

Case Study: Best Practices of the Department of Environmental Affairs Republic of South Africa

Tineke Lambooy & Yulia Levashova
8 August 2012

Table of Contents

Section 1: Changes in Organizational Structure: A Trigger for Improvement?.....	6
Section 2: Strategic Planning and Measuring Performance: “What Gets Measured – Gets Done”	8
Section 3: Effective Leadership: “People do not need an Organization, they need a Manager”	11
Section 4: Human Resources Policy: “People Leave Bad Managers, Not the Organization”	12
Section 5: Financial Management: Supply-Chain Management and Financial Administration and Reporting: “We Deal with Matters as They Come”	15
Discussion: Sound Organizational Culture, Values and People.....	17

Introduction

The Department of Environmental Affairs (hereafter: “DEA”) of the Republic of South Africa has the mandate to ensure the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources. This has to be balanced with sustainable development and the equitable distribution of the benefits derived from natural resources. The mandate is derived from the Constitution of South Africa. Section 24 provides that:

“Everyone has the right to:

(a) an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and

(b) to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures [...].”

The constitutional mandate of the department is closely aligned with the vision of the DEA, which is: “A prosperous and equitable society living in harmony with our natural resources”. Therefore, the mission of the DEA is to create a society that lives in harmony with natural resources. To achieve this mission, the department is designing, implementing, and monitoring environmental legislation, policies and programmes that aim to protect the environment. The main activities of the DEA are divided into six programmes, whereas each programme has a purpose and a goal(s). These programmes are:

- (1) Administration and Support;
- (2) Environmental Quality and Protection
- (3) Oceans and Coasts;
- (4) Climate Change;
- (5) Biodiversity and Conservation; and
- (6) Sector Services, Environmental Awareness and International Relations.

For more information see Table 1. Along with the key areas of expertise, the department is guided by the following values: Passion; a People-centric policy, Integrity, Performance and a Proactive approach. The strategic goals of the DEA for the coming five years include: (a) Environmental assets conserved, valued, sustainably

used, protected and continually enhanced; (b) The enhancement of socioeconomic benefits and the creation of employment for present and future generations from a healthy environment; and (c) A department that is fully capacitated to deliver its services efficiently and effectively.

Table 1: Departmental Programmes and Structure

No	PROGRAMME	PURPOSE
1	Administration and Support	Provide strategic leadership, centralised administration and executive support, and corporate services.
2	Environmental Quality and Protection	Protect and improve the quality and safety of the environment to give effect to the right of all South Africans to an environment that is not harmful to health and wellbeing
3	Oceans and Coastal Management	Manage and protect South Africa's oceans and coastal resources
4	Climate Change	Facilitate an effective national mitigation and adaptation response to climate change
5	Biodiversity and Conservation	Promote the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources to contribute to economic growth and poverty alleviation
6	Sector Services, Environmental Awareness and International Relations	Create conditions for effective corporate and co-operative governance, international co-operation and implementation of expanded public works projects in the environment sectors.

The macro-reorganisation by government took place in 2009. It gave rise to a few significant changes. Firstly, the Ministry of „Water and Environmental Affairs“ has been created by a merger of the 'Department of Water' (which was previously part of the 'Department of Water Affairs and Forestry') and the 'Department of Environmental Affairs' (which was previously part of the 'Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism'). Secondly, the reorganisation resulted in existence of the separate Department of Environmental Affairs detached from tourism component and the fisheries function („Marine Living Resource Fund“). However, today there are still two independent operating departments, namely the 'Department of Environmental Affairs' and the 'Department of Water Affairs'. The two departments are headed by one Minister and one Deputy Minister: the 'Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs' and the 'Deputy Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs'. Each of the two

departments has its own Director-General. The two Directors-General serve as the respective chief accounting officers of the departments. The Ministry's budget falls under the Department of Water Affairs. However, the Department of Environmental Affairs has its own budget. This case study concerns the DEA. Whenever reference is made to 'the department', it means the DEA.

The DEA was evaluated by the 'Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation' (DPME) via the 'Self-Assessment Module of the Management Performance Assessment Tool' (MPAT). The department was evaluated using the 'MPAT Framework' from the perspective of human capital (people), financial resources (budget allocation), and facilities. The MPAT assesses the management performance of public servants and their departments. Each national and provincial department is responsible for a set of core competences. These are broadly categorized as the four 'Key Performance Areas' (KPA's), namely, (i) „Strategic Management“, (ii) „Governance and Accountability“, (iii) „Human Resources and Systems Management“, and (iv) „Financial Management“.

