

**2022/2023 FINANCIAL YEAR**

**TRANSFORMATION COLLABORATIVE  
COMMITTEE:**

**OCCUPATION SPECIFIC DISPENSATION**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

DECEMBER 2022

## Table of Contents

1. Purpose.....	4
2. Background.....	4
3. CBE Medium-Term Priority areas linked to the OSD TCC .....	5
4. CBE Mandate linked to the OSD TCC .....	5
5. Occupation Specific Dispensation TCC Quarter 3 Progress Report.....	6
5.1. Overview .....	6
6. Conclusions and Way Forward.....	12

## **ACRONYMS**

<b>APP</b>	Annual Performance Plan
<b>CBE</b>	Council for the Built Environment
<b>DPSA</b>	Department of Public Service and Administration
<b>DPWI</b>	Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
<b>OSD</b>	Occupation Specific Dispensation
<b>PER</b>	Personnel Expenditure Review
<b>PwC</b>	PricewaterhouseCoopers
<b>TCC</b>	Transformation Collaboration Committee
<b>ToR</b>	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 3 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 Valuers, 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 respectively mandate the CBE to promote and protect the interests of the public and promote appropriate standards of health, safety and environmental protection in the built environment.

In line with the above, the 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:

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

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 also 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 initially when OSD was introduced. The section below provides a status update on progress made thus far by the OSD TCC in relation to Quarter 3 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 (fit-for-purpose) Built Environment Professionals

### **4. CBE Mandate 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) 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; and*

*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 3 Progress Report**

### **5.1. Overview**

The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) contracted PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to conduct the 2022 Personnel Expenditure Review (PER), the first review of the OSDs since their implementation more than ten years ago. The PER will form the basis for the Remuneration Policy which the DPSA ultimately will develop. Key considerations for the PER 2022, is to determine whether:

- OSDs achieved their intended objectives
- service delivery has improved with the implementation of OSDs

The CBE, in collaboration with DPSA, is coordinating inputs from infrastructure sector departments implementing the Engineering and related Occupations OSD to record and report their challenges for attention and address in the PER and Remuneration Policy.

### **5.2. Quarterly Progress**

The section below provides a progress update on the work of the OSD TCC during Quarter 3 (October – December 2022) 2022-2023 financial year.

#### **5.2.1. Quarter 3**

The CBE did not schedule nor host the OSD TCC for the third quarter 2022/23, however work continued in line with the workplan.

##### **5.2.1.1. 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 following CBEP and infrastructure departments implementing the OSD.

Department	Date
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
Free State Department of Public Works and Infrastructure	03 November 2022

CBEP	Date
SACLAP	25 October 2022
SACAPSA	11 November 2022
SACPVP	03 November 2022

The objective of the engagements was to determine the following:

- Gaps, challenges and limitations in implementing the OSD Policy
- Whether OSDs have achieved their intended objectives
- Whether service delivery and infrastructure roll-out has improved with the implementation of OSDs

### **The 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 as follows:

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

- i. OSD has occupations that are not recognised by the CBEP; conversely occupations recognised by CBEP are not on 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 (viz. Surveyor and Architecture)
- iii. The Property Valuers Profession is not on the OSD; this impacts the quality of professionals employed by the state to perform functions of a registered professional property valuer without being professionally registered
- iv. The Landscape Architecture Profession is not on the OSD; consequently, Landscape Architects employed by the state are not professionally registered

## **b) Development of Skills**

- i. Absorption of recently professionalised individuals - 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 salaries less than 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.

## **d) Did OSD achieve its intended objectives?**

According to the 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 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 Public Service's ability to attract and retain skilled employees

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

## **e) Recommendations**

During the round-table discussions the following recommendations were made for DPSA's consideration:

