



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

State of Air Report 2005: A report on the state of the air in South Africa

Date Evaluation was completed: 01 January 2009

Name of assessor: Meagan Jooste

Evaluation Number: 102

Date Assessment Completed: 13 February 2013

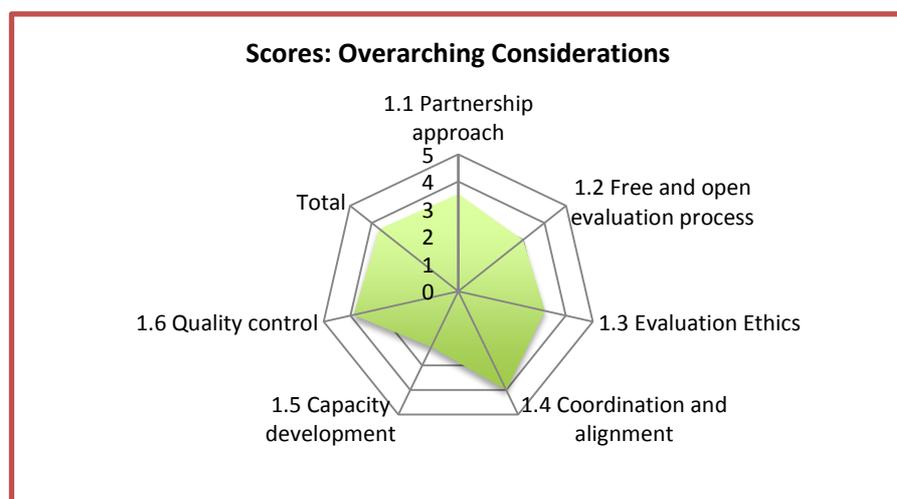
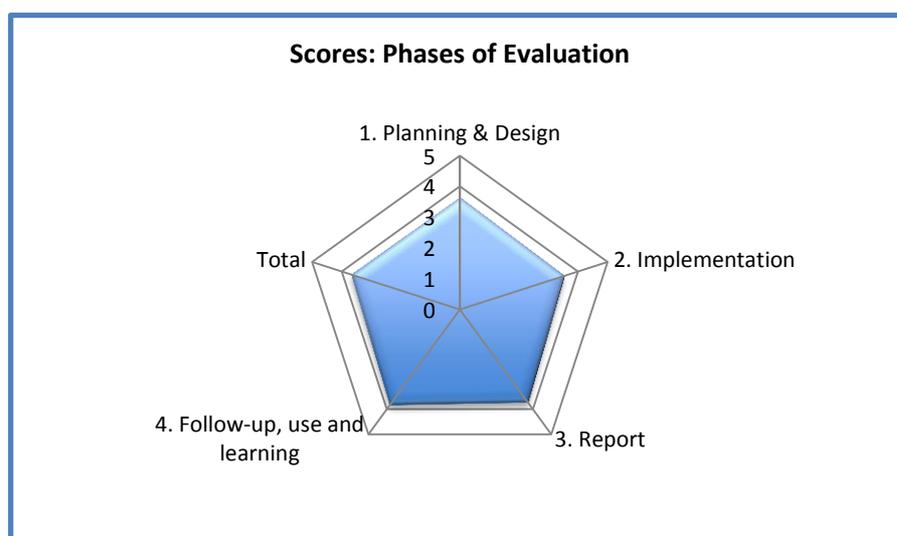
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	State of Air Report 2005: A report on the state of the air in South Africa
Completion Date of Evaluation	01 January 2009
Name of Assessor	Meagan Jooste
Evaluation Number	102
Completion Date of Assessment	13 February 2013
Initiated by	Department of Environmental Affairs
Evaluation undertaken by	Department of Environmental Affairs
Evaluation area / sector	Environment, climate change
	<i>Additional</i>
National Outcome	Outcome 10
	<i>Additional</i>
Type of Evaluation	Diagnostic
	<i>Other</i>
	<i>Additional</i>
What is being evaluated	Sector
	<i>Policy</i>
	<i>Additional</i>
Geographic Scope	National
Period of Evaluation	2005
Known Cost of Evaluation	Unknown