The DEA was nominated as a 'best practice' department in all four KPA's during the 2011-2012 MPAT self-assessments. The department had either high or highest scores for all evaluated KPA's, which indicates that not only all requirements prescribed in the law and regulations were fulfilled, but also that the DEA performed even better than required in the context of MPAT. Therefore, the goal of this case study is to understand the success factors underlying the excellent results of the department and to extract „best practices“ from the example of the DEA.

This case study will attempt to unfold the motivations, ambitions, visions and outcomes of the DEA in the field of the Strategic Management, Governance and Accountability, Human Resources and Systems Management, and Financial Management. „Best practices“ will be identified so that they can be applied by other national and provincial departments. The research team consisted of Tineke Lambooy and Yulia Levashova of Nyenrode Business University - Center for Sustainability, in the Netherlands, and Phazamile Dumiso, Pulane Nkosi employed by the DPME and Delorez Kotze employed by the „Department of International Relations and Cooperation“. The team worked on understanding the success factors and the challenges faced by the DTI, as well as evaluating the documents and reports

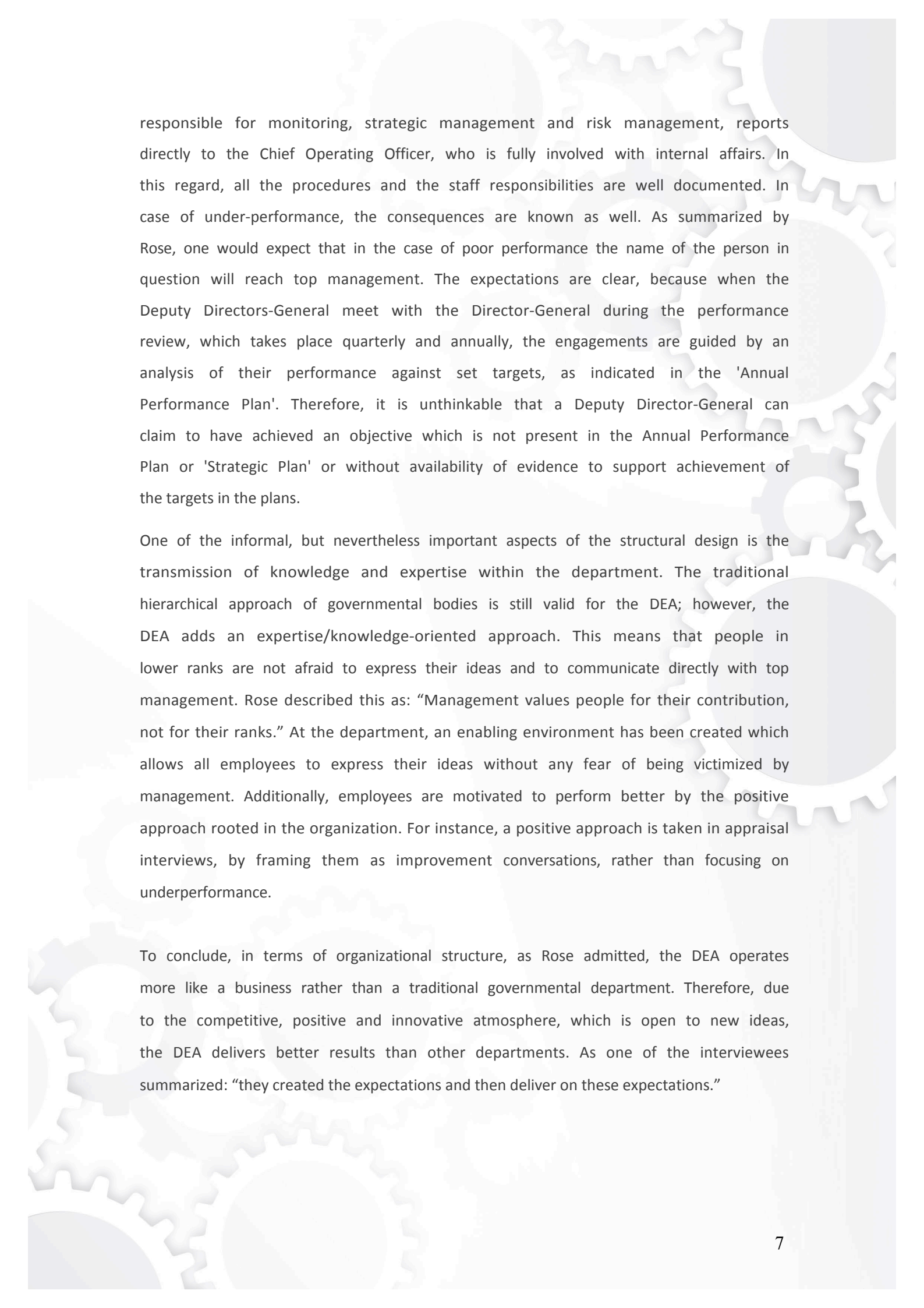
provided by the DTI in the context of the MPAT. In addition, Tineke Lambooy, together with Phazamile Dumiso, Delorez Kotze, Pulane Nkosi, James Koana and Khanyisile Cele, interviewed key managers from the DEA.

