

MPAT 2012 to 2015 Lessons and Support to the Public Service



planning, monitoring &
evaluation

Department:
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Table of Acronyms

NT	National Treasury
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
PSC	Public Service Commission
OTP	Office of the Premier
MPAT	Management Performance Assessment Tool
MKIT	Management Knowledge Information Tool
PM&E	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
NES	National Evaluation System
KPAs	Key Performance Areas
AG	Auditor General
RSA	Republic of South Africa
APP	Annual Performance Plan
EA	Executive Authority
GTOC	
HoD	Heads of Department

1. Executive Summary

The National Development Plan (NDP) states that between now and 2030, South Africa need to have established a state that is more capable, more professional and more responsive to the needs of its citizens. It further urges that progress in this regard needs to be pursued most rapidly, especially in those areas where state capacity is currently at the weakest. According to the NDP unevenness in state capacity and capability leads to uneven performance in local, provincial and national government. Within this context government has to prioritise key programmes to reform the public sector to a capable state. In this regard, DPME has been implementing the tool called Management Assessment Tool (MPAT) to facilitate and support public sector reforms in the areas of management practises and leadership. The MPAT tool was approved by Cabinet in 2010.

This report gives results of lessons learnt through the implementation of MPAT in the areas of managerial leadership, as a key tenant of a capable state. MPAT is one of the key tools by which government measures management practices and some leadership principles in government institutions. The results over the five years as distilled by the tool, indicate that the standard of management practices both at national and provincial government institutions has not yet reached the desired levels. More can be done to achieve a high performance culture which is the backbone to effective and efficient service for the South African citizens.

According to these results, it is evident that whilst progress in management practises that contribute to service delivery has been made, inefficiencies still persists in crucial areas. Such inefficiencies need to be addressed to enable appropriate resource allocation, ensuring well run government institutions and improved service delivery. As such, one of the key elements to ensure well run government institutions and ensuring an efficient government would be to address management practises and leadership so as to build a high performance culture in government.

This slow progress is a cause for concern MPAT results have confirmed that poor management practices have negative impact in the implementation of policies and ultimately service delivery. One example to substantiate this point is that if leadership

does not adequately budget for the filling of vacancies within the set time frames, then there will be inadequate resources to enable service delivery.

This calls for initiatives to address poor management practices and encourage a culture of learning and continuous improvements. This is one of the major cornerstones of MPAT. In addition to this, in the past years several support initiatives to ensure improvements were introduced including the master classes and improvement workshops based on documented case studies. The DPME further encouraged departments that continue to do well in provinces to partner with those that are struggling that they can learn from each other. It is however acknowledged that there is an urgent need for a more holistic and integrated approach to fast-track the pace of improvements in departments.

2. Background an introduction

A capable state as envisaged by the NDP is the enabler for government to realise its long term development goals. At the centre of government's plan is the outcomes approach. With this approach government adopted the systems thinking approach to ensure integration and the whole of government working together to ensure realisation of sustainable goals. This outcomes approach is also aimed at demonstrating the government's commitment and determination to deliver the required services to its citizens.

The fundamentals of the outcomes approach, is that it measures, monitors and supports the chain of inputs, activities and outputs enabling achievement of outcomes. Such an approach is more likely to encourage re-prioritisation of scarce resources by government to areas that needs urgent attention.

It is important to note that, achievement of these priorities is dependent on a more developmental and capable Public Service. Outcome 12: *"An effective, efficient and development-oriented public service"* is aimed at having focused intervention to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and developmental orientated Public Service.

To complement the achievement of the outcomes approach, DPME also developed and implemented the Management Performance Assessment Tool (MPAT) to assist government to transform the public service to be a capable and developmental state

thereby contributing towards the rudiments of Outcome Twelve (12), and ultimately the NDP. The MPAT also calls for initiatives to address poor management practices and encourage the culture of learning and continuous improvements.

