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## **Editorial**

An effective and efficient system of public administration is a prerequisite for all governmental policies to succeed. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the managers in every public institution, at all levels (spheres) of government should be suitably qualified to establish and operate the administrative systems applicable to their particular organisational structure. Training required for senior positions in the public sector is non-negotiable. Without the required administrative knowledge, effective managing is equally impossible. It could be argued that experience is another requirement, but without proper training, experience in non-administrative functions cannot improve knowledge of the basic functions related to administration. Countries with well-established and stable public services usually provide more efficient and effective public services than countries with unstable governments and unstable public services. Unfortunately many African countries are prone to governments which do not value the importance of a core of suitably qualified and experienced senior public officials.

It is argued that sustainable public services could be guaranteed only if a stable well trained, experienced and committed corps of public servants are available. In this regard the discipline of Public Administration and Management has a crucial role to play. On the one hand it has to provide relevant teaching and training. On the other hand relevant research into public administration and management must be undertaken to provide the policy makers and government with advice on the most effective and efficient methods to provide services required by society.

In this issue of the African Journal of Public Affairs a collection of articles are published that illustrate the diversity of policies and processes involved in governing and administering a country. Jordaan addresses the complex issue of the recognition and safeguarding of an individual's personal information to prevent a big brother manipulating members of society. In a similar vein Tshoose argues that public participation is crucial to local government to ensure that policies reflect the wishes of citizens. Koma and Tshiyoyo's contribution focuses on mechanisms to improve public service delivery through administrative reform, again emphasising the need to reconsider existing ways of operating on a regular basis. The need for relevant research to improve decision making in the public sector is highlighted by Madue in his article on the operations of the Research Services Unit in the Gauteng Provincial Legislature. Van Dijk and Legalatladi explain in their article on employee perceptions towards performance management the need to obtain and retain the public servants' positive attitude to the validity of how performance is measured to retain their loyalty and dedication to improved service delivery. The following articles are aimed at specific issues in the public sector in general. Janse van Rensburg and Coetzee investigate the effectiveness of the Internal Capability Model in the public sector and explain the possibility of introducing the model in the South African public sector. This contribution is followed by Mupindu's investigation into the success (or failure) of Operation Magutu in Zimbabwe to improve agricultural production levels. This again exemplifies the changing role of the public sector and the need to have suitable public servants for each and every policy in a country. Tshetlo and Naidoo take the role of the public sector a step further by analysing the implementation of the SA-China Bilateral Agreement. In this article they investigate the preconditions for the successful implementation of the agreement to assist local workers such as engineers, artisans and project managers.

**Jerry Kuye** Chief Editor

## **Erratum**

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Correction to author's detail,

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