

**2022/2023 FINANCIAL YEAR**

**TRANSFORMATION COLLABORATIVE  
COMMITTEE:**

**OCCUPATION SPECIFIC DISPENSATION**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

OCTOBER 2022

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## **ACRONYMS**

**APP** - Annual Performance Plan

**CBE** - Council for the Built Environment

**DALRRD** - Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

**DPSA** - Department of Public Service Administration

**DPWI** - Department of Public Works and Infrastructure

**DWS** - Department of Water and Sanitation

**KHS** - KwaZulu-Natal Department of Human Settlements

**KT** - KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport

**OSD** - Occupation Specific Dispensation

**PER**- Personnel Expenditure Review

**PwC**- PricewaterhouseCoopers

**TCC** - Transformation Collaboration Committee

**ToR** - Terms of Reference

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the activities undertaken by the Occupation Specific Dispensation Transformation Collaborative Committee (OSD TCC) during Quarter 2 of the 2022/2023 financial year.

## 2. Background

The Council for the Built Environment (CBE) is a statutory body established under the Council for the Built Environment Act (No. 43 of 2000). It is an overarching body that coordinates the following six councils for the built environment professions - Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Engineering, Property Valuation, Project and Construction Management, and Quantity Surveying – and through memoranda of understanding these include Town and Regional Planning, Land Surveying and Environmental Assessment. Sections 3(a) and (e) of the CBE Act mandate the CBE to promote and protect the interests of the public and promote appropriate standards of health, safety and environmental protection within the built environment.

In line with the above, Transformation of the Built Environment Professions is one of the key imperatives of the CBE. As per the CBE Strategic Plan, the CBE is to facilitate participation by the Built Environment Professions in integrated development in the context of national goals, specifically regarding Transformation as a key priority of the sixth term government. The CBE's third Transformation Indaba, hosted in October 2019, produced a number of key resolutions, in relation to challenges impeding Transformation in the sector. The CBE expects to deliver on these resolutions to ensure transformational progress. The main vehicle for driving these activities is the Transformation Collaborative Committees (TCCs), constituted in collaboration with the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) to specifically address these challenges. These TCCs, with support from the DPWI, are commissioned to engage with all relevant departments and industry role players to resolve key challenges identified by stakeholders. These Transformation Collaborative Committees (TCC) comprise of the following:

- i. Health, Safety, Public Protection and Universal Access (HSPPUA)
- ii. Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD)
- iii. Procurement, Policy, Legislation and Socio-Economic Development (PPLSED)
- iv. Professions Skills and Capacity Development (PSCD)
- v. Women Empowerment and Gender Equality (WEGE)

## Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD)

The OSD TCC's focus is to look into the current gaps and limitations of the Engineering and related occupations OSD policy and its impact on built environment professionals in the employ of public service. It looks into the need to revisit and review the Engineering and related occupations OSD policy framework over reforms that will also ensure the inclusion of other professions that were left out when OSD was introduced. The section below provides an update on the OSD TCC in Quarter 2 of the 2022-2023 financial year.

### 3. CBE Medium-Term Priority areas linked to the OSD TCC

In the medium-term the OSD TCC is paying attention to two issues:

- i. Transforming the Built Environment
- ii. Creating skilled (i.e. fit-for-purpose) Built Environment Professionals

### 4. Mandate of the CBE linked to the OSD TCC

In-line with the objectives of the OSD TCC, the CBE Act mandates the CBE to:

*3 (b) promote and maintain a sustainable built environment;*

*3 (c) mandates the CBE to promote ongoing human resources development in the built environment;*

*3 (d) facilitate participation by the built environment professions in integrated development in the context of national goals;*

*3 (h) serve as a forum where the built environment professions can discuss relevant -*

- i. required qualifications;*
- ii. standards of education;*
- iii. training and competence;*
- iv. promotion of professional status;*
- v. legislation impacting on the built environment*

*4 (a) advise Government on any matter falling within the scope of the built environment, including socio-economic development, and for this purpose carry out such investigations as it or the relevant Minister deems necessary*

## 5. Occupation Specific Dispensation TCC Quarter 2 Progress Report

### 5.1 Overview

The DPSA contracted PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to conduct the 2022 Personnel Expenditure Review (PER), which is the first review of OSDs since they were implemented more than 10 years ago. The PER that will form the basis for the Remuneration Policy which the DPSA ultimately will develop. Key consideration for the PER 2022, is to determine whether:

- i. OSDs have achieved their intended objectives
- ii. service delivery has improved with the implementation of OSDs

The CBE, in collaboration with DPSA, is coordinating infrastructure sector inputs with Engineering and related occupations OSD implementing departments to ensure that the challenges and limitations encountered by the departments are reported and addressed in the PER and Remuneration Policy.

### 5.1. Quarterly Progress

The section below provides an update on the OSD TCC in Quarter 2 (July – September 2022) of the 2022/2023 financial year.