The MPAT tool was developed following an extensive research of international models of management practises and consultation with departments. In this process, the DPME worked collaboratively with the DPSA, the National Treasury and the Offices of the Premiers in provinces including independent bodies such as Auditor General South Africa (AGSA) and Office of the Public Service Commission (OPSC). The input by these key partners is continuously given through a forum called the MPAT advisory Committee which seeks to ensure the objectivity and relevance of the MPAT Tool. The MPAT tool uses standards that are categorised in four (4) Key Performance areas (KPA's) i.e. Strategic Management; Governance and Accountability; Human Resource and Financial Management.

Through these standards, the tool goes a step further by ascertaining if government institutions make use of policies to work smartly to promote efficiency institutionally. Each year departments are required to complete the self-assessments through the MPAT web based system, they self-reflect against the standards across the KPA's. Subsequent to the self-assessment period, departments are subjected to a robust moderation process wherein the departmental self-assessments are either confirmed or rejected based on evidence provided with comprehensive feedback for improvements.

The moderation process is conducted by subject experts of the standards that are from the national and provincial departments as well as DPSA, NT, OPSC as well as Justice and Constitutional Development that form the Centre of Government. Although there are some IT glitches in some departments with this process, the benefits far outweighs the challenges in terms of awareness and implementation of policies and improvements.

In the implementation of the (MPAT) assessments from 2012 to 2015, 100 percent participation has been achieved across national and provincial departments. This is significant as it indicates that departments do take time to reflect on their management practises and how well they are doing in implementing the government policies.

Two key issues coming out of the performance assessment are as follows (1) there are pockets of excellence with regards to management practises throughout government. (2) Secondly weak managerial leadership practises remain a major challenge and contributes to administrative failures in government. Good management practices are crucial and at the centre as enablers for service delivery.

3. Context

The MPAT theory of change (Figure1) emanating from the MPAT implementation evaluation, asserts that regulatory compliance will improve management practices and ultimately contribute to service delivery.