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	3.63
Implementation	3.52
Report	3.71
Follow-up, use and learning	3.82
Total	3.66

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	3.55
Free and open evaluation process	3.00
Evaluation Ethics	3.22
Coordination and alignment	4.00
Capacity Development	2.25
Quality control	3.89



1. Planning & Design

1.1. Clarity of Purpose and Scope in TOR

STANDARD: *The evaluation was guided by a TOR with at least the following sections explicit: purpose, scope and objectives; expectations regarding design and methodology; resources and time allocated; reporting requirements; expectations regarding evaluation process and products.*

Comment and Analysis

There does not appear to have been a ToR for the study. However, the study was informed by two key objectives of the study: 1. Provide a published version of available information and 2. Document the evaluation in a textbook like structure such that it took the targeted audience (matric students) through the basics, up to the advanced elements of air quality in South Africa. The evaluation was designed to be a resource of information on air quality - the first of its kind in the country.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: *The purpose of the evaluation was clear and explicit in the TOR*

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: *The evaluation questions were clearly stated in the TOR and appropriate to addressing the evaluation purpose*

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: The approach and type of evaluation was suited to the purpose and scope of the evaluation TOR

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Intended users and their information needs were identified in the TOR

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were involved in the scoping of the TOR and determining the purpose of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced

STANDARD: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of time allocated

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of original budget

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of staffing and skills sets

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Where appropriate, the evaluation planned to incorporate an element of capacity building of partners/staff responsible for the evaluand

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

1.3. Alignment to Policy Context and Background Literature

STANDARD: There was evidence that a review of the relevant policy and programme environments had been conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation by the evaluators

Comment and Analysis

A review of the appropriate policies and programmes currently in place to mitigation air pollution was provided and it is assumed this information was used in the planning of the evaluation.

Rating 4

STANDARD: There was evidence of a review of appropriate literature having been conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation by the evaluators

Comment and Analysis

A tremendous body of literature was referred to in the report to support the various statements raised.

Rating 4

1.4. The evaluation methods planned were appropriate to the project

STANDARD: There was explicit reference to the intervention logic or the theory of change of the evaluand in the planning of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were consulted on the design and methodology of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: The planned methodology was appropriate to the questions being asked

Comment and Analysis

The planned methodology was appropriate to the questions being asked as the latter enquired about the status of air quality in South Africa in 2005.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Planned sampling was appropriate and adequate given the focus and purpose of evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The sampling was appropriate given that the study sought to reflect the scale of air pollution in South Africa not only on a national, but also at the city level (with attention afforded to the major metros).

Rating 4

STANDARD: There was a planned process for using the findings of the evaluation prior to undertaking the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

From the report it is not clear that there was a specifically planned process for using the findings of the evaluation prior to undertaking it. The evaluation was however generally intended to guide future such assessments of the state of air quality in the country.

Rating 2

1.5. Inception phase

STANDARD: The inception phase was used to develop a common agreement on how the evaluation would be implemented

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

2. Implementation

2.1. Ethical Review and Considerations

STANDARD: *Where data was gathered in contexts where ethical sensitivity is high, appropriate clearance was obtained through an ethics review board; e.g. in evaluation involving minors, institutions where access usually requires ethical or bureaucratic clearance, and situations where assurances of confidentiality was offered to participants*

Comment and Analysis

As the evaluation relied on secondary data or data provided by entities personally, no ethical review or clearance regarding the use of the data in the report was needed.

Rating 4

2.2. Evaluator independence

STANDARD: *Where external, evaluation team was able to work freely without significant interference*

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: The evaluation team was impartial and there was no evidence of conflict of interest

Comment and Analysis

While the study was completed by the government department responsible for Air Quality Management, the technical analysis was completed by the CSIR. To that extent, it would be fair to say the evaluation team was relatively impartial.

