personnel function in order to prevent their departments/administrations being compromised. It should be borne in mind that the probationary period is an extension of the selection process and the manner in which a person copes with his/her work and his/her development during this probationary period is an integral part of the selection process.



This study is therefore undertaken in order to determine whether this function is executed in accordance with the applicable values and principles governing public administration as contained in the new Constitution. Furthermore, it is necessary to monitor, by means of interviews -

- whether departments/ administrations adhere to prescripts contained in the Public Service Staff Code;
- whether departments/administrations have devised departmental policy in the application and executing of the function regarding probationary appointments;
- whether supervisors are adequately trained to train and monitor the progress of new appointees;
- whether supervisors are acquainted with the relevant prescripts; and
- whether the in-service training programmed enhance the probationers' career development during the probationary period.

Emanating from the above investigation the Commission will formulate its advice on the procedures to be followed in respect of this practice.

## Interviewing as part of the personnel selection process

The aim of this project is to monitor the process of interviewing as a critical part of the personnel selection process, as well as to formulate advice on certain technical aspects of interviewing which could, with a view to promoting the values and principles regulating public administration as contained in the new Constitution, be taken up in departmental policy.

The interviewing of a candidate maybe regarded as the most important function in the selection process as it provides the opportunity for a personal exchange of information between the candidate and the interviewer. Concerns have often been expressed, however, that the interview process is often conducted in a haphazard manner. This may subsequently compromise the validity of the results obtained.

In view of the fact that it is common practice to base the final decision regarding the choice of the most suitable candidate for a post on the results of the interview, it is understandable that the reliability of the interview is of the utmost importance. It is therefore clear that interviewers must be adequately trained and that standardised selection criteria must be utilised to identify the most suitable candidate for a post, in order to ensure

that the principles of merit and equity are adhered to.

This study is therefore undertaken to determine to what extent departments/administrations adhere to the relevant prescripts contained in the Public Service Staff Code, e.g. the determination of post and person specifications with regard to specific posts, and the utilisation of comparable/standard selection criteria, as well as to what extent departments/administrations have devised departmental policy in respect of interviewing.

Emanating from the above investigation, the Commission will formulate its advice regarding departmental policy in respect of interviewing, which could include aspects such as the types of interviews; interviewing techniques; auxiliary aids in conducting interviews; factors which may influence the results of the interview, the environment in which the interview is conducted; the interviewer; and practical hints on structuring, planning and preparing for an interview.

#### **Alignment of organisational structures with strategic objectives**

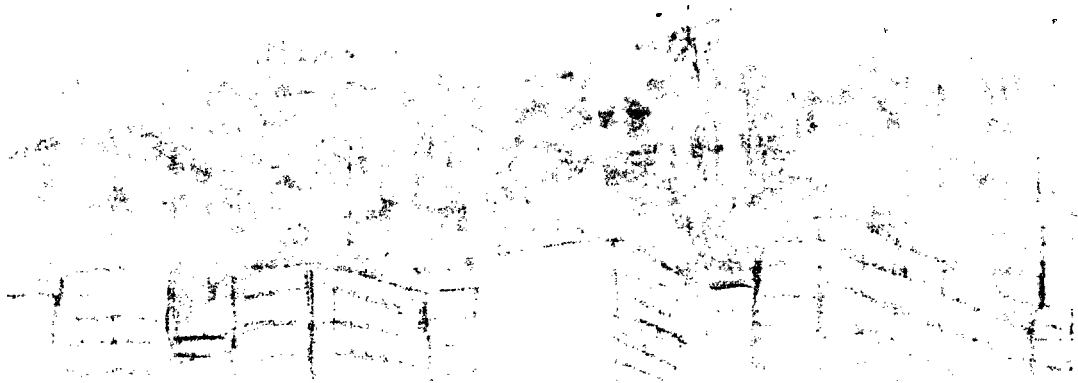
The aim of this project is to monitor whether organisational structures of departments/administrations are aligned with the efficient attainment

of their strategic objectives and to advise as regards the improvement of the present position. An organisational structure defines the division of work and formalises work relationships to enable the organisation to execute, co-ordinate and control work activities.

The requirements for organisational structures were defined, standards set and questions in this regard formulated.