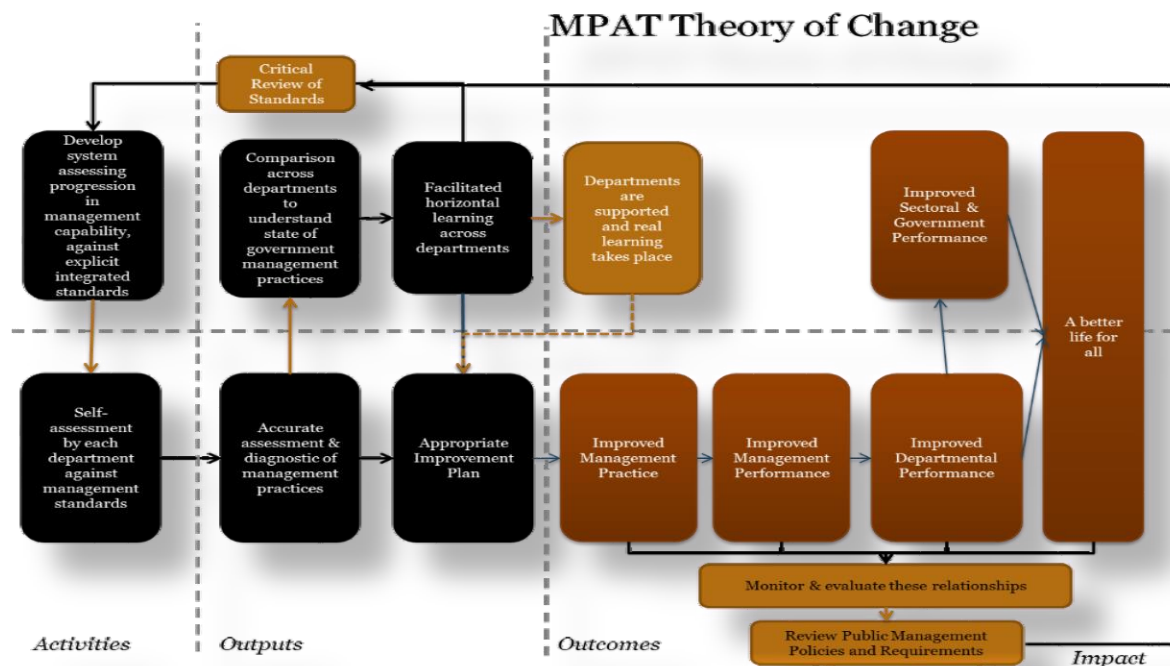


Figure 1: MPAT theory of change

As a part of the theory of change, specifically the element pertaining to “*departments are supported and real learning takes place*”, case studies have been conducted and documented through the years to ascertain the key enablers and preconditions of good management practices. The case studies enables management to learn, improve and deliver services effectively. The 34 good practise case studies that have been developed through the years and the statistical analysis performed as part of the MPAT, highlights and confirm managerial leadership as key in the delivery of services.

It is important to note that whist there are a correlation between delivery against the core mandate of departments and the MPAT scores, that the MPAT scores reflect only the status of management practises within the department. Figure 2 below illustrates

the relationship. Good management practises are seen as an enablers of delivery on the core mandate of departments.

Management Practises Link to Service Delivery

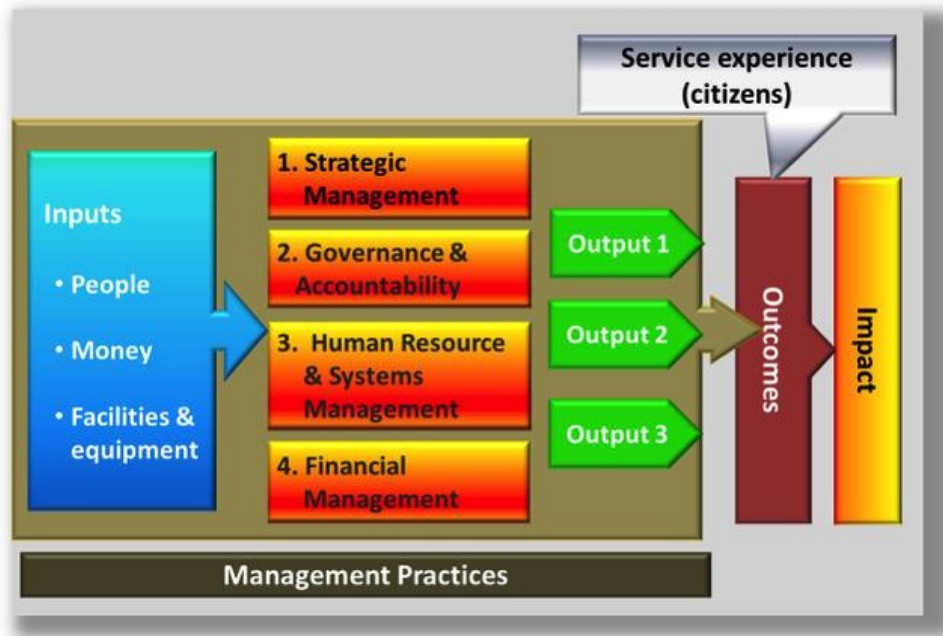


Figure 2: Management practices and service delivery

4. Analysis and results of the MPAT scores

In accordance with the MPAT Analytical framework the MPAT score are analysed using the following 3 dimensions:

- Trends over time i.e. the changes are analysed comparatively over the years across the standards in the four KPAs.
- Comparative analysis across departments (national and provincial), sectors, provinces and RSA by KPAs and Standards
- Triangulation with other data i.e. MPAT scores with PERSAL, Annual Reports (Auditor General (AG) findings) and other data.

The 2015 results suggests that, MPAT has succeeded in facilitating incremental improvements on management practices. Results presented herein have not been correlated with service delivery indicators, however evidence has shown that where there is good management practises then there is good service delivery.

4.1 Analysis by Department and Provinces.

The below figure demonstrate the total Public Service.