Rating 3

2.3. Key stakeholder involvement

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were consulted through a formalised mechanism or institutional arrangement during the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

Key stakeholders were consulted during the evaluation. In particular, as Air Quality Management is in large part the responsibility of local government, they were extensively engaged with through the evaluation (providing a source of data and knowledge input to the evaluation).

Rating 4

STANDARD: Where appropriate, an element of capacity building of partners responsible for the evaluand was incorporated into the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

From the report it is not clear that capacity-building of partners responsible for the evaluation was incorporated into the evaluation process.

Rating 2

2.4. Methodology

STANDARD: The methods employed in the process of the evaluation were consistent with those planned

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Data collection was not compromised by fieldwork-level problems or unplanned diversions from original intentions

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation relied on available information from a number of sources (including inventories, monitoring stations and literature) and thus the data referred to was secondary data. In general as the evaluation was able to piggy-back on the technical data analysis completed by CSIR (for a separate project) the data collection process was not compromised by fieldwork-level problems or unplanned diversions.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Forms of data gathering were appropriate given the scope of evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The data gathering was appropriate given the scope of the evaluation.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The data analysis approach and methods were appropriate and sufficient given the purposes of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

A rigorous data analysis was completed and is well documented in a Technical Appendix to the report. The analysis was appropriate given the purposes of the evaluation.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were significantly engaged as part of the methodology

Comment and Analysis

Key stakeholders were consulted during the evaluation.

Rating 3

STANDARD: The methodology included engaging beneficiaries appropriately as a key source of data and information

Comment and Analysis

As the evaluation involved reviewing the status of air pollution in the country, there were no real 'beneficiaries'. However, data was sourced from parties who influence air pollution, whether that be large entities or local government.

Rating 3

2.5. Project management

STANDARD: The evaluation was conducted without shifts to scheduled project milestones and timeframes

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

3. Report

3.1. Report was well-structured and presentation was clear and complete in each of these areas

STANDARD: Executive summary captured key components of the report appropriately

Comment and Analysis

The executive summary captured the key components of the report appropriately.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The context of the development intervention was explicit and presented as relevant to the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

To the extent that the evaluation involved a detailed review of air pollution trends and determinants, a thorough background to air pollution management (as the development intervention) was provided.

Rating 4

STANDARD: There was a clear rationale for the evaluation questions**Comment and Analysis**

The rationale for the evaluation questions was clear, it was to determine the state of Air Quality in 2005 so as to have a baseline of emissions at the initiation of the Air Quality Act.

Rating 3

STANDARD: The scope or focus of the evaluation was apparent in the report**Comment and Analysis**

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: A detailed methodology was outlined in the relevant section of a report (full report or 1/3/25) to the point that a reader could understand the data collection, analysis and interpretation**Comment and Analysis**

A very detailed methodology section is provided in the Technical Appendix guiding the reader as to the data collection, analysis and interpretation methods.

Rating 5

STANDARD: Key findings were presented in a clear way; they were made distinct from uncertain or speculative findings; and unused data was not presented in the body of the report

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation presents the key findings in a detailed and clear fashion.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated*

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions were clear and succinctly articulated, and the recommendations were equally well-written and spoke well to data improvements which can enhance the quality of information utilized in future such assessments.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *Acknowledgement of limitations of all aspects of the methodology and findings were clearly and succinctly articulated*

Comment and Analysis

The report makes good acknowledgement of the limitations of the methodology when, in particular, referring to the constraints in comparing air quality monitoring data (which is often collected using different equipment).