On the basis of these requirements and standards, an extensive questionnaire was drawn up to be utilised for the scientific evaluation of the organisational structure and post establishment of departments. This purpose designed questionnaire is utilised to determine, *inter alia*, what the strategic objectives are; the approved organisation chart of the institution with purposes and functions; the approved establishment; whether the provisioning of posts complies with current applicable national norms and standards; whether the span of control complies with acceptable standards; and whether job descriptions are in place.

On this basis an assessment will be made to ascertain if organisational structures allow for the efficient attainment of strategic objectives and to furnish advice on the improvement of the present position.



## Assessment of management systems

Public service institutions in general are being criticised for three related shortcomings, namely that plans are being produced but that visible practical results are not forthcoming; public servants are rules driven and not results orientated; and public accountability is mainly focused on financial regularity with little or no emphasis on the meeting of community needs.

The Commission has therefore embarked on a project with the aim to monitor and, if found necessary, to provide departments/administrations with advice regarding the implementation of formal managerial control measures as a logical extension of their policy formulation and planning processes.

While not derogating from the relative importance of regularity and accountability, managing towards the attainment of objectives (performance) is of equal importance. This project therefore concentrates on the setting of short, medium and long term qualitative and quantitative performance objectives and targets as part of planning processes; on the determination of key performance areas for individual managerial positions at the various organisational levels; and on the establishment of effective management systems.

A normative model, against which the managerial control systems of departments/administrations can be evaluated, has since been developed and the Commission will formulate its advice to improve the present position after having fully assessed departments/administrations.

## Improvement of operational efficiency

Concern has often been expressed that departments do not render the services expected of them. The processes applied by departments do not always deliver the desired outputs and do not always comply with the principles of efficiency and effectiveness.

In order to rectify the situation the Commission initiated a project to evaluate the operational efficiency of departments. The aim of the project is to monitor the relationship between inputs and outputs and to give advice on the enhancement of the effectiveness and efficiency of the processes applied. Processes will be identified and an in depth analysis of the processes will be conducted. Emanating from these evaluations, advice will be provided with a view to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the processes applied.

As part of this project and to sensitise departments on the notions of effectiveness and efficiency, the Office of the Commission compiled various position papers on these topics. A position paper on productivity was compiled in which the concept of productivity is defined and all the elements that form part of the production process are explained. A further position paper deals with Business Process Re-engineering, its methodology, techniques and instruments which can provide an effective vehicle to enhance the efficiency of operational processes applied in departments. A third position paper deals with performance measurement. These will be produced as a brochure for circulation to departments.

Quality assurance was identified as a means to enhance service delivery and to ensure that the products produced by the various operational processes do conform with stated or implied needs. A position paper on this forms the basis of introducing quality assurance in the public service. It furthermore lays a foundation for the possible introduction of the International Standards Organisation system within the public service.

Apart from these position papers, various other instruments were also developed to be utilised by the Office in rendering advice to departments in order to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of operational processes.

### **Efficiency of transversal information technology systems**

The Commission has also launched a project intended to advise on the effectiveness and efficiency of the

existing transversal systems and to assess the application of the public service policy on transversal systems.

Transversal systems are intended to address matters of common interest, to eliminate duplication and to promote integration and standardisation between the common needs of departments/administrations. Concerns have been expressed, however, that the existing transversal systems were not evaluated regularly to determine whether the envisaged benefits were achieved. User departments were often not fully satisfied with the delivery of services and the procedures to be followed in order to enhance the functionality of these systems.

This project focuses separately on the user departments/administrations, the principal departments, and the developers of the transversal systems.

To deal with the focus on departments/administrations, a questionnaire has been utilised to identify problems which departments /administrations experience with the existing transversal systems; to identify which other systems had to be developed on departmental level to acquire additional functionalities that are not supported by the transversal systems; and to evaluate the advantages of transversal systems as envisaged in national policy.

