Chapter 3:   Historical perspective of the development of the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA): 1995-2001

3.1   Introduction

One of the important reasons for socio-economic hardships is the lack of trained employees, especially in the Public Service. South Africans are entitled to high quality service delivery and thus the Public Service has the responsibility of identifying skills that would enable line function departments to fulfil their obligations. Development and training of public employees will not only benefit the Department but will also uplift, challenge and advance the individual employee. In this Chapter, attention will be given to the transformation process in the DPSA. The DPSA has an important role to play in the development and training of public employees and, as such, should not appoint lesser skilled or inadequately trained employees. The reasons and circumstances surrounding Public Service development and training will be discussed and attention will also be devoted to the *Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2005 for the Public Service*.

3.2   Establishing a new Department of Public Service and Administration

The *White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995* outlines the broad policy framework for transforming the Public Service in line with its vision (Paragraph 2.1 of the *White Paper of the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995)*:

> *The Government of National Unity is committed to continually improving the lives of the people of South Africa by a transformed Public Service that is representative, coherent, transparent, efficient, effective, accountable and responsive to the needs of all.*

In 1996, the Commission of Inquiry on the Transformation and Reform of the Public Service was instituted with a specific mandate to investigate the structures

and functions of the Public Service, focusing on an internal audit and a review of each ministry and department as well as to propose revisions in the systems, routines and procedures of each. The underlying guidelines for the Commission were derived from the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995 together with Chapter 10 of *the* Constitution, 1996. Both documents identify the mission of the Public Service that include the creation of a people-centred and people-driven Public Service. The Commission of Inquiry became known as the Presidential Review Commission (PRC).

The PRC's key role was to assist in the transformation of the Public Service thereby creating an enabling agency that would establish democracy and entitle communities to services that are accountable and transparent. The PRC recommended that a new DPSA should be created that would take over various executive duties of the Public Service Commission and the provincial service commissions. The DPSA would be responsible for a range of policy documents designed to make the implementation of the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995 a reality. Additional duties assigned to the new DPSA include (Presidential Review Commission 1998):

a)   implementing the proposed reduction of 300 000 Public Service posts;

b)   audit of all provincial governments;

c)   development of a strategy for utilising information technology; and

d)   the revision of the complex Public Service Regulations.

The Cabinet of South Africa approved the new state administration model on 21 February 1996. The model had a basic impact on the internal functioning of the DPSA. All policy matters relating to human resource practices, conditions of service, labour relations, organisational development and information technology were assigned to the Minister of Public Service and Administration. All executive powers relating to the career incidents of public employees, organisational structures and post establishments of departments were transferred to the respective ministers and their departments. Amendments to the *Public Service*

Act, 1994 and the *Public Service Commission Act, 1984* had to be formalised in order to facilitate the changing roles of the Public Service Commission and the DPSA (Annual Report 1996:9).

Before the new model was implemented, the DPSA comprised 130 posts of which 15 were at the managerial level. The transfer of the Office of the Public Service Commission to the DPSA increased the posts to 377 of which 34 were at the managerial level. Funds, personnel and other resources were transferred from the Office of the Public Service Commission to the DPSA with effect from 1 April 1996 (Annual Report 1996:9).

The transfer of the functions from the Office of the Public Service Commission constituted the first step in the restructuring process of the DPSA (Annual Report 1996:9). By 1998, the DPSA had evolved into a department consisting of (Annual Report 1998:20A):

a)   three branches, namely:

- Organisational Arrangement, Information Technology and Corporate Service;
- Human Resource Management and Development; and
- Remuneration, Conditions of Service and Labour Relations.

b)   Project Co-ordinating Team entailing:

- one project leader for planning and work organisation;
- one project leader for human resource management;
- one project leader for information technology and management
- one project co-ordinator for status quo training;
- one project leader for labour relations; and
- one project leader for European Union Projects.

c)   Chief Directorate: Reform and Transverse Support; and

d)   Chief Directorate: Communication and Ministerial Support.

In its 1998 Annual Report, the DPSA formalised its vision as promoting: '*A responsive Public Service that delivers on government's commitment to a better life for all the people of South Africa'.* Included in its mission is the rendering of professional support to the Minister in leading the transformation process by developing appropriate policies and facilitating their implementation through strategic interventions and partnerships as well as maintaining a functioning Public Service (Annual Report 1998:i).

The DPSA recognised the need for re-organisation after the Presidential Review Commission published its report and expressed the obligation for strategic support to provincial administrations with regard to human resource management and development. The DPSA restructured the Human Resource and Development Branch into three new units, namely, the Senior Public Service Unit, the Performance Management Unit and the National Transverse Programmes Team (Annual Report 1998:14).