Rating 4

3.2. Writing and presentation

STANDARD: *Quality of writing and presentation was adequate for publication including: adequate layout and consistent formatting; complete sentences and no widespread grammatical or typographical errors; consistency of style and writing conventions (e.g. tense, perspective (first person, third person); levels of formality; references complete and consistent with cited references in reference list and vice versa; etc)*

Comment and Analysis

The quality of writing and presentation was very good and accessibly laid out with no widespread grammatical or typographical errors. All in all, the report is well laid out and uses a consistent style of writing. This is likely attributable to the fact that the report was reviewed by both an english language and scientific reviewer.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *Appropriate conventions were used in presentation of data (e.g. use of appropriate statistical language; reporting of p-values where appropriate; not reporting statistically insignificant findings as significant; clarifying disaggregation categories in constructing percentages; not using quantitative language in reporting qualitative data, etc.)*

Comment and Analysis

Appropriate conventions were used in the presentation of the data. In addition, the text explains the logic behind the data very well.

Rating 4

3.3. Presentation of findings

STANDARD: *The use of figures and tables was such that it supported communication and comprehension of results; and data reported in figures and tables was readily discernible and useful to a reader familiar with data presentation conventions*

Comment and Analysis

The use of figures and tables was such that it communicated the information well and represented it in a readily discernible fashion.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed

Comment and Analysis

The data analysis appears to have been thoroughly and meticulously executed as well as the detail to this effect being very well-documented in the Technical Appendix.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence

Comment and Analysis

The findings in the report were well-supported by available evidence.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The evidence gathered was sufficiently and appropriately analysed to support the argument

Comment and Analysis

The evidence contained in the report was sufficiently and appropriately analysed to support the argument.

Rating 4

STANDARD: There was appropriate recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations

Comment and Analysis

There is fair acknowledgement of the possibility of alternative interpretations, for example in terms of the 'Limitations of this technical compilation' section of the Technical Appendix.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The report appeared free of significant methodological and analytic flaws

Comment and Analysis

The report appeared to be free of any significant methodological or analytical flaws.

Rating 3

3.4. Conclusions

STANDARD: Conclusions were derived from evidence

Comment and Analysis

Conclusions were well documented and based on the investigation completed in the report.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions took into account relevant empirical and/or analytic work from related research studies and evaluations

Comment and Analysis

Given that the basis of the evaluation assessment was a good literature assessment, the conclusions took into account relevant empirical and/or analytic work from related research studies.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Conclusions addressed the original evaluation purpose and questions

Comment and Analysis

Given that the original evaluation question was aimed at establishing whether the Air Quality Act and its implementation, ensures air quality is not harmful to health or well-being: the report addressed this matter very well in the conclusionary section.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions were drawn with explicit reference to the intervention logic or theory of change

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

3.5. Recommendations

STANDARD: Recommendations were made in consultation with appropriate sectoral partners or experts

Comment and Analysis

An Annual Air Quality Governance Lekgotla is held between national and provincial governments as well as the National Association for Clean Air. At this event, inputs from stakeholders were acquired on the evaluation.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Recommendations were shaped following input or review by relevant government officials and other relevant stakeholders

Comment and Analysis

An Annual Air Quality Governance Lekgotla is held between national and provincial governments as well as the National Association for Clean Air. At this event, inputs from stakeholders were acquired on the evaluation.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Recommendations were relevant to the policy context**Comment and Analysis**

Insofar as the recommendations largely spoke to the need for air quality data collection improvements, the recommendations were relevant to the policy context as the Air Quality Act's implementation relies heavily on the quality of such data to determine progress in achieving its objectives.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Recommendations were targetted to a specific audience sufficiently - were specific, feasible, affordable and acceptable**Comment and Analysis**

The recommendations were quite well-targeted to provincial and local governments in particular, whom the evaluation finds have a need to improve their air quality data so as to identify potential priority areas accurately.

Rating 4

3.6. Relevant limitations of the evaluation have been noted**STANDARD: Relevant limitations of the evaluation were noted****Comment and Analysis**

Where data quality constraints limited the evaluation's analysis, these are well reflected upon.