This study has progressed considerably and, while not concluded yet, the following preliminary conclusions can already be drawn:

- The process followed to identify, plan and develop transversal systems requires improvement. Too little involvement from all poten-

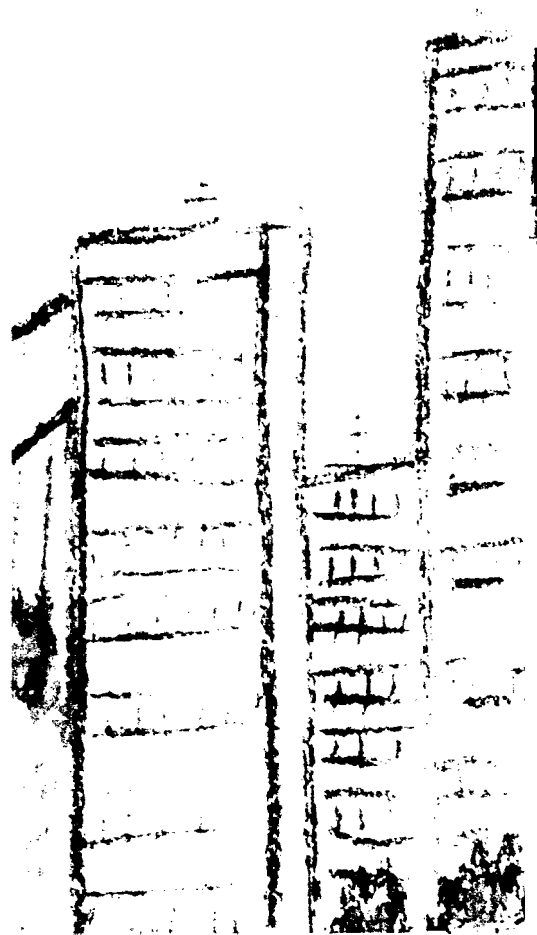
tial users resulted in systems not fully complying to all the functionalities required by the users thereof.

- Inadequate user training and escalation procedures.
- Inability of departmental information technology personnel to render support services due to the fact that the transversal systems are running centrally on hardware situated in bureaus in Pretoria.
- The time required for development and implementation is too long.
- Principal departments often do not fulfil their role according to pre-scripts.
- Some transversal systems have high operational and maintenance costs.
- The operation of transversal systems often depends on information technology consultants.

This project will be concluded once the roles of principal departments and the developers of transversal systems have been assessed. The results to be obtained are expected to inform the process of policy reformulation in insuring that transversal systems are planned and developed in such a way that the desired benefits will be achieved.

### Development of a Code of Conduct for the public service

The promotion of a high standard of professional ethics is central to the new role of the Commission, as great



emphasis is placed on transparency and accountability in the new public service. The development and implementation of a Code of Conduct for the public service has therefore received high priority. The first draft of the Code was published in September **1994** and developmental work resumed in May 1996, drawing largely on inputs made from a number of role players.

Taking into account the need to involve major role players as part of a wider consultative approach, the draft Code of Conduct has been subjected to considerable further discussion. It was first discussed at a meeting between the Commission and the Portfolio Committee on the Public Service and Adminis-

tration. Following this it was tabled as a working document at a meeting of the Central Chamber of the Public Service Bargaining Council. This is one of the last steps before finalizing the consultation process in readiness for the formal launching and releasing it as an official instrument of the public service.

The Code of Conduct is intended to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct governing the performance of public servants in carrying out their respective duties. It is intended to establish the desired value system to be strived at by all public servants and as such it should be regarded as a positive initiative. This could also have a positive influence on other initiatives such as the ongoing transformation of the public service and the upgrading of service delivery.

The Code of Conduct is divided into five sections. The first covers the public servant and his/her relationship with the legislature and the executive. Section two is concerned with the relationships with the public. Section three deals with the relationships among public servants. The last two sections are concerned with the performance of duties, personal conduct and private interests.

The Commission is also planning an overall strategy to launch and raise awareness around the Code once released. Activities to be undertaken as part of such a strategy will include appropriate workshops and a media awareness campaign.

As the implementation of a Code of Conduct is crucial to any drive to promote high ethical standards, the

need for a manual to be read in conjunction with the Code has been identified. A suitable manual has therefore been developed. The manual elucidates the principles contained in the Code, provides practical examples to guide public servants and will be used by departments in establishing suitable training programmed.

Information on public services in selected countries

Apart from its monitoring role, the Commission will in future also provide advice as to the improvement of administrative practices in the South African public service. It is essential that such advice be informed by full information regarding similar public service practices in other countries. Full information on all aspects of these public services is being obtained and will be kept up to date.

