



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

**Seventh Consolidated Public Service Monitoring & Evaluation
Report: Evaluation Cycle 2009/2010**

Date Evaluation was completed: 01 February 2011

Name of assessor: Mike Leslie

Evaluation Number: 66

Date Assessment Completed: 10 December 2012

Evaluation Assessment Details

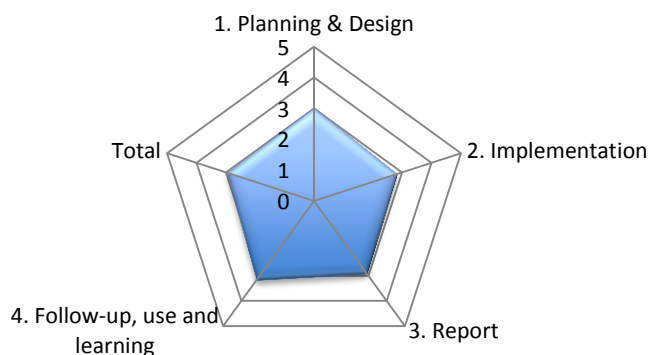
Title of evaluation report	Seventh Consolidated Public Service Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Evaluation Cycle 2009/2010
Completion Date of Evaluation	01 February 2011
Name of Assessor	Mike Leslie
Evaluation Number	66
Completion Date of Assessment	10 December 2012
Initiated by	Public Service Commission
Evaluation undertaken by	Public Service Commission
Evaluation area / sector	Public service, governance, M&E
	Additional
National Outcome	Outcome 12
	Additional
Type of Evaluation	Evaluation Synthesis
	Additional
What is being evaluated	Institution
	Additional
Geographic Scope	National
Period of Evaluation	Financial Year 2009/2010
Known Cost of Evaluation	Unknown

Quality Assessment Scores

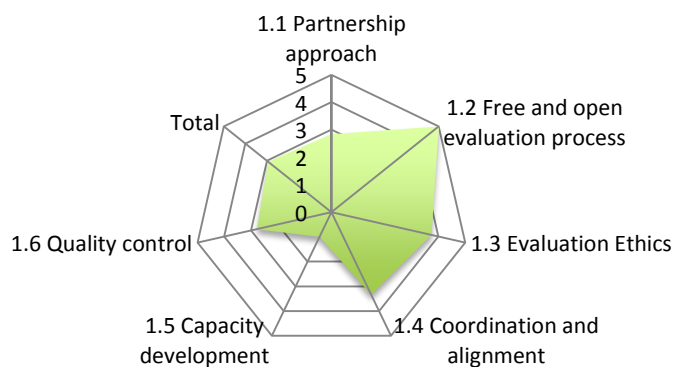
Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	3.00
Implementation	2.83
Report	2.90
Follow-up, use and learning	3.15
Total	2.92

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	2.84
Free and open evaluation process	5.00
Evaluation Ethics	3.73
Coordination and alignment	3.33
Capacity Development	1.00
Quality control	2.78

Scores: Phases of Evaluation



Scores: Overarching Considerations



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

A ToR was not available for review of this evaluation.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

The aim of the synthesis was stated clearly and explicitly in the report as "To provide an overview of performance of the 30 Departments included in the PSC's 2009/2010 evaluation cycle, against the nine Constitutional values and principles (CVPs) set out in Section 195 of the Constitution of South Africa."

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

No evaluation questions were stated explicitly in the report, although the M&E Assessment Framework accompanying it did provide an indication of the context and rationale for the assessments, although without explicit questions.

Rating 3

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

Although deadlines were reported to be tight, it appeared that the time allocated was appropriate.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

It was reported that the financial resourcing was stretched in terms of doing any more work than was done, but the available funds were appropriate in relation to this report.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The team responsible for the assessment was comprised of two few people for the scope of work of reviewing and synthesising 30 reports.

Rating 2

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

The sections on Background and PSC's M&E system in the report provide some policy and contextual grounding that suggests the planning was informed by a general review of the relevant policy environments.