In the case study the real names of the interviewees will not be revealed. Fictional names will be used to identify these interviewees. The following team members of the department were present: the first interviewee: Rose (Chief Director: „Business Performance and Risk Management“) represented the 'Business Performance Unit', the second interviewee: James (Director: „Strategic Management“) represented the 'Strategic Management Unit', the third civil servant: Lydia (Chief Director: „Human Resource Management“) represented the 'Human Capital Management Unit' and the fourth interviewee: Abraham (Director: „Financial Management“) represented the 'Financial Management Unit'. During the interviews an atmosphere of trust was established, where staff members could openly talk about their experiences, ideas, policies and goals with regard to the KPA concerned.

Section 1: Changes in Organizational Structure: A Trigger for Improvement?

The structure of the 'Department Environmental Affairs' is quite complex (see Table 2). Due to the restructuring in 2009, it was essential to redefine and establish the work of the management and all employees in an efficient way. The structural design and procedures, and the policies thereof, can be considered as a stepping-stone to the successful performance of the DEA. The success in building an effective structure has contributed to good performance at all operational levels in the organization. The interviewees have shared their vision and experiences regarding the organizational structure with the research team.

The interviewees confirmed that the structural design plays a major role in achieving productive day-to-day activities. Firstly, the responsibilities of key managers are now well defined and divided. For instance, there is a clear distinction between the responsibilities of the 'Director-General' and the 'Chief Operating Officer'. The Chief Operating Officer is more focused on the internal supervision of the work of the department, whereas the Director-General has a more external orientation. Because of the clear division of responsibilities, nobody “misunderstands what their functions are”, stressed Rose. For example, the Business Performance Unit, which is