- i. The current OSD title “Engineers and related Professionals” is exclusionary of other professions and should be amended to include all professionals in the Built Environment. It is therefore recommended that the OSD is reviewed to “*Respective Built Environment Professionals*” or “*Engineering and Built Environment Professionals*”.
- ii. The salary for candidates should be in line with “Graduate Programme Stipend” and in-line with their qualifications, which is approximately R15 000.00 per month. This will encourage candidates to become professionally registered in the quickest time possible.
- iii. SACQSP does not have the Technologist category, hence it should be removed in-line with registration requirements of the professional Council.
- iv. SACAP’s Technician category should be removed in line with registration requirements of the professional Council. Similarly, the Draftsperson category is not on the OSD as a SACAP registration category; it is therefore recommended that the DPSA should amend the OSD Policy to replace the Technician band with the Draughtsperson category.
- v. Property Valuers, Associated Valuer professionals and Landscape Architecture professionals are excluded in the Engineering and related Professionals OSD, it is therefore recommended that the policy be amended to cater for these excluded professions.
- vi. DPSA should introduce a new dispensation for technical managers which will resolve the situation where non-technical managers manage technical personnel.
- vii. DPSA should consider an allowance for professionals working in rural areas since the Engineering and related Occupations OSD does not provide for it.

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

The CBE is conducting a study to assess BE Candidacy Programmes within Public sector institutions. The objectives of this exercise are to:

- i. examine the nature and efficacy of built environment candidacy programmes within the sector institutions
- ii. investigate the effectiveness of the mentorship of built environment candidates within public sector institutions

- iii. evaluate the extent to which OSD enables or limits the implementation of built environment candidacy programmes
- iv. examine whether the working environment within public sector institutions is conducive to built environment candidacy programmes
- v. investigate challenges impeding the success of built environment candidacy programmes implemented in public sector institutions
- vi. assess and document good practices of built environment candidacy programmes in public sector institutions

**Preliminary findings on the assessment of candidacy programmes in public sector institutions reveal that:**

**Nature of Built Environment Candidacy Programmes**

- Built environment candidacy programmes in the public sector, by their nature, are implemented to address the shortage of critical and scarce skills in the organisation. The built environment candidacy programme caters for learning opportunities and development needs of permanent staff and candidates to successfully attain the competency level required to attain professional registration. The research shows that most national and provincial government departments have implemented policies to guide the implementation of built environment candidacy development programmes, establish focal points dedicated to technical skills development, and drive capacity-building initiatives across the public sector.

**Effectiveness of Mentorship of Built Environment Candidates**

- The study found that mentors are either based internally, contracted, or seconded from other government institutions and private companies. The role of mentors is to provide career development, psychosocial support and to guide candidates on the exposure and training required to attain professional registration.
- The findings reveal that most national, provincial and local government departments lack structured mentorship. Internal mentors lack the soft skills required to mentor

candidates in public sector institutions. Public sector institutions lack systems and capacity to monitor the mentoring of both in-house candidates as well as those outsourced to private companies. National and provincial government departments reported a high turnover of registered professionals (resulting in the loss of internal mentors). What is also evident in the research findings is that public institutions have a shortage of mentors to guide candidates towards attaining professional registration.

### **The extent to which Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) enables or limits the implementation of Built Environment Candidacy Programmes**

- The study found that the affordability of OSD for candidates is becoming a challenge for national and provincial government departments. Government departments implementing the OSD reported that remuneration for candidates is too high and not market related. National and provincial government departments reported that there is not much difference in salary between candidates and recently professionalised personnel. The study highlighted that salary disparities exist between candidates and professionals, as there isn't much difference in salary between candidates and recently professionalised personnel. In fact, in some instances, professionals may earn less than candidates resulting in the government's inability to retain these recently professionalised individuals as they leave for better employment opportunities in the private sector. This presents a dilemma for professional developmental programmes as registering as a professional is not incentivised.
- Another finding is that technical senior staff are hesitant to mentor candidates earning equal or more than them. Furthermore, the OSD does not cater for counter offers or negotiated remuneration at production level. The bulk of technical personnel at DPWI are appointed at production level. When these technical personnel receive external job offers, the Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure sector is unable to counter these offers due to the prescriptive nature of OSD. The same applies to offers to external applicants - the department cannot enter into negotiated remuneration no matter how critical the skill is and the benefit that will be derived by the department should that appointment be made. OSD limits upscale movement and retention. Key informants from the Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure sector also reported that other

government departments are poaching critical skills from the Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure sector by utilising other job titles to bypass OSD requirements.

## **6. Conclusions and Way Forward**

The report on gaps and limitation of the OSD has been submitted to the CBEP for input and will be submitted to implementing government departments on 26/01/2023 for further inputs prior to being submitted to DPSA on 31/01/2023.