The primary objectives of the National Transverse Programmes Unit would be to (Annual Report 1998:14):

a)   identify strategic occupation and other training and development needs within the Public Service;

b)   prescribe training and development to satisfy these needs; and

c)   implement and co-ordinate programmes which meet these specific needs.

The expected outcomes from the National Transverse Programmes Unit ranged from timeously providing government with a clear understanding of the strategic occupational training and development needs, to successfully managing training and development so that it would become both beneficial to the individual as well as to the Department (Annual Report 1998:14-15). Serious challenges would however constrain the transformation process, including the lack of racial, gender and occupational representativeness; the lack of clarity and communication in respect of the vision for change; a centralised control and a top-down

management style; poor productivity; a low and unequal level of service delivery, especially to the majority of the population; a disempowering work ethic; the absence of clearly defined roles and responsibilities; the lack of effective co-ordination and communication between the key agencies of transformation and the persistence of rule-bound practices and culture (Presidential Review Commission 1998).

The *White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service*, 1995 highlighted some of the more important themes emphasised by the PRC. Building new management and leadership practices, improving co-ordination and communication and ensuring effective consultation and participation are themes central to the implementation of effective human resource development practices. Thus, since 1995, the policy direction of human resource management in the DPSA changed. The new direction was a movement away from the Public Service as a facilitator for human resource management to becoming an enabler for human resource development and training.

In 1995, the main objective of the DPSA was to drive the transformation process. However, after transformation was completed, what would the role of the Department be then? The PRC stated in Chapter 2 of its 1998 report, that after the major elements of transformation were achieved and the Public Service was more or less stabilised at both the national and provincial sphere, a large DPSA would no longer be necessary. The PRC recommended that an Office of Public Management should strategically be placed in the Office of the Presidency and should, as such, be charged with the authority to engage more effectively with other departments and with the provinces. The DPSA responded to this suggestion in the *1999-2000 Public Service Review Report* by stating that the Department, which was mandated with the responsibility of public service and administration, should address the essence of how best to regulate, supervise and support the ongoing development of the Public Service. It is an important debate, but the fact that a department should exist to exercise the overall

responsibility of the Public Service, should be kept in mind. The DPSA (Public Service Review Report 1999-2000:8) also declared that there is nothing wrong with exploring different ways in which such a department should be structured. The debate can only help to improve the quality of policy and decision-making in the Public Service (Public Service Review Report 1999-2000:8).

From the above it could be argued that the restructuring of the DPSA was part of government's plans to restructure the Public Service, making it more representative and responsive. Although the Department's role was more restricted towards facilitating transformation in the Public Service, the debate was opened by requiring the Department to contribute more to the Public Service, in the sense of policy formulation and implementation regarding human resources, service delivery and information management.

3.3   Increased need for human resource development

During 1997, the DPSA published the *White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service,* detailing the shift away from personnel administration to human resource management. The vision of *the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997* is that human resource management will result in diversely competent and well-managed employees, capable of, and committed to delivering high quality services to the people of South Africa. The human resource management mission entailed that *(White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997):*

> *Human resource management in the Public Service should become a model of excellence, in which service to society stems from individual commitment instead of compulsion. The management of people should be regarded as a significant task for those who have been charged with the responsibility and should be conducted in a professional manner.*

The *White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997* stated in paragraph 8 that human resource management will have to undergo a crucial change in order to realise the following management principles, including:

a)   increased delegation of managerial responsibility and authority to national departments and provincial administrations and within departments, the delegation of day-to-day management decisions to the line managers;

b)   the development of employees towards becoming service delivery-oriented, multi-skilled and multi-cultural;

c)   the continuing pressure for efficiency and effectiveness; and

d)   creating a flexible environment that considers both the individual as well as departmental needs.

The paradigm shift away from personnel administration to human resource management is important in the study of the relevance of human resource development and training to departmental effectiveness and efficiency. From the above, it could be concluded that since 1997, the emphasis in the Public Service has been on creating a Public Service that would, not only be responsive, but also well equipped to handle the added pressures of an ever-increasing population. Thus, human resource development and training become instrumental to departmental effectiveness and efficiency. Identifying the strategic link between appropriate individual placement and realising departmental priorities becomes an important task of all managers. The problem statement of this thesis states that human resource development and training is essential in the implementation of a learning organisation. The assumption can, thus, be made that without the identification of the strategic link, human resource development and training might not necessarily address departmental priorities. Implementing a learning organisation becomes more challenging when the learning taking place in the department does not benefit anyone besides the individual employee.