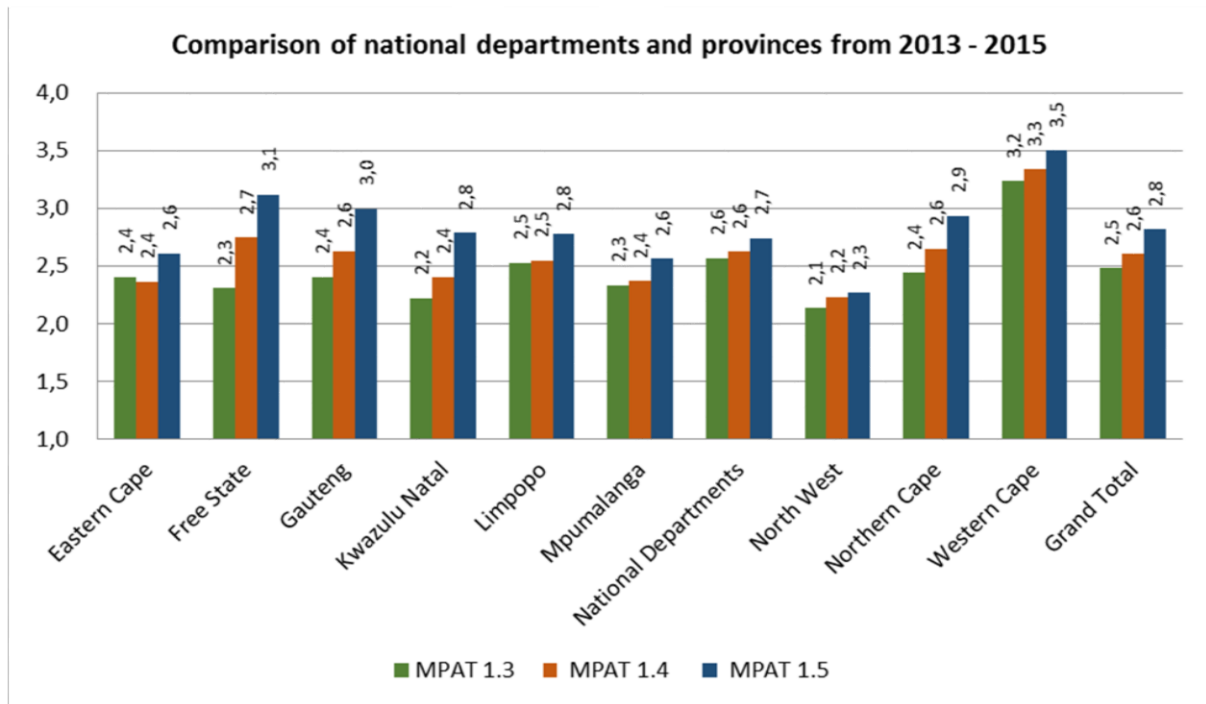


Figure 3: Comparative graph of national departments and provinces from 2013 - 2015

The Western Cape continues to incrementally improve over the year with its baseline of 3.2 in 2013 to 3.5 in MPAT 2015. North West has over the few years been struggling in performance but it worth noting that it is on a positive trajectory. More stability in the number of appointed HOD's is observed within NW province and it is anticipated that this stability will result in improvements of management practises.

The Gauteng province has also shown substantial improvement and their positive AG outcomes for 2015/16 is commendable.

The analysis is further conducted per a National Department as par graph below.