The countries for which material is being accumulated from sources both within South Africa and overseas are:

- Europe:  
Britain, Sweden, Germany, France
- North America:  
United States of America, Canada
- The East:  
Malaysia, Singapore, India, Japan
- Africa:  
Kenya, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana
- Australasia:  
Australia, New Zealand

The following types of information are being collected in respect of each of the public services identified:

- Full information on legislation and secondary legislation (prescripts, measures, other official documents) pertaining to the relevant public service.
- Information on the programmed/projects of institutions with similar functions to the Commission:
- Information on public service transformation /reform/improvement programmed.

Information is also being collected in respect of sources/studies conducted by the United Nations, the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Valuable information has already been obtained by Commissioners and officials who have visited other countries on study tours or to attend conferences. It is intended to collect further information, and to systematise it.

#### International Relations

During the year under review, the Commission continued to interact with various international organisations on public service issues. These contacts have

proved to be invaluable in providing both a theoretical and a practical background to the developmental work that has been undertaken by the Commission.

During March, Members of the Commission, led by the Minister for the Public Service and Administration, paid an official visit to Malaysia, where they met with the Public Service Department, the Federal Public Service Commission, the Education Service Commission and the State Secretary's Office of Selangor. MAMPU, which is a specific body dealing with effectiveness and efficiency in the Malaysian public service, provided valuable insight into several aspects of the Commission's new role.

In April, a Member of the Commission and two officials from the Office attended the 1996 Biennial Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM) Conference in Malta, the theme for which was "The New Public Administration: Global Challenges - Local Solutions". This conference provided further perspectives on the future functioning of the Commission.



*Visit of the PSC to Canada*

*Left to right:*

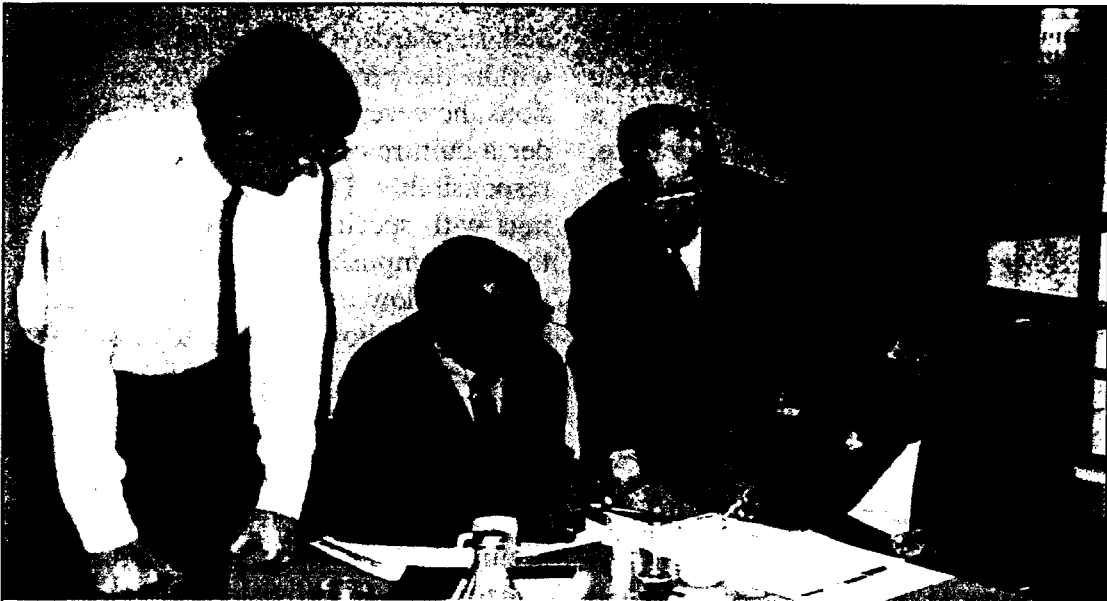
*Dr Y G Muthien,*

*MS R Hubbard (Chair, Canadian PSC),*

*Prof S S Sangweni,*

*Ms M Guisela (Commissioner, Canadian PSC),*

*Ms G Steward (Commissioner, Canadian PSC).*



↑↑  
Visit of the PSC to Alberta, Canada  
Left to right: Dr L C A Stoop,  
Prof S S Sangweni,  
Mr J Dixon (Chairman, Alberta PSC),  
Dr Y G Muthien.