The responsibility for the day-to-day managing of human resources is delegated to the line managers. Thus, line managers will receive greater freedom, within the limits of their budgets, to determine the number of employees and the levels of skills they need to achieve the required results. To assist the line managers with the responsibility, human resource practitioners will have to develop a more professional role. Practitioners will have to assist management on issues regarding human resource legislation, labour trends and other human resource management and development issues (Paragraph 3.*1 White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997*).

The DPSA published its policy on human resource development through the *White Paper on Public Service Training and Education* in 1997. The policy stressed the importance of human resource development while focusing on measures to improve the current training and development system. The principal aim of the policy was to establish a clear vision and policy framework to guide the introduction and implementation of new policies, procedures and legislation aimed at transforming Public Service training and education into a dynamic, needs-based and pro-active instrument ensuring a 'new' Public Service. The anticipated outcomes are, *inter alia*, strategically linking the new system of training and education to the broader processes of transformation, institution building and human resource development as well as ensuring the development of effective career paths for all public employees.

This change indicates that the DPSA realises the importance of strategically linking human resource development to departmental development. Through this policy, the DPSA intends to develop Public Service capacity to fulfil the demands of its ever-changing environment. Developing employee capacity to enable a department to develop its productivity in terms of efficient and effective service delivery becomes apparent in reviewing the *White Paper on Public Service Training and Education*, 1997.

Human resource development and training were placed high on the agenda for ensuring the successful implementation of the transformation process. The PRC (1998) identified two reasons for the importance of human resource development. The first reason was a growing awareness that investing in the employees of a department would result in a more productive department and second, the realisation that South Africa ranked last out of 46 countries in 1996 in terms of its human resource development performance. This provided the PRC with an incentive for focusing on the development of employees as a major investment.

The *White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995* emphasises that the effective mobilisation, development and utilisation of human resource is not only an important individual and departmental transformation goal in itself, but also a critical factor for the success of the transformation process of the Public Service in general. A coherent and realistic policy for human resource development was needed at both the national and provincial spheres. Such a policy should, according to the *PRC Report*, 1998 entail the elevation of the role and status of human resource development within the overall framework of government policy; the development of effective and lifelong career paths for all categories of employees; the introduction of effective performance management and appraisal systems and the use of incentives to reward individual and team performance; and the introduction of effective systems of staff development and training.

The decentralisation of authority to line managers was implemented during 1998, in accordance with the requirements of the *Public Service Act*, 1994 (Act 108 of 1994). Line managers are given greater control of the utilisation of their resources and personnel, subject to the signing of a performance agreement and the delegation of the relevant powers. The cumbersome Personnel Administration Standards (PAS) were replaced with the Codes of Remuneration allowing for greater managerial flexibility within the framework of norms and

standards (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002(b): 6). The relevance of the stipulations to the problem statement of the thesis is evident in the human resource training and development responsibilities and roles of public managers. The argument could thus be forwarded that the extent to which a department is competent relies on the extent to which training and development are departmental priorities. Line managers are responsible for the implementation of performance frameworks that would fulfil their main objective (organisational efficiency and effectiveness). But, in order for the line managers to ensure that their department remains efficient and effective, they also have to ensure that the employees are competent and trained to such an extent that it would fulfil employee developmental needs. Herein lies the main challenge for human resource management - strategic alignment of individual employee development needs with the objectives and goals of the department.

The DPSA stated in its Annual Report (1998:13) that specific key initiatives were highlighted in order to ensure the successful implementation of new human resource policies, which included the establishment of a *human resource management and affirmative action forum* in February 1997. The purpose of the *forum* was to facilitate consultation between the DPSA and its clients with regard to providing guidance in human resource management and affirmative action matters during the transformation period. Human resource provisioning workshops were also provided , during September 1998, with the objectives of identifying problem areas in the staffing function and developing strategies to address these, obtaining inputs so as to develop good practice guidelines and collectively developing key performance indicators that are both realistic and achievable.

The 1997-1998 *Training Review* published by the DPSA indicates that progress has been made in the implementation of the *White Paper on Public Service Training and Education* through the adoption of five projects as part of the *Implementation Strategy*. The five projects, according to the 1997-1998 *Training*

Review are management support and capacity building; finance and budgets for training; accreditation, standard setting, co-ordination and alignment; communication; and monitoring and evaluation.