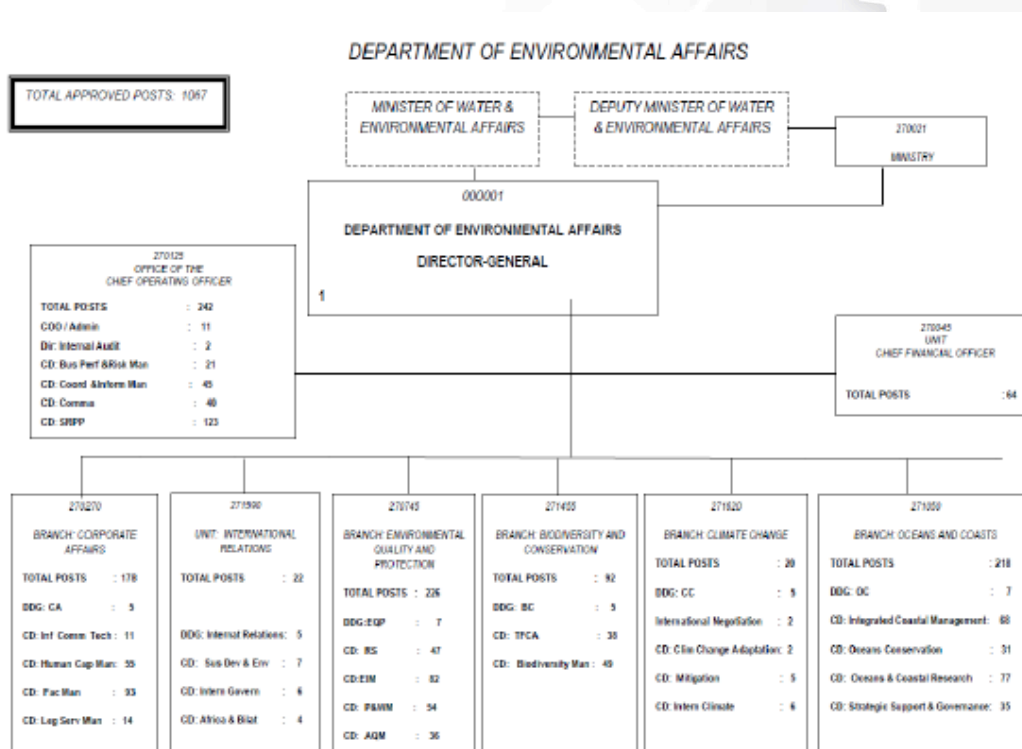


responsible for monitoring, strategic management and risk management, reports directly to the Chief Operating Officer, who is fully involved with internal affairs. In this regard, all the procedures and the staff responsibilities are well documented. In case of under-performance, the consequences are known as well. As summarized by Rose, one would expect that in the case of poor performance the name of the person in question will reach top management. The expectations are clear, because when the Deputy Directors-General meet with the Director-General during the performance review, which takes place quarterly and annually, the engagements are guided by an analysis of their performance against set targets, as indicated in the 'Annual Performance Plan'. Therefore, it is unthinkable that a Deputy Director-General can claim to have achieved an objective which is not present in the Annual Performance Plan or 'Strategic Plan' or without availability of evidence to support achievement of the targets in the plans.

One of the informal, but nevertheless important aspects of the structural design is the transmission of knowledge and expertise within the department. The traditional hierarchical approach of governmental bodies is still valid for the DEA; however, the DEA adds an expertise/knowledge-oriented approach. This means that people in lower ranks are not afraid to express their ideas and to communicate directly with top management. Rose described this as: "Management values people for their contribution, not for their ranks." At the department, an enabling environment has been created which allows all employees to express their ideas without any fear of being victimized by management. Additionally, employees are motivated to perform better by the positive approach rooted in the organization. For instance, a positive approach is taken in appraisal interviews, by framing them as improvement conversations, rather than focusing on underperformance.

To conclude, in terms of organizational structure, as Rose admitted, the DEA operates more like a business rather than a traditional governmental department. Therefore, due to the competitive, positive and innovative atmosphere, which is open to new ideas, the DEA delivers better results than other departments. As one of the interviewees summarized: "they created the expectations and then deliver on these expectations."

Table 2: Departmental Structure



Section 2: Strategic Planning and Measuring Performance: “What Gets Measured - Gets Done”

The Strategic Plan is a key departmental document which contains the goals, objectives, key performance indicators and targets. The Strategic Plan covers a five-year period. The strategic planning process is organized in the following way. Firstly, the Minister is responsible for the entire determination of the policy imperatives that should be considered in the strategic planning process as priority goals. Secondly,

these imperatives are usually communicated through a Ministerial address during departmental planning sessions. Thirdly, the Director-General assembles a strategic planning meeting for the department and takes overall responsibility and accountability for the content and quality of the departmental Strategic Plan.

The process of setting up the Strategic Plan requires a great deal of input. The DEA Business Performance Unit has managed the Strategic Plan on time. This means that the staff members of the Business Performance Unit are working on the Strategic Plan throughout the year, rather “than rushing before the deadline”, as emphasized by Rose. She also added: “We plan these things.” The „thinking-ahead strategy” characterizes the Business Performance Unit. For instance, the Business Performance Unit uses the input of the quarterly reviews in the process of the strategic planning for the next year. Challenges and targets are identified and monitored. At the branch sessions organized by the Business Performance Unit, the achievements and drawbacks of each branch are monitored by looking at the identified targets indicated in the previous/forthcoming quarterly reports. Therefore, good preparation and knowledge of the problems stimulate progress in the field of strategic planning. Staff members do not have to start all over again in each meeting, they can just pick up where they left off. Additionally, the strategic choice or preference for problematic areas is of great importance. As Rose indicated: “We try to focus on those areas that really have to be changed.”

Performance Agreements and Measuring Performance

A specific instrument which helps to achieve good performance through a clear task division is to employ 'Performance Agreements'. As was explained by James, a Performance Agreement is concluded between the Director-General and every Deputy Director-General (i.e. the head of a particular branch). The Performance Agreement stipulates the tasks as well as issues of compliance. A Performance Agreement is drafted by a Deputy Director-General, and is evaluated by the Business Performance Unit from the perspective of aligning the Performance Agreement with the Strategic Plan and an Annual Performance Plan. Afterwards, the Business Performance Unit facilitates the signing of the Performance Agreement between the Director-General

and each Deputy Director-General. James asserts that “in most departments the Performance Agreement is just a formality, but not here, it is taken seriously.” The Performance Agreement does not only offer guidance in terms of performance, it also facilitates in holding management accountable.

Monitoring Performance

The department measures and monitors performance in accordance with the Performance Agreement. In the DEA, frequent assessment meetings are held between the Director-General and each of the Deputy Directors-General. Two formal and two informal assessment meetings take place each year concerning the performance and achievements of each Deputy Director-General.