Rating 3

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

There was limited reference to other studies or research on Public Service values and principles and only existing reports conducted by the PSC were referenced in the research and writing of the report. This suggests that some relevant literature informed the planning, but it was certainly not a comprehensive review of appropriate literature.

Rating 3

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 for the synthesis was inadequately explained.

Rating 1

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

The report used all of the available Provincial and National Assessments at its disposal.

Rating 5

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

There was a planned process for disseminating the document to oversight bodies in general, with follow-up meetings planned across Departments. However, the use of the synthesis itself could have been more fully explored, particularly with regards to follow-up as part of the planning of the evaluation.

Rating 3

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 this was a synthesis report of existing reports and relied on secondary data, this consideration did not apply.

Rating N/A

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***

Although internal to the public sector, the team from the PSC compiling the report appeared sufficiently impartial without any conflicts of interest for the synthesis.

Rating 4

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 engaged at the beginning of the assessment process and later on finalisation of the report.

Rating 3

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

There was not any evidence of capacity building of departments incorporated into this evaluation process.

Rating 1

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

In terms of accessing the reports from the Provincial Departments, it did not appear that there were any serious deviations or unplanned diversions in obtaining the reports.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Since the data used for this study was secondary data in the form of reports from provinces and departments, such data gathering was appropriate, although the extent to which these reports were validated with other comparable work (such as AG reports) was not entirely clear as the methodology was not provided.

Rating 3

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

Given that the work was a consolidation and synthesis of existing reports, the methodology appeared to have been assumed and not explicitly addressed. The lack of explanation of the methods was a serious shortcoming of the report.

Rating 2***STANDARD: Key stakeholders were significantly engaged as part of the methodology******Comment and Analysis***

Key stakeholders were involved in the assessment process from its inception and input was requested and in some instances received from stakeholders prior to the issuing of Departmental reports. The consolidated report appeared to serve a general information purpose and was publically disseminated whereas the Departmental reports were not. More could be made clear as to how this report should be used by the public, policy makers, administrators, etc.

Rating 3***STANDARD: The methodology included engaging beneficiaries appropriately as a key source of data and information******Comment and Analysis***

Given that the work was a synthesis of the findings from the compliance assessments, beneficiary consultation was not necessarily appropriate. However, the involvement of beneficiaries in the sourcing of data for the PSC's M&E system could certainly be improved. The consolidated report failed to critically engage with how beneficiaries experience these values in their dealings with the state.

Rating N/A

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 was a concise and appropriate synopsis of the work presented in the Main Report.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

There was a brief introduction and background to the project in terms of mandate and policy, along with an overview of the PSC's M&E system but this could have been further expanded upon and elaborated.

Rating 3

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

There was a clear rationale for the assessment of the 9 CVPs, however no evaluative questions were made explicit.

Rating 3

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

The scope and focus was clear in terms of the 30 Departments assessed for the 9 CVPs during the 2009/2010 evaluation cycle.

Rating 4

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**

There was no explanation of the data collection methodologies employed for the purpose of the report.

Rating 1

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

Findings were presented in a clear way, with a clear distinction made between overall performance of the CVP, and those strengths and weaknesses of specific standards.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

The recommendations prefaced the conclusions, but they were clearly and succinctly articulated.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no acknowledgement of the limitations of the methodology and findings.

Rating 1

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

Quality of writing and presentation, formatting and style were all appropriate.

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

There was an instance where an inappropriate convention was used in the data presentation. The Pie Graph provided on Page 7 was an inappropriate usage of a proportional visual for two separate totals. Such a visual representation would be appropriate to illustrate the proportion of recommendations implemented vs. the proportion of those not implemented out of the total recommendations made in the 1st assessment. However, this was no justification for including Recommendations made in the 2nd assessment as part of the chart.