The *Public Service Review Report,* 1999-2000 (2000:64) affirms that the key challenge facing the Public Service is the need to attract, develop and sustain capable managers. Movement towards a system where managerial responsibility is devolved and decentralised is focused upon, provided that the principle of accountability is also enforced. As part of a better human resource management effort the DPSA indicates that more importance should be placed on increasing morale and motivation within the Public Service. The following measures are outlined to ensure that the human resource practices support the development objectives of the Department (Public Service Review Report 1999-2000:68-69):

a)   automatic promotions should be replaced with an appropriate career-pathing and pay progression system linked to performance;

b)   greater flexibility in employment practices should be introduced such as extended use of the fixed-term contracts for senior management;

c)   appropriate measures to reward performance should be developed and departments should be given flexibility to determine the relevant levels for rewarding performance;

d)   ethical conduct should be promoted through advocating adherence to the code of conduct;

e)   development of a labour relations framework for the public sector is vital; and

f)   skills development and empowering public employees should be intensified in order to fulfil the development nature of Public Service delivery.

Based on the above, human resource management within the DPSA will thus be focused on human resource development and training through an appropriate performance management system highlighting career pathing, performance

rewards, skills development and empowerment. It is believed that efforts to ensure that the DPSA's employees are capable of maintaining high performance standards, will result in enhanced service delivery.

Following the 1999 national elections, the Cabinet cluster system was restructured and the DPSA became part of the Governance and Administration Cabinet Committee. For the purpose of this thesis, the term "governance" will be defined as the government processes implemented to promote transparency, accountability, leadership, information sharing and stakeholder analysis (Hendricks 2002). The Governance and Administration Cabinet Cluster's efforts are aimed at facilitating greater integration of the DPSA with other support departments. The purpose of these efforts is to create an enabling environment for better service delivery. The Cluster is also able to identify key governance and administrative challenges that impact and shape the DPSA's future priorities. One of the key challenges is the shortage of skilled employees in specific professional areas (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002(b): 6-9). Close attention should, thus, be paid to the type of human resource development and training currently taking place within departments. A shortage of skilled employees will hamper the implementation of a learning organisation, in the sense that, without the appropriate skills the emphasis of the department will always stay on skills development and not on creating a learning environment characterised by skills sharing to enhance departmental effectiveness and efficiency. If development and training only aims to enhance the capacity of individual employees, departmental learning will not be facilitated and the emphasis stays on individual development and not on departmental development.

In line with the governmental budget priorities for 2000, the DPSA aims to align and consolidate human resource development in the Public Service. The DPSA assumes responsibility for the Public Sector Training and Education Authority (PSETA). Measures are also taken to strengthen and stabilise management

capacity through the introduction of parameters to the Senior Management Service (SMS).

3.4   Tswelopele - we serve the people who serve the people

The German Agency for Technical Cooperation Ltd. or *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ) in collaboration with Andersen Consulting, launched a research project in the DPSA during 1999-2000. The project titled '*Tswelopele*' involved a comprehensive assessment of the DPSA which focused on the following (Department of Public Service and Administration 2000:3):

a)   an analysis of the *status quo* of the role, strategy, structure, systems, resources, processes and culture of the DPSA; and

b)   a determination of employee opinions through surveys.

A skills assessment report was one of the deliverables of the project, and this determined the current skills within the DPSA. The skills assessment was performed as part of the status quo assessment. The final report, presented in 2000, made specific conclusions and recommendations that closely link with the problem statement of this thesis. All different components within the DPSA developed their own work plan following the strategic planning process. Unfortunately, the different work plans were not aligned or integrated into an overall strategic plan (Department of Public Service and Administration 2000:9). Thus, establishing the link between individual positions and departmental efficiency and effectiveness was identified and recommendations were made to implement a comprehensive, coherent macro strategy that would cascade down to the lower levels. The *Tswelopele Report,* 2000 highlighted that a common departmental vision was not shared by all employees (Department of Public Service and Administration 2000:9). When trying to implement and manage a learning organisation, creating a shared vision would be one of the building blocks for the implementation of a learning organisation.

Further findings reported in the final *Tswelopele Report,* 2000 focus on the importance of an information technology framework that would do more than just facilitate communication, the transfer and formatting of documents through, for instance, e-mailing but, would also support the core activities of the DPSA. The *Report* also found that within the organisation (structure) of the DPSA, projects are formed that comprise cross-component team members which disrupt the formal line function, which could also hinder reporting and accountability. The departmental culture is characterised by an emphasis on rank that prohibits the free flow of information and ease with which integration of people in different ranks take place (Department of Public Service and Administration 2000:9-14).

Probably the most telling finding regarding human resources in the DPSA regards the lack of guidelines concerning the attributes, skills and competencies for the different job profiles (Department of Public Service and Administration 2000:14). Thus, it could be said that human resource management practices, such as training, will be inconsistent in its application and the establishment of a human resource management environment, where every employee realises his or her individual and departmental roles and responsibilities will be lacking. The DPSA needs to identify an integrated framework of competencies, which highlights all appropriate skills, knowledge and attributes of each job profile.