In order to assist the Commission in moving towards its newly assigned role and functions, the United States Information Services and the International Development Research Centre in Canada invited the Commission to send a delegation to the USA and Canada in May. The purpose of the study tour was to provide the Commission with the opportunity of exploring how crucial issues pertaining to its new role and functions are addressed in practice in both the USA and Canada. Visits to several public service institutions provided the delegations with valuable insights.

In June/July, a Member of the Commission and an official from the Office attended the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) International Conference in Durban, where the theme was Professionalism and Ethical Conduct for the Public Servant: Challenges of the 21st Century. The

same official in the Office also attended a conference on Public Sector Ethics - Past and Future, which was held in Australia in August. This has assisted the process of finalizing the Code of Conduct.

Two officials from the Office of the Commission spent October and November in the United States as part of an internship programme run by the United States Information Agency. They were placed in organisations with similar functions to the Office and returned motivated by what they had learned, especially in the area of human resource management, dispute resolution and performance-based pay.

### Miscellaneous local activities

At the national level, the Commission made three substantial presentations to the Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration. These presentations *inter alia* addressed the progress made with representativeness



in the public service, the envisaged new role and functions of the Public Service Commission, and the development of a Code of Conduct for the public service. Inputs were also made to the Constitutional Assembly during the process of drafting the new Constitution.

Members of the Commission continued to contribute in the professional and academic field by presenting papers on various public service issues at several universities, including the Rand Afrikaans University, the University of Pretoria and the University of Port Elizabeth, as well as at the annual conference of the South African Institute of Public Administration.

### The Forum of Service Commissions

The Forum of Service Commissions is a combined body of all nine provincial service commissions and the Public Service Commission. It exists for mutual benefit, to facilitate the exchange of information and the discussion of topics of common interest, but has no decision-making powers over affairs at either provincial or national level.

The Forum met on several occasions during the year and there were further meetings between the Chairpersons of the Commissions to discuss specific topics.

Special meetings/workshops were held to address issues of mutual interest. A strategic workshop held in February focused on the functioning of the Forum. The Interim Constitution granted key leadership responsibility to the Public Service Commission by entrusting it with the setting of norms

and standards. Consultation with and within the provincial service commissions, however, was essential to engender a culture of co-ownership and co-responsibility. Dedicated Forum meetings with specific objectives and tasks to be accomplished, as well as mechanisms to follow them up, were proposed at this workshop and activated during the year.

At a special meeting of the Forum in May the formulations of the draft Constitution with regard to public administration were discussed. The constitutional provisions regarding the Public Service Commission and the provincial service commissions were deliberated. This was further debated at a special meeting of the Forum in August, where certain legal aspects of the draft Constitution and draft Public Service Commission Bill were studied in detail.

A two-day Forum workshop was held in September to further address the implications of the new Constitution. Important issues under consideration were various models proposed for the effective implementation of the envisaged new Public Service Commission and proposals for the envisaged size, organisation and operation of the new Office of the Commission.

A very successful two-day conference was also held in November, during which comprehensive discussions were held between the Forum and the Presidential Review Commission on issues relating to the transformation of the public service. Presentations were given by all five Public Service Commissioners and by representatives from the provincial service commissions.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

As this is the last formal report under the Interim Constitution, the Public Service Commission wishes to express its appreciation to all Ministers, especially the Minister for the Public Service and Administration, Heads of Department, the Provincial Service Commissions and the Portfolio Committee for the Public Service and Administration for their co-operation and collaboration in implementing constitutional requirements during a period which will be recorded as the most difficult and complex in the history of the public service in South Africa.

The Commission would like to thank all Ministers, Premiers and heads of department for their support during 1996. It also appreciates the valuable guidance of the Portfolio Committee on Public Service and Administration, as well as the sterling contributions made by the provincial service commissions and the various employee organisations in the Central Bargaining Chamber of the Public Service Bargaining Council towards the transformation of the Public Service.

The Commission particularly wishes to thank the personnel of its Office for their dedication and positive support during this transition, and for their enthusiastic approach to the new role of the Commission.