Rating 2

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 readily discernible and appeared appropriate for the information presented, with the exception of the issue noted above.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed

Comment and Analysis

Data analysis appeared to be of average execution.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence

Comment and Analysis

Findings were supported by available evidence.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The evidence gathered appeared sufficiently analysed to support the argument

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

The methodology applied for the assessment was not clear, thus limiting the reader's ability to assess it for methodological flaws. The analysis appeared free of significant errors.

Rating 2

3.4. Conclusions

STANDARD: Conclusions were derived from evidence**Comment and Analysis**

The Conclusions seemed to contradict some of the findings. For instance, the average performance across 8 of the 9 CVPs was found to be adequate for the 30 Departments evaluated, yet the Conclusion states, "There was a general lack of compliance with the most basic Public Service frameworks, such as the disciplinary code and procedures for the Public Service, the PFMA and Treasury Regulations, the Promotion of Access to Information Act, human resource management practices, and representivity." How could performance be found to be adequate for the most part, and then the Conclusion stated that there was a general lack of compliance?

Rating 2***STANDARD: Conclusions took into account relevant empirical and/or analytic work from related research studies and evaluations*****Comment and Analysis**

The Conclusions did not take into account other relevant work done to assess the Public Service, although the report on the whole did provide a basis for comparison against the same assessment completed the year previous.

Rating 3***STANDARD: Conclusions addressed the original evaluation purpose and questions*****Comment and Analysis**

The conclusions did address the original evaluation purpose, but did not address specific questions as none were explicitly stated.

Rating 3

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**

There was not any indication that recommendations were made with appropriate sectoral partners or experts outside of the PSC.

Rating 2

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

There was an indication that the recommendations were informed following discussions and inputs on the findings from government officials and relevant stakeholders after the Departmental Reports. However, the extent to which Stakeholders were given the opportunity to give input on the consolidated report was unclear.

Rating 4

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

Recommendations made explicit reference to the policy context and recommended better compliance to regulations.

Rating 4

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

The recommendations were fairly generalised, given the nature of the assessment. However, they did not make reference to specific functions across Departments (eg. Human Resource Management, Legal, Internal Audit, Fraud Prevention, etc) that were common and could be drawn out.

Rating 3

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

No limitations were noted in the report.

Rating 1

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

There was no evidence in the report documented to ensure confidentiality, but none was necessary in this instance.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

The document was not considered to be a risk to any participants in disseminating the original report as it was already available online.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The document was not considered to be an unfair risk to any institutions, although there was certainly the potential to reflect negatively on a given province or sector department. Nevertheless, this was not considered unfair.

Rating 3

4. Follow-up, use and learning

4.1. Presentation to stakeholders

STANDARD: *Results were presented to all relevant stakeholders*

Comment and Analysis

Findings were presented to stakeholders for input at an earlier stage and not necessarily following the consolidated report.

Rating 3

4.2. Resource utilisation

STANDARD: *The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes*

Comment and Analysis

The synthesis report was completed within the set timeframes.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget*

Comment and Analysis

Information was not available in this regard.

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 document was already publically available via the PSC's website.

Rating 5

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

This standard could not be assessed at the time of writing due to insufficient information.

Rating N/A

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

Given that the report was presented to Parliament and Provincial Legislatures it was clearly of some symbolic significance, although the extent to which this has added value was added value to the policy environment or programme more generally was not clear.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

Limited information was available to assess this standard.

Rating N/A

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

The extent to which recommendations made by the PSC were acted was an issue. Despite follow-up meetings to discuss progress on addressing the PSC's recommendations, there was limited evidence of demonstrable use.

Rating 2

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

Limited information was available to assess these standard.

Rating N/A

References

Public Service Commission. 2011. Seventh Consolidated Public Service Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Evaluation cycle 2009/2010.

Public Service Commission. 2010. Updated M&E Assessment Framework.

Public Service Commission 2010. Updated M&E Reporting Template.

List of Interviewees

Kleintjie Henning: Director, Public Service Commission, telephonic interview, 9 December 2012.

Kobus van der Merwe: Chief Director, Public Service Commission, telephonic interview, 9 December 2012.