Regarding the organisational culture, the *Tswelopele Report*, 2000 recommends that the culture should be based on principles such as information sharing, creativity and innovation, professionalism, collaboration, job titles based on roles, transparency, open workspaces, ownership and leadership (Department of Public Service and Administration 2000:14). The skills assessment conducted indicate that on average the DPSA employees have only a basic understanding in proficiency across all skills areas and that financial management skills lack. Furthermore, the DPSA employees do have above average computer skills as well as above average skills in generic areas including interpersonal skills and communication skills. Levels 14 and 15 are highly skilled compared to the other

levels within the DPSA while levels 11-13 have adequate skills but lack practical experience in which the skills can be tested (Department of Public Service and Administration 2000:14).

The *Tswelopele Project,* 2000 recommends that all human resource practices should be aligned to a basic competency model that will identify all the competencies that are required within the DPSA. In the alignment of practices, the DPSA will be able to recruit, retain, compensate and develop all the relevant skills that will assist them to achieve their strategic objectives. A staff development model is proposed that should comprise a training curriculum, skills tracking mechanism, career planning initiatives and incentives and rewards. The model will institutionalise staff development to ensure that the skills required in future are realised and maintained (Department of Public Service and Administration 2000:16).

The 2000 *Tswelopele Project's* recommendations can be closely aligned to principles needed for the implementation and management of a learning organisation (as will be discussed in Chapter 5). The recommendations are based on issues and risks that will impact on the design and implementation of the DPSA organisational, and thus also human resource management strategy. Part of the recommendations is that the DPSA needs capacity to ensure that the change management effort continues in a sustainable manner. The DPSA needs strong executive leadership and sponsorship in order to facilitate successful change efforts while maintaining continuous buy-in into the change effort through collective ownership on all the different levels of the hierarchy. Senior management must ensure that the change process is consistently communicated throughout the hierarchy.

Based on the recommendations made by the *Tswelopele Project*, 2000 the DPSA revised its departmental structure as from 1 April 2001 which involved 269 posts. The major changes included the integration of the old Human Resource

Management and Development and the Conditions of Service, Negotiations and Labour Relations Unit into one new entity, titled 'Integrated Human Resources'. The Anti-Corruption and High Profile Cases was a newly established unit created to address corruption in the Public Service. The Information Technology and Knowledge Management Unit was created within Corporate Management, to oversee the services provided by the State Information and Technology Agency (SITA), to ensure information resource planning and, to develop and implement a knowledge management strategy for the DPSA. Lastly, the Public Service Information Unit was transferred from the Service Delivery Improvement Branch into the Information and Information Technology Management Unit, with the Office of the Government's Chief Information Officer. Overall, the posts were also reduced from 269 to 258 with a breakdown of the structure per level provided in table 3.1 (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002:35-36).

Table 3.1   Breakdown of the structure per level (31 March 2002)

Post designation / grading level	No of posts	Filled posts			Vacant posts
		Total	M	F	
Director General (Level 16)	1	1	1	0	0
Executive Manager (DDG Level 15)	4	3	2	1	1
Senior Manager (CD Level 14)	12	11	7	4	1
Manager (Director)	35	27	19	8	7
Levels 9-12	90	77	42	35	13
Levels 5-8	82	73	20	53	9
Levels 1-4	34	35	19	16	0
Total	**258**	**227**	**110**	**117**	**31**

Source: Department of Public Service and Administration. 2002. **Medium term strategic plan 2002-2005:** 36.

The *Tswelopele Report*, 2000 identifies the culture and need for training and development in the DPSA. The exercise failed in its attempt to determine what the skills gap is between the skills currently found in the DPSA and the skills

needed for the future. It did however, identify the need for the strategic link required between individual development and departmental performance. The problem statement of the thesis stipulates that training and development in the DPSA does not facilitate a learning organisation. Throughout the discussion emphasis will continuously be placed on strategically linking the importance of an individual position to the attainment of departmental effectiveness and efficiency. Further human resource development outcomes and implications will now be discussed.

3.5   Human resource development outcomes and implications

In 2001 the DPSA was instrumental in compiling the national human resource development plan. The stated aim of the Chief Directorate: Human Resource Development is to provide policy, advice and support on human resource development matters (Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service, 2001(c)). The creation of a national human resource development plan aims to encourage the development and training of public employees as an important aspect in the fight against poverty and other unacceptable socio-economic issues. Development and training should, however, not only take place for the sake of developing and training public employees, but should also be intended to raise the quality of public service delivery as well as lead to socio-economic upliftment. The need for human resource development has increased since 1994, even though training initiatives have been undertaken in both national and provincial spheres of government, they have been fragmented and uncoordinated, with inadequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the success of such training courses. In order for development and training to be beneficial to the Department and its employees, a comprehensive, coherent training and education strategy for the Public Service was needed (Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service, 2001(c)).