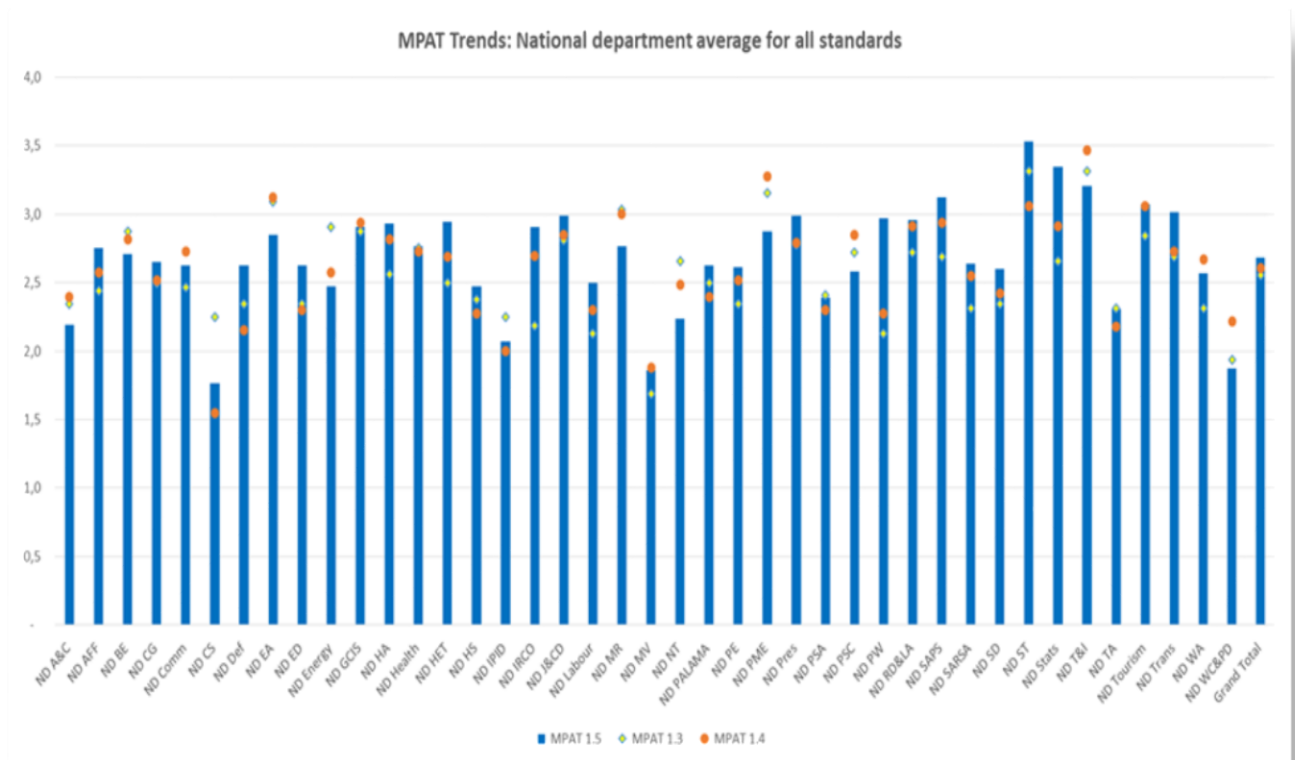


Figure 4: Comparison across national departments

For the National departments, the slow rate of improvements in the Department of Military Veterans is noted. An Inter-Ministerial Team is currently working on a turnaround strategy to improve the performance of the department. In addition to this, the Correctional Service and the former Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities show a dramatic decline in the MPAT scores over the last two MPAT assessment cycles. The detail National Departments Report is attached as Appendix A.

The results show incremental improvement overall, however there are some national departments that shown regression. The said departments include the following:

- Arts and Culture
- Basic Education
- Communication
- Environmental Affairs
- Energy
- Mineral Resources

- National Treasury
- Planning Monitoring and Evaluation
- Public Service Commission
- Trade and Industry
- Women

Departments that continue to be on a progressive trajectory include the following:

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
- Co-operative Governance
- Defence
- Higher Education and Training
- Human Settlements
- International Relations
- Justice and Constitutional Development
- Labour
- National School of Government
- Presidency
- SAPS
- Science and Technology
- Statistics South Africa
- Transport.

It worth commending the departments of Higher Education and SAPS for notable improvements, considering the vastness of these departments in terms of budgets and human resources.

The departments that continue to regress are encouraged to engage with the policy departments that form the centre of government and have a policy supporting role as well as other departments that are performing well thereby facilitating their own improvements and moving forward. The departments that continue to do well are encouraged to remain on this trajectory and guard against complacency.

4.2 Analysis by KPA

Analysis overall per Key Performance Area as seen below is conducted.