The extensive measuring approach is deeply rooted in the DEA. An electronic performance reporting system, that is referred to as the 'Balanced Score Card', has been created in order to collect all input, supported by evidence. The Balanced Score Card is an innovative mechanism that optimizes the work of the department. The Annual Performance Plan template with quarterly and annual targets is put into the system by the Business Performance Unit. The system is open at the end of the quarter and for two weeks in the new quarter, during which the information is collected and verified. The Deputy Directors-General take responsibility for the quality and validity of reports and sign-off before submission of both reports and evidence. The staff members at Business Performance Unit verify the information submitted on the system and provide analysis of performance. It is requirement to submit evidence both quarterly and annually. The Business Performance Unit verifies the quality of the submitted information to prevent unfounded submissions. Besides the Balanced Score Card system for measuring organizational performance, there is also an individual Balanced Score Card to monitor individual performance.

Regarding external visibility and monitoring, the DEA fully complies with the legal requirements, tables their annual reports to Parliament and ensures that their plans and reports are accessible on their website (www.environment.gov.za). This allows the external stakeholders and citizens to engage with the department on their deliverables and monitor progress. For example, for the Biodiversity and Conservation Programme

one can see what the target percentage for land conservation is and to what extent this target is being met.

To conclude this section, the best practices in the strategic planning and measuring management performance area are the clear strategic planning processes that performed on a continuous basis; the effective monitoring of performance through the Performance Agreements and frequent meetings; and the clear measuring performance system via the Balanced Score Card.

Section 3: Effective Leadership: “People do not need an Organization, they need a Manager”

All interviewees emphasized that the high quality of management plays a fundamental role in the good functioning of the department. The guiding principle of the DEA is: “the value of leading by example”. This means that top managers are expected to be examples of good performance. This in turn “creates a culture of performance at our department”, as was summarized by Rose. The senior managers should take all the procedures and policies of the organization seriously. As noted by James, “it all depends on your Director-General”, as the Director-General “should not only have vast technical expertise and political knowledge, but also a solid administrative management background.” The interviewees admitted that the Director-General of the DEA possesses all the qualities which contribute to a productive working environment and good performance. All interviewees praised the current Director-General, who has been in office for many years and has worked continuously on improvements. Abraham observed that he used to work in another department, where the Director-General sometimes did not represent the department in Parliament. This was done by a CFO who was more knowledgeable. At the DEA, the difference is striking. “The Director-General of the DEA is always upfront, she is able to cover all areas”, remarked Abraham. At this department “people want to perform” and this is a success factor in the organization which cannot be underestimated.

Effective leadership is not only required within, but also outside the organization. All