The ministers for Labour and Education, respectively launched the *National Skills Development Strategy* and the National *Human Resource Development Strategy* in 2001. The *Human Resource Development Strategy's* main aim is to provide a holistic approach to human resource training and development in the Public Service. The impact of major resource and capacity constraints on public service delivery are addressed in the Human *Resource Development Strategy* (*Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service*, 2001(c)).

Annual reporting and reviewing will take place over the next five years and every year an adjusted strategy will be implemented to ensure the successful implementation of the human resource development strategy in all departments. The Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service has as its vision the achievement of a dedicated, responsive and productive Public Service. The mission is as follows (Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service, 2001(c)):

> *… to maximise people development, management and empowerment through quality skills development to accelerate transformation and service delivery that will benefit the people of South Africa.*

The strategic objective for the *Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service*, 2001 is to deliver, by the year 2006, effective and equitable services to its clients and stakeholders. The Strategic Development Indicators are the reduction of the general backlog of services, reduction in the number of complaints and an increase in the number of service departments, institutions or organisations that all have achieved Investors in People Accreditation (as further described in section 2.6 of this chapter). The desired outcomes for the strategy are (*Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service,* 2001(c)):

a)   desired outcome 1 – full commitment to promote and implement the human resource development strategy in all public institutions and organisations;

b)   desired outcome 2 – establish effective strategic and operational human resource development planning frameworks;

c)   desired outcome 3 – establish relevant competencies within the public services; and

d)   desired outcome 4 – implement effective management and co-ordination of the human resource development strategy.

The DPSA will be responsible for ensuring that systems are in place to determine the needs analysis for effective development of training courses as well as creating a system to recognise accreditation of information learning in the past. The development and implementation of continued training courses for human resource development professionals and the promotion of pre- and post-training evaluation for training are the responsibilities of the DPSA (*Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service,* 2001(c)).

Thus, through the *Strategy* the DPSA intends to highlight the importance of human resource development and training that would benefit each employee and consequently lead to the development of the Department. The development of the Department relates to the effective and efficient utilisation of employees, and in so doing positively impact on service delivery. The *Strategy* clearly indicates government's commitment to the development and training of all employees and thus establishes the groundwork for facilitating a learning organisation.

Human resource development and training in the DPSA are addressed through the *Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service,* 2001. The question remains whether the DPSA will be able to implement the Strategy and achieve its objectives of capacity building and empowerment. Currently the DPSA has no departmental human resource development policy or

strategy. Hendricks (2002) states that the strategy is being drafted and should be completed for implementation in March 2003. The current performance management system (will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4) will inform and integrate human resource development with organisational efficiency and effectiveness. The tendency in the DPSA is to move to a more team based review involving a 360 degrees peer review process. Thus, employees will be reviewed by their supervisors, peers, colleagues and subordinates in order to obtain a clear analysis of skills, competencies and performance. The formulation and implementation of a DPSA human resource development strategy will be integrated with the performance management system currently being implemented in the Department.

The national *Human Resource Development Strategy* sets out desired outcomes covering a period of five years starting in 2001. An evaluation conducted in five years time will, only then, determine the success of the *Strategy*. For the purpose of this thesis, the *Strategy* will be the framework of desired standards against which the human resource development and training opportunities and outcomes for the period 1994-2001 will be measured.

The principle of lifelong learning, defined as the learning that takes place while in the employment of the DPSA, is part of the management framework to implement the human resource development strategy. As such, the DPSA will have specific roles and responsibilities to ensure the successful implementation of the strategy in the Department. All government departments should identify functional areas that are critical for service delivery, taking into the account the Public Service Sector Skills Plan. The DPSA should thus identify both crosscutting and functional skills that will ensure that the Department realises its service delivery targets. The Workplace Skills Plans should be submitted to the Public Service Education and Training Authority (PSETA) for quality assessment against the Public Service priorities. Workplace Skills Plans should be continuously monitored and evaluated. The *Strategy* further details specific role

and responsibilities assigned to the DPSA, including to align departmental training budgets with the Workplace Skills Plan, to develop a clearly articulated human resource development policy and to ensure that training of supervisors and managers as to their respective roles and responsibilities within the Department's human resource development policy. The heads of department will be responsible and accountable for ensuring that subordinates are given opportunities to learn through the development and implementation of the departmental human resource development strategy.