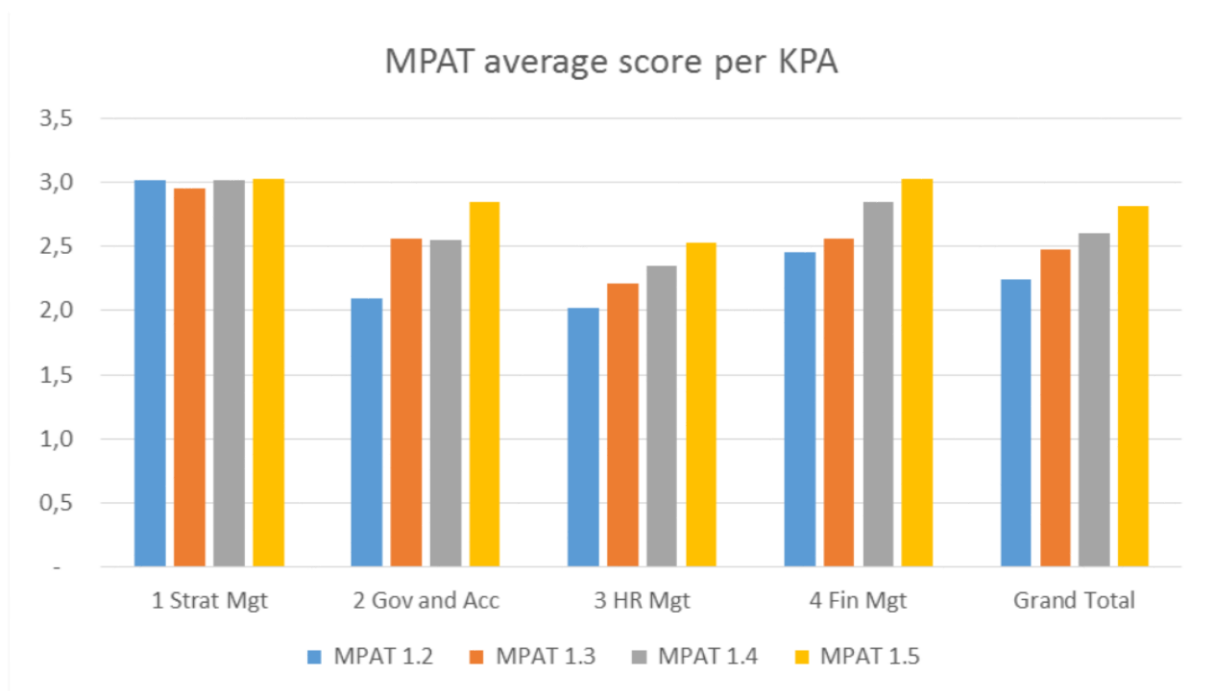


Figure 5: Overall analysis per Key Performance Area

The Strategic Management KPA continues to remain at the compliance level (level 3), however departments struggle to use compliance to work more smartly under this KPA. Governance and Accountability KPA shows notable improvements from the previous outcomes of MPAT. This is indicative that departments are institutionalising internal controls and process. The Human Resource Management KPA also shows improvements year-on-year to (average of 2.5). The Financial Management KPA also shows incremental improvements. The improvements in scores could point to the fact that more and more departments are beginning to aware of the policies and its timelines governing management practises and departments are now cognisance of the need to develop systems and process such as supply chain management, payment of suppliers within 30 days and management of fruitless, unauthorised, irregular and fruitless expenditure amongst others within the KPA.

In terms of the standards, the improvement in the scores of standards have been consistent, however the outcomes of the following standards is below 40 per cent:

- 2.4.2 Fraud Prevention ,

- 2.9.1 PAJA, 3.3.3 PMDS HOD,
- 3.1.1 HRP
- 3.1.2 OD,
- 3.2.4 Diversity,
- 3.2.5 Employee Wellness,
- 3.2.6 Delegations PSA and
- 3.3.2 PMDS SMS,
- 3.4.2 Disciplinary cases,
- 4.2.2 Payment of suppliers within 30 days

MPAT scores are also compared against HR information and the AG's report. In the analysis of the MPAT scores against PERSAL data, there was evidence of a correlation between stability of Top Management and MPAT scores. This was further substantiated and unpacked by the results from the case studies which indicated that managerial leadership is crucial to enable management practices and service delivery.