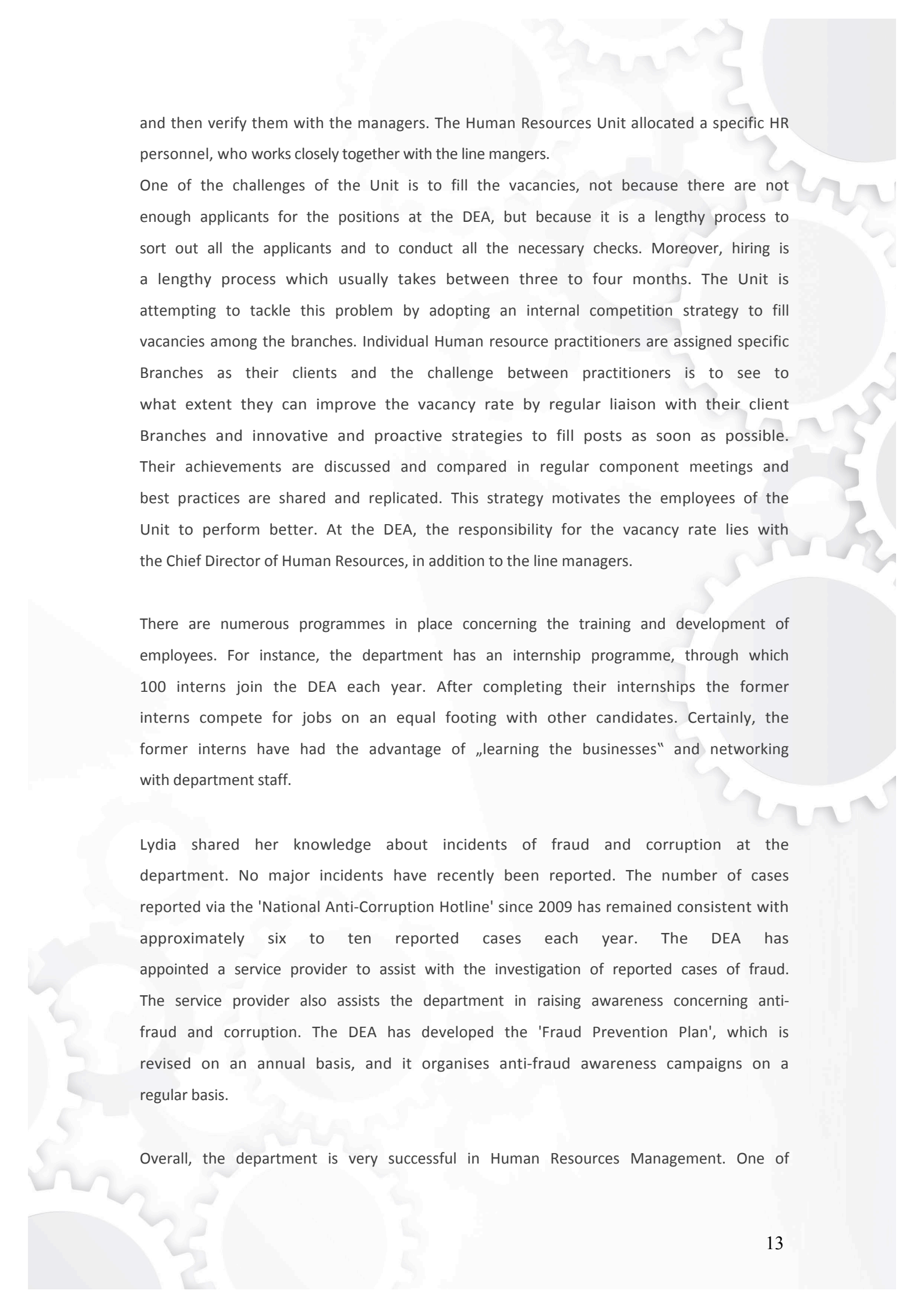
interviewees confirmed that the DEA has powerful political support, which ensures a sufficient budget allocation. On this point, Rose stressed that this political support is not accidental, as it goes back to the management style. At the DEA, the Director General is able to „sell“ and to present the DEA programmes in such a way that political support is ensured, which in the end is essential for the productive implementation of the environmental programmes.

To summarise, the best practices in the 'leadership' management performance area are: the existence of a caring manager with technical expertise, political knowledge and an administrative management background; the presence of the Director-General who can effectively represent the department in the political arena, as well as possessing a knowledge of all processes within the department in order to be on top of all issues concerning his or her department.

Section 4: Human Resources Policy: “People Leave Bad Managers, not the Organization”

The department's Human Resources Strategy is derived from its goal of being “a growing organisation built on a human capital foundation.” The main objective is for the department to become an 'employer of choice'. The department has so far been fairly successful in attaining this objective. For instance, the turnover rate for the last quarter (July 2012) was 1.5%, meaning that employees prefer to remain at the organization rather than looking for other employment. Among all governmental departments in South Africa, a quarterly turnover rate of 1.5% for a total of 1,500 employees is a very low turnover rate, indicating that the DEA is perceived to be a good employer.

Lydia, who is at the top management level in the field of Human Resources, shared her views on the successful HR policy of the department. The Human Resources Management team functions as a family where employees support each other in order to achieve the targets. The friendly atmosphere and the acknowledgement of achievements create a productive working environment. Compared to other departments, the 'Human Resources Unit' at the DEA does not wait for the line managers to tell them to look for vacancies or to advertise certain positions; they themselves show initiative and advertise the vacant posts



and then verify them with the managers. The Human Resources Unit allocated a specific HR personnel, who works closely together with the line managers.

One of the challenges of the Unit is to fill the vacancies, not because there are not enough applicants for the positions at the DEA, but because it is a lengthy process to sort out all the applicants and to conduct all the necessary checks. Moreover, hiring is a lengthy process which usually takes between three to four months. The Unit is attempting to tackle this problem by adopting an internal competition strategy to fill vacancies among the branches. Individual Human resource practitioners are assigned specific Branches as their clients and the challenge between practitioners is to see to what extent they can improve the vacancy rate by regular liaison with their client Branches and innovative and proactive strategies to fill posts as soon as possible. Their achievements are discussed and compared in regular component meetings and best practices are shared and replicated. This strategy motivates the employees of the Unit to perform better. At the DEA, the responsibility for the vacancy rate lies with the Chief Director of Human Resources, in addition to the line managers.