The Skills Development Facilitator (SDF), appointed by the Head of Department, should investigate and identify the patterns of people development in the Department in order to identify specific skills shortages and priorities. The Workplace Skills Plan will be the responsibility of the SDF and as such he or she will have to submit the Plan to the PSETA, advise the Department on the implementation of the Plan as well as facilitate the PSETA on the establishment of quality assurance requirements. Drafting the annual training report and co-ordinating the Learning Committee meetings will also be part of the SDF's job description. A learning committee is compulsory where a department comprises more than 50 employees. The committee should be utilised for consultation and ratification of all skills development issues. A learning committee should comprise members that reflect representativity in terms of position or rank, race and gender (*Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service*, 2001(c)).

The *Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service,* 2001, specifies the responsibilities of both managers and employees in terms of organisational and individual development. Managers should, at all times, ensure that employees are given the opportunity to learn as well as offer formal approval for learning activities such as courses or seminars. Managers will also have the responsibility of ensuring that skills are transferred and that training does not only take place for the sake of training but also serves both the departmental as well

as individual objectives. Together with the employees, the manager will ascertain the training needs of employees and plan and manage that individual's career within the DPSA (*Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service*, 2001(c)).

The employee should apply the knowledge taught him or her and take full advantage of all training opportunities available. An employee should become an active member in his or her own evaluation through implementing personal development plans and always confirm his or her willingness to develop and learn through challenging work experiences (*Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service*, 2001(c)).

The devolution of the human resource development and training responsibility to line managers implies that the line managers of the DPSA will be held accountable for the capacity building and empowerment of their employees. The actual success of line managers with regard to human resource development and training is evaluated through the use of questionnaires. The challenge of providing human resource development and training to employees that will benefit both the Department and the individual is the main focus of the thesis. By using the questionnaires to ascertain the impact of human resource development and training in the DPSA, it aims to prove that line managers in the DPSA understand the importance of building capacity, but that the implementation of the *Human Resource Development Strategy 2001-2006 for the Public Service,* 2001, has not yet met its goals and objectives.

3.6   Investment in people

The current human resource and equity challenges in the DPSA centre around the principle of developing the skills and capacity base required for the existing demands as well as future (anticipated) demands placed on the Department. The DPSA is attempting to address this challenge through a variety of processes including a skills and competency assessment, a skills gap analysis and the

introduction of focused career development training interventions aimed at enhancing and strengthening the overall performance management and assessment system (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002(b): 36).

The DPSA has chosen, as a pilot site, to participate in the Investment in People Standards Project sponsored by the Department of Labour, supported by the European Union. Departments taking part in the Project are recognised for their commitment to inform and develop their employees in order to achieve departmental goals and targets and thus to improve departmental performance. The Project is set to run over a two year period during which participating departments are expected to ensure that the objectives of the Investment in People Standards are met and maintained. The Project is based on four main principles, including (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002(b): 36-37):

a)   a commitment to developing employees in order to achieve departmental aims and objectives;

b)   clear planning regarding aims and objectives and what employees need to do to achieve them;

c)   effective development in order to improve departmental performance (real action); and

d)   understanding and evaluating the impact of departmental investment in people on performance improvement.

The DPSA has started to address its equity targets especially with regard to women in management positions. A joint initiative between the Malaysian and South African governments has allowed for several women in middle and senior management positions to take part in extensive leadership development programmes during 2001/2002. The initiative will remain a focal point of the DPSA's human resource development agenda until the ratios of women and blacks in management positions reflect the equity targets. The specific targets

the DPSA have identified are detailed in Table 2.2 (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002(b): 37).

Figure 3.1   Equity targets for the DPSA
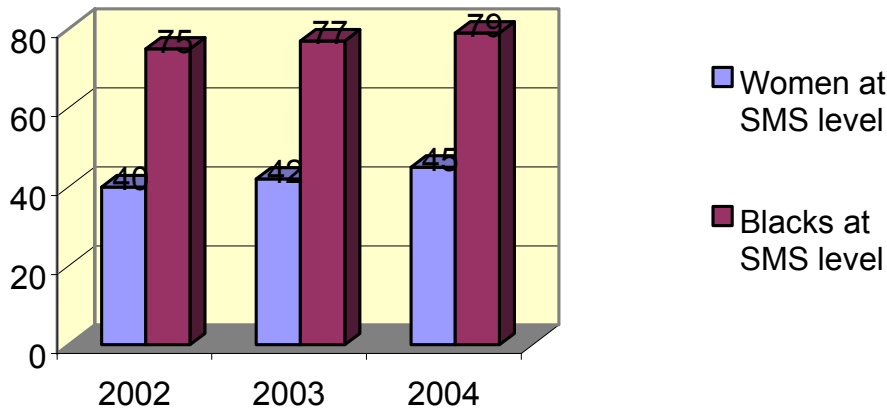
Source: Department of Public Service and Administration. 2002(b). **Medium term strategic plan 2002-2005**: 37