In the comparison of the MPAT to the AG audit outcomes and the achievement of annual targets the centrality of Human Resources and Financial Management in the achievement of the targets was identified. Figure 6 below provided a schematic view of this argument.

The above mentioned analysis further identified the lack of integration between Strategic Management and HR Management. It has further been observed in the analysis of Strategic, Annual and HR plans that the skills profiles and HR capabilities are not always adequately considered in the strategic and annual planning. The lack of relationship is also depicted in figure 6 below.

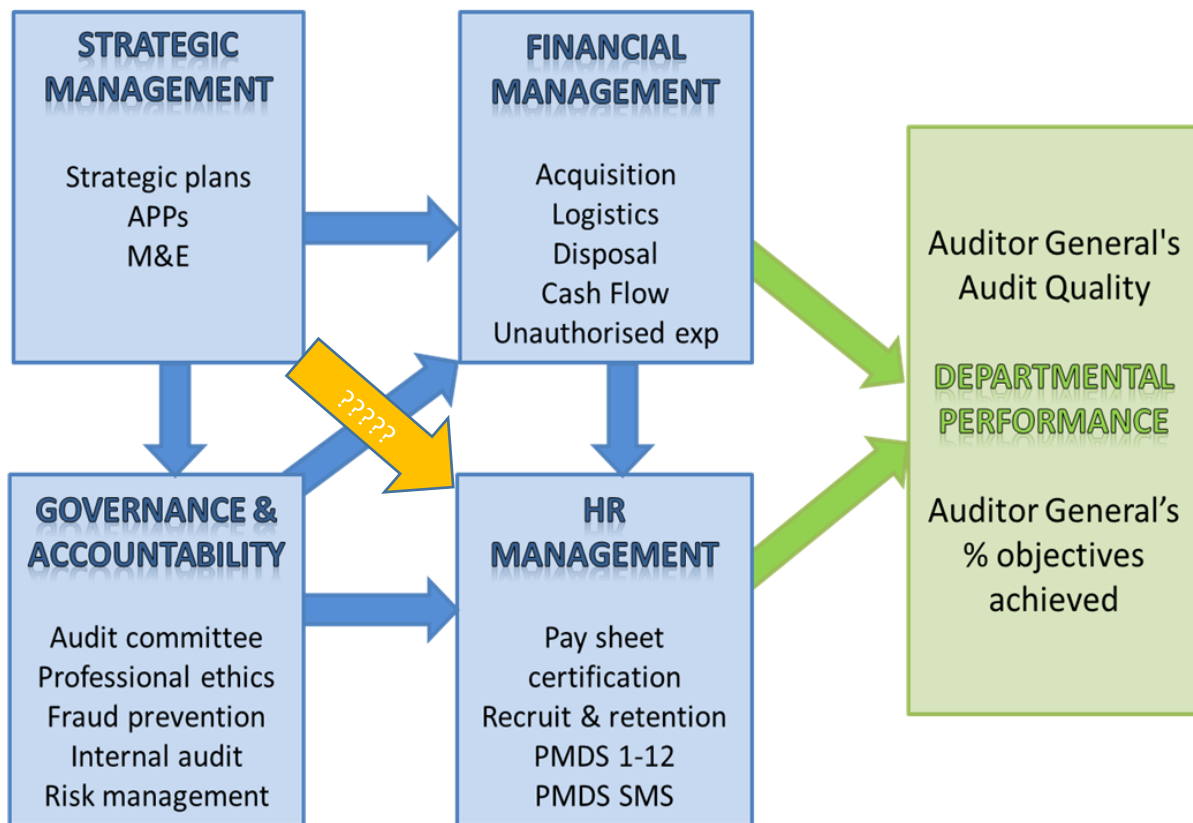


Figure 6: Comparative analysis of KPAs to the achievement of APP targets through the centrality of HR and financial management