There are numerous programmes in place concerning the training and development of employees. For instance, the department has an internship programme, through which 100 interns join the DEA each year. After completing their internships the former interns compete for jobs on an equal footing with other candidates. Certainly, the former interns have had the advantage of „learning the businesses“ and networking with department staff.

Lydia shared her knowledge about incidents of fraud and corruption at the department. No major incidents have recently been reported. The number of cases reported via the 'National Anti-Corruption Hotline' since 2009 has remained consistent with approximately six to ten reported cases each year. The DEA has appointed a service provider to assist with the investigation of reported cases of fraud. The service provider also assists the department in raising awareness concerning anti-fraud and corruption. The DEA has developed the 'Fraud Prevention Plan', which is revised on an annual basis, and it organises anti-fraud awareness campaigns on a regular basis.

Overall, the department is very successful in Human Resources Management. One of

the main reasons for this success is that the Human Resources Unit has various templates on all subjects, e.g. templates for screening the security of candidates by the line managers. The structural organization and team work to ensure that the Human Resources Unit provides the necessary basis for a well-functioning department.

Equity and Diversity Policy: Proactiveness and Teamwork

The mandate for the development and implementation of an 'Employment Equity Plan' (EEP) for the DEA is derived from Section 20 of the 'Employment Equity Act 1998'. The main goal of the EEP is to achieve employment equity at the workplace. The department has appointed a Senior Manager who oversees and implements the Employment Equity Plan. Additionally, the line managers are responsible for promoting and facilitating representativeness and hence increasing diversity, specifically among managerial ranks. The DEA has achieved the target of 50% women at management level. Problematic areas, specifically regarding reaching the target of appointing at least 2 % of employees with a disability, have been gradually improving at the department. This was considered problematic because people without a visible disability often do not want to be 'earmarked' as a disabled person, hence they do not inform the Human Resources Unit about their disability. To achieve the disability targets at the department, the DEA implemented a number of measures such as the development of a 'Disability Strategy', advertising positions at the 'Disability People Organizations of South Africa' (DPSA) which distributes the advertisements to a wide range of disability organizations affiliated with them etc. Because the diversity and equity targets are taken very seriously by the department and because progress in this area is part of the senior management performance system, the department has managed to achieve most of these targets. The DEA attempts to endorse the diversity and equity policy through awareness campaigns by promoting gender issues, disability etc.

In conclusion, the best practices in the human resources management performance area are: the effective retention policy guided by inspiring leadership; a productive working environment underpinned by healthy competition with regard to the vacancy rate; the proactiveness and initiative of Human Resources Unit; and integration the disability and equity targets at the highest level.

Section 5: Financial Management: Supply-Chain Management and Financial Administration and Reporting: “We Deal with Matters as They Come”

The 'financial administration' and the 'supply-chain management', which are often closely linked together, have been highly evaluated according to the assessment under the MPAT Framework. A key success factor is strategic planning. No decisions are taken without strategic consideration. Also, according to Abraham of the 'Financial Management Unit', problems are being solved as soon as they arise. Challenging issues are not postponed, but are addressed immediately at the highest level. This best practice goes back to an effective management style and the attitude of the Director General, who is hands-on in all areas.

Reporting and control in the financial administration play a major role in ensuring an efficient and transparent system. Controls are carried out at a high management level thereby ensuring top quality. The 'Annual Report' of the DEA is the final product of the financial management system. The Annual Report is drafted so that it is aligned with the well-defined programmatic processes of the department. These processes are affiliated with risk management and internal controls. The department has a structured guide for drafting the Annual Report. This guide clarifies required information and indicates important deadlines. Abraham supports the excellent evaluation of financial management with statistics from his Unit. For instance, last year the DEA was one out of three national departments with a 'clean audit'. A „clean audit“ refers to unqualified audit, which provides that the financial statements present an accurate picture of the organisation and comply with generally accepted accounting principles. The final opinion regarding quality of the audit process is provided by the „Auditor-General.“ Abraham indicates that a „clean audit“ was achieved because of strict adherence to legal requirements; good performance and dedication of professional staff. Also, its spending in the last seven or eight years was between 98 and 99%. It was achieved because of an ability of managers to plan strategically and to deliver on services within available budget.

The Unit has a specific reporting system which is called the 'Electronic Document Management System (EDMC) Dashboard Report'. The Dashboard Report includes financial management accounting information and statistics which are regularly updated. Results from the transversal financial systems are used to provide

management accounting information to managers. Consequently, managers, knowing the latest financial results, can manage their areas of responsibility in a more efficient way. This report is communicated and discussed at the top management level.