Currently the DPSA's race profile is as follows: 26% White, 67% Black, 3% Coloured and 4% Asian/Indian. Women comprise 52% of all employees and men 48%. Lack of appropriate skills; rate of attrition due to promotions, transfers to other departments and resignations; and HIV/Aids and other diseases affecting the health of employees were identified as possible risks to the DPSA achieving its equity targets (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002(b): 37).

The DPSA proposes to introduce interventions that will facilitate the realisation of equity targets through internships or targeted development and by ensuring that a supportive working environment exists. Women in management are not the only targets, but women at all levels of the DPSA are being targeted. The majority of women currently hold positions such as administrative assistants, secretaries and clerks. Given the supportive nature of the DPSA, in terms of providing equitable and fair working conditions, staff attrition is fairly high and the

Department needs to focus on detailed succession planning and retention strategies in order to become a learning organisation.

3.7   Training and development framework

The DPSA has recognised that to send employees for training without clearly defining the need and expected outcomes of the training, is a waste of resources. Currently a draft policy on training and development in the DPSA is being developed. The purpose of the draft policy is to provide guidelines for training and development interventions accompanied with the financial assistance needed to address the skills gap in the DPSA. The objectives will inform as to which type of training and development interventions should be identified that will support skills development. The objectives of the draft policy include (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002(a): 2):

a)   to assist employees to become suitably developed to perform and improve their roles and jobs;

b)   to assist the DPSA in acquiring the necessary competencies to achieve strategic and functional objectives;

c)   to strengthen departmental performance and professionalism;

d)   to provide a mechanism for retention once employees have been developed;

e)   to use the training and development budget effectively and efficiently in order to promote career development and competency proficiency; and

f)   to utilise appropriate accredited service providers.

The *Draft Training and Development Policy* (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002(a): 3-6) sets out the roles and responsibilities regarding training and development for all the relevant stakeholders including top management, line managers, the skills development facilitator, employees and the skills development committee. Top management's role extends to the way in which the training budget is utilised as well as creating a conducive training and development environment for the implementation of the Workplace Skills Plan.

Line managers responsible for ensuring that their subordinates have access to development opportunities, know how the undertaken development will influence individual performance and ensure that the chosen training intervention is the most efficient and effective in terms of permitting the employee to obtain the best possible advantage for personal and professional performance improvement.

Employees have to ensure that they participate in the development of their personal development plan. They should be committed to their own career development and management as well as assist in the development of their career paths. Most importantly, is that employees should ensure that their development needs and plans are linked to their positions and career paths (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002(a):4-5).

The *Draft Training and Development Policy* (Department of Public Service and Administration 2002(a):12) maintains that in order to facilitate the implementation of a learning organisation, employees have to actively participate in identifying and evaluating training and development. After attending a training course, employees are expected to make a presentation to other employees. The draft policy does not elaborate as to the content of the presentation but, in order to ensure that training and development remain meaningful (in terms of individual and departmental effectiveness and efficiency), the regular evaluation of training courses have to be strictly implemented. This would imply that the intentions regarding skills development were specifically stated before the training course was presented and that evaluations take place after completion of the training course and will be based on the predetermined criteria and intentions.

From the above, it could be concluded that training and development have received attention from senior management in the Department of Public Service and Administration. In order to understand the process involved in implementing and managing a learning organisation, senior managers will have to ensure the

appropriate alignment of departmental training priorities with individual employee and group training and development priorities.

3.8　Conclusion

It could be concluded that the DPSA has undergone several changes in the past six years. The focus and emphasis of the Department was transformed and the Department is now responsible for ensuring appropriate human resource development in the Public Service. The DPSA is also responsible for encouraging the use of their own workplace and an active learning environment and to encourage employees to participate in learnerships and training courses.

The DPSA has to ensure the quality of education and training courses in the workplace. All changes and policies that have been implemented by the DPSA were aimed at achieving the goal of shaping their employees for a future filled with more demands, requiring a commitment to lifelong learning (while in the employment of the department). Currently, the DPSA is in the process of formulating a training policy that will guide the Department in determining the implementation and management of training and development initiatives.

In the next chapter, attention will be focused on the external and internal factors that influence training and development in the DPSA.