5. Consolidated Learnings from MPAT Implementation

As indicated earlier on in this report, case studies were conducted and documented through the identified good practice departments. The main focus of the case studies was to capture the management practices of these departments. The MPAT 1.1 – MPAT 1.3 focused on good management practices within the identified KPAs. During the MPAT 1.4 case studies the focus was on managerial leadership. The MPAT 1.5, integrated all the learning captured over the years in a total of 42 cases captured and other data analysed into a consolidated learning document. The methodology used to conduct the case studies was through a combination of reflection by, and enquiry from various Executive Authorities (EA); leadership as well as lower level staff members of various departments. In addition, a desk-top analysis of departmental policies, templates, documents was further conducted for triangulation purposes. These case studies were shared with departments and further published on the DPME website as another dissemination mechanism.

The learnings from the case studies are organised according to the thematic areas. The thematic areas make up “The six steps to management and leadership”:

- **Lead** with commitment and consideration
- **Build** an accountable and responsive service and work culture
- **Strategise** and operationalise transformation in delivery outcomes
- Allocate and **utilise** human, financial and physical resources
- **Integrate** plans, resources, budgets and performance review systems up, down and across
- **Review** performance, report progress and respond to challenges

This consolidated lessons from MPAT learning also bring to the fore following teachable leadership principals that management in departments must take cognisance off:

- Leadership builds a performance culture and links culture with management performance and delivery.
- Strategy and strategic management enables the process of setting, adapting and operationalizing plans to ensure delivery.
- Integration in terms of the alignment of policy, resource planning and performance review systems, contribute to improved delivery.
- Capacity is enhanced when departmental structures, systems, human and financial resources are utilised appropriately and deployed strategically to ensure delivery.

It is within the context of lessons learnt through MPAT case studies that an observation is being made that it is time to consider support initiatives currently in place and gravitate towards a more integrated approach so as to realise improvements in service delivery and running of government institutions. Consolidated learnings is documented as discussed in the document attached as Appendix B.

6. Support initiatives

DPME, DPSA, NT have in the past five years implemented programs to improve financial, human resource management, service delivery, planning and governance. However these were focussed interventions and did not address managerial leadership practises in Government.

- The DPME introduced the MPAT, Government Performance Information, Performance dialogues, Capacity Development w.r.t monitoring and evaluation. DPME also introduced the National Evaluation System (NES) programme which provide focussed support to the Public Service.
- Additionally, DPME in collaboration with NT has been monitoring the non-payment of suppliers within 30 days. As such, there has been support and interventions to fast track the payment of invoices within the period of 30 days. An analysis project has been initiated within the Health sector to fully understand the root causes for the delays in paying suppliers within 30 days. This probe, is set to provide directions to address the challenges around payment.
- DPME has also initiated budget analysis for prioritisation of programmes working together with National Treasury.
- DPSA and NT also provide support to the Public Service as part of the implementation of the PSA, PFMA and other legislation. The DPSA has developed and are implementing a support strategy based on the MPAT scores and trends identified.
- National Treasury has, amongst other interventions, created the Office of the Chief Procurement Officer. This Office has done substantial amount of capacity development and awareness creation to improve the procurement system of the state. The National Treasury has also played a role in assisting departments to improve their audit outcomes and other aspects of financial management.
- The MPAT scores are also used by the NSG to identify areas which requiring capacity development. The case studies are also provided to the NSG as additional resources for capacity development material.

7. Conclusion

MPAT has been implemented to facilitate reforms in management practises of government departments. MPAT has over the years acknowledged that whilst there are pockets of improvements, these have not reached the desired levels. The lessons learnt from MPAT case studies show that managerial leadership weaknesses still persist in the public service and highlight need a for a holistic approach towards managerial leadership to improve performance in service delivery.

Various programmes that have been implemented by the Centre of Government Departments namely DPSA, NT, NSG, are acknowledge. Pockets of excellence are identified however emphasis is made for the need for integrated support for improvement in managerial leadership.

Leadership in government should play their role to fast track the improvements in management practices as these directly contribute to service delivery.