#### 5.1.1. Quarter 2 (13 September 2022)

On 13 September 2022 the third OSD TCC was hosted. The CBE provided update on the following:

- i. Status On the OSD policy proposal - report on gaps and limitations of OSD Policy
- ii. One research report on assessment of BE Candidacy Programmes within Public Sector Institutions - 2022/23 Annual Performance Plan (APP) target

#### 5.1.1.1. **Status on the Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) Policy Proposal - Report on gaps and limitations of OSD submitted to DPSA**

The CBE, in collaboration with DPSA, held Round-table discussions with the infrastructure implementing departments.

| Department   | Date  |
|--|---|
| Department of Public Works and Infrastructure                | Submitted a report on Challenges of OSD at DPWI |
| Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development | 01 September 2022                               |
| KwaZulu-Natal Department of Human Settlements                | 05 September 2022                               |
| Department of Water and Sanitation                           | 07 September 2022                               |
| KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport                        | 03 October 2022                                 |

The objective for the engagements was to discuss the Gaps and Limitations of Engineering and Related Occupations OSD Policy and to determine:

- a) gaps, challenges and limitations in implementing the OSD Policy
- b) whether OSDs have achieved their intended objectives
- c) whether service delivery and infrastructure roll-out has improved with the implementation of OSDs

### **Gaps and Limitations of the OSD Policy**

The presentation categorised the challenges and limitations of OSD in three thematic areas in relation to the objectives of the OSD policy:

#### **a) Attraction of Skills**

- i. OSD has occupations that are not recognised by the CBEP; and conversely occupations recognised by CBEP and not on the OSD (e.g. Architectural Technician does not exist at SACAP; QS Technologist does not exist at SACQSP)
- ii. Some occupations do not have the Technologist band (Surveyor and Architecture)

#### **b) Development of Skills**

- i. Absorption of recently professionalised individuals – the OSD states that once candidates obtain professional registration they may apply for vacant posts. This does not encourage professional registration given the current economic situation in the country
- ii. There is not much difference in salary between candidates and recently professionalised personnel. In some departments, professionals at production level earn less than the candidates. This discourages candidates to become

professionally registered as it is financially advantageous to remain at candidacy

**c) Retention of skills**

- i. OSD does not cater for counter offers or negotiated remuneration in high rotation of professionals
- ii. OSD does not encourage upward mobility (non-BEP managing BEP)
- iii. There is a high rotation of professionals deployed in rural areas /districts

**Did OSD achieve its intended objectives?**

According to DPSA OSD framework, the objectives of OSD are to:

- i. provide for a unique salary structure per occupation and to cater for the unique needs of the different occupations
- ii. prescribe grading structures and job profiles to eliminate inter-provincial/departmental differentiations/variations
- iii. provide adequate and clear salary progression and career pathing opportunities based on competencies, experience and performance
- iv. improve the ability of the Public Service to attract and retain skilled employees

Although there are number of challenges in implementing the OSDs, OSDs did achieve their intended objectives.

**Recommendations**

The round-table discussions recommended the following for DPSA's consideration:

- i. review of the Engineering and related occupations policy to include all professional categories as recognised by the CBEP
- ii. review the salaries of candidates to be significantly lower than that the professionals. This will encourage professional registration and avoid a situation where candidates remain at candidacy for extended time
- iii. a new dispensation for technical managers, which will resolve the situation where non-technical managers managing technical personnel
- iv. an allowance for professionals working in rural areas

#### **5.1.1.2. One research report on assessment of BE Candidacy Programmes within Public Sector Institutions - 2022/23 Annual Performance Plan (APP) target**

The CBE is conducting a study to assess the BE Candidacy Programmes within Public sector institutions with these objectives:

- i. Examine the nature and efficacy of built environment candidacy programmes within the sector institutions
- ii. Investigate the effectiveness of built environment candidate mentorship within public sector institutions
- iii. Evaluate the extent to which OSD enables or limits the implementation of built environment candidacy programmes
- iv. Determine whether the working environment within public sector institutions is conducive for built environment candidacy programmes
- v. Investigate the challenges impeding the success of built environment candidacy programmes implemented within public sector institutions
- vi. Assess and document good practices of built environment candidacy programmes within public sector institutions

The preliminary findings on the assessment of candidacy programme within public sector institution reveal the following:

#### **Nature of Built Environment Candidacy Programmes**

The public sector built environment candidacy programmes address the shortage of critical and scarce skills in the departments. The candidacy programmes cater for learning opportunities and development needs of permanent candidates to successfully attain the competency level required for professional registration.

Most national and provincial government departments have two types of candidates namely:

- i. Candidate Intern: Young Graduate with a diploma, B-Tech or bachelor's degree, eligible to register with the relevant Council for the Built Environment Profession (CBEP)
- ii. Mature Candidate: Experienced government employee, with relevant qualifications, eligible for a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Programme with the relevant CBEP

## **Effective Mentorship**

The success of a candidacy programme relies heavily on mentorship. In most implementing departments mentors are either based internally, contracted, or seconded from other government institutions and private companies.

The role of the mentor is to provide career development, psychosocial support and guide candidates on the exposure and training required to attain professional registration. However, more than 60% of public sector institutions do not have the requisite internal mentors to facilitate built environment candidacy programmes, hence the heavy reliance on external mentors.

## **To what extent does the OSD Enable / Limit the Implementation of Built Environment Candidacy Programmes?**

The OSD policy is not enabling the implementation of the Built Environment candidate programme simply because of salary disparities that exist between candidates and professionals. Additionally, affordability of the OSD for candidates is becoming a challenge for national and provincial government departments.

## **Conduciveness of the Working Environment**

Most public sector institutions that participated in the study do not have live, infrastructure projects of relevant complexity to expose candidates. Instead, there is heavy reliance on placing candidates on secondment for exposure to live infrastructure projects of relevant complexity.

## **Recommendation**

It was recommended that the CBE needs to create focus groups with private sector, public sector and state-owned entities to identify projects for the benefit of candidacy programmes.

## **6. Conclusion and Way Forward**

The CBE will work together with DPSA, PwC and other government departments to address the challenges and recommendations detailed in this report. The CBE is currently collecting data in respect of the two reports draft reports to be submitted at the end of Q3 of the 2022/23 financial year.