Rating 3

3.7 Protection of participants and risk considerations

STANDARD: The full report documented procedures intended to ensure confidentiality and to secure informed consent where this was needed (in some cases this is not needed - e.g. evaluation synthesis - in which case N/A should be recorded)

Comment and Analysis

The information gathered for this evaluation was secondary in nature to the extent that it was sourced from a variety of parties who collect the data. Given that this data was aggregated to the provincial or local government level, it is not apparent from the evaluation that there was a need to ensure participant confidentiality.

Rating 3

STANDARD: There were no risks to participants in disseminating the original report on a public website

Comment and Analysis

There was no risks to participants in disseminating the original report on a public website.

Rating 3

STANDARD: There were no unfair risks to institutions in disseminating the original report on a public website

Comment and Analysis

There were no unfair risks to institutions in disseminating the original report on a public website.

Rating 3

4. Follow-up, use and learning

4.1. Presentation to stakeholders

STANDARD: Results were presented to all relevant stakeholders

Comment and Analysis

An Annual Air Quality Governance Lekgotla is held between national and provincial governments as well as the National Association for Clean Air. At this event, inputs from stakeholders were acquired on the evaluation.

Rating 4

4.2. Resource utilisation

STANDARD: The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

4.3. Transparency

STANDARD: The report was publicly available (website or otherwise published document), except where there were legitimate security concerns

Comment and Analysis

The report is publicly available through the Department of Environmental Affairs website.

Rating 3

4.4. Lessons learnt

STANDARD: After completion of the evaluation, a reflective process was undertaken by staff responsible for the evaluand to reflect on what could be done to strengthen future evaluations

Comment and Analysis

It is not clear that a formalised reflective process was undertaken by staff responsible for the evaluand. However, the interview revealed that the Department of Environmental Affairs (the party responsible for implementing the National Air Quality Act) learned a great deal from the evaluation particularly regarding how to improve their air quality data collection techniques.

Rating 3

4.5. Symbolic and conceptual value

STANDARD: The evaluation study was seen by interviewed stakeholders as having added significant symbolic value to the policy or programme (eg raised its profile)

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation study has raised the profile of Air Quality as a priority in the environmental concerns of provincial and local governments in particular (who are responsible for air quality monitoring).

Rating 4

STANDARD: The evaluation study was of conceptual value in understanding what has happened and possibly in shaping policy and practice

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation study was of conceptual value in understanding what has happened and possibly in shaping policy and practice in Air Quality Monitoring and Management going forward.

Rating 4

4.6. Utilisation of findings and recommendations

STANDARD: There was clear evidence of instrumental use - that the recommendations of the evaluation were implemented to a significant extent

Comment and Analysis

Since the publication of the document, there have been dramatic improvements in data collection and monitoring. It is now possible for Air Quality data to be accessed through the Department of Environmental Affairs' South African Weather Services. The Weather Services hosts the South African Air Quality Information System (SAAQIS) where one can get real-time updates of air quality. In addition, a National Air Quality Indicator has been developed, which takes SAAQIS - weights and averages it - and produces an indicator of air quality (where a value above 1 shows non-compliance with ambient air quality standards and a value below 1 shows an improvement in ambient air quality).

Rating 4

STANDARD: There was clear evidence that the evaluation has had a positive influence on the evaluand, its stakeholders and beneficiaries over the medium to long term

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation brought about improvements in the quality of air quality monitoring and management. Specifically, an online air quality monitoring portal being set-up for the public to trace air quality trends (namely, SAAQIS). In addition, the Minister of Environmental Affairs approved the establishment of new air quality monitoring stations in the country so as to expand the reach of air quality monitoring. Both of these actions were informed by this State of Air Report. As such, the evaluation has had a clear positive impact on stakeholders and beneficiaries over the medium and long term.

Rating 4

References

Department of Environmental Affairs. 2009. State of Air Report 2005: A report on the state of air in South Africa. Available from:
<http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=109447>

List of Interviewees

Peter Lukey, Chief Policy Advisor: Strategic Environmental Intelligence Environmental Advisory Services Unit: Department of Environmental Affairs, Telephonic Interview, 11/02/2013