Supply-Chain Management

Supply-chain management plays a very important role in the functioning of the department. The goal of supply-chain management is to deliver a comprehensive logistical and acquisition management service to the department. The supply chain entails both goods ordered by the DEA (for example, office equipment) and services rendered to the DEA at its request such as IT services/travel arrangements/catering. For instance in the field of IT services, the „Supply-Chain Management Unit“ places the orders for all IT services and purchases IT equipment. The 'National Treasury' has issued instructions on supply-chain management in order to enhance compliance, monitoring and improving transparency and accountability in the institutions of the government. To ensure full compliance with these instructions, the 'Head of Supply-Chain Management' is appointed at Director level. Therefore, the directorate is responsible for managing the total supply chain and asset management at the DEA. A so-called 'check & balances' mechanism is established to measure the performance of suppliers. It works as follows: there are two systems to measure performance. One is a 'Database' that includes responses to requests for quotations and the placing of orders. The second is the 'LOGIS' system, which monitors the delivery turnaround. Suppliers have to adhere to strict guidelines and sanctions are imposed in the case of non-compliance. In terms of placing orders, suppliers are generally provided with 30 days to deliver the ordered goods to the department. At the same time, the Supply-Chain Management Unit has a 30-day payment policy. All orders are tracked and monitored by the Supply-Chain Management Unit. This provides additional management accounting information and accessible reference document that can be used by both: the Supply-Chain Management Unit and Financial Administration Unit. Abraham proudly stated that the present payment period is on average 16 working days.

Sanctions are imposed in the case of poor performance by suppliers, for example when a supplier fails to deliver goods without any written notification to explain the delay. The order will be cancelled and the supplier will be removed from the database because of non-performance. Transparency is an important aspect of supply

management. As Abraham stated: “You can track every cent that was paid to the supplier.”

In conclusion, the best practices of the Financial Management Unit are: transparent financial reporting and control systems; strategic considerations on all levels of decision-making; a reporting system: the 'EDMS Dashboard Report'; responsibility for supply-chain management being regulated at the highest level in the department; the monitoring of suppliers' performance via a 'Database' and the 'LOGIS' system; and strict time frames for paying suppliers.

Discussion: Sound Organizational Culture, Values and People

The Department of Environmental Affairs has been nominated as one of the best departments. In all four Key Performance Areas (KPA's), Strategic Management, Governance and Accountability, Human Resources and Systems Management and Financial Management, the department has obtained the highest score using the MPAT Framework. This case study has attempted to reveal the key success factors of this department and most importantly to distil „best practices“ which can be shared with other governmental departments. A variety of best practices in this department are striking. Each performance area has something to share. The Research Team has attempted to make a selection of the most interesting and important „best practices“ identified during desk research and the interview process. Three fundamental elements which by themselves can be considered “best practices” have been identified. These are: **(1) the sound organisational culture; (2) values and (3) people.**

The sound organisational culture is driven by strict policies and procedures, such as concrete planning, templates, measurable outcomes, effective performance monitoring, clear expectations in terms of managers and an efficient strategic process. The department operates like a business. Despite the government “being a hierarchal animal”, the DEA encourages communication and discussions at all levels. Values are difficult to measure. In fact every department has values, but not every department lives up to these values. In this regard, the DEA is different, as “values are not on paper here, they are living these values,” as was noted by one of the

interviewees. Commitment, passion and dedication drive the DEA to great performance.

The third component that makes the department one of the best is its people. This element also includes the top management level. The DEA has a “culture of performance”, which is based on the example set by top management at the organisation. All interviewees confirmed that the productivity of the department is closely linked to the quality of the managers and their willingness to continue in their position (rather than to start job-hopping). This leads to a workforce that is very experienced and good in what they do. The Director-General of the DEA has clearly shown the necessary leadership, expertise, administrative background and great managerial skills. People are performing better when an environment of healthy competition is created. For example, the Human Resources Unit has a clear policy to create such an environment. People are encouraged to work better when they are praised for good work and, in the case of under-performance, stimulated to improve rather than being punished. Specific „best practices“ can be summarised as follows: (1) the clear division of responsibilities between managers, e.g. the Director-General and the Chief Operating Officer, (2) developing the strategic planning on a continuous basis, rather than meeting periodical deadlines, (3) a clear time frame in supply management and financial administration, (4) effective risk management and monitoring procedures and (5) the proactiveness of the Human Resources Unit. Certainly, there is still room for improvement at the DEA. As Rose summarized: “We are not as ambitious as we want to be, because we want to do so much more.” However, the department is currently doing well in achieving realistic self-identified targets.