

# Public Works' **'HRM Team'** on the verge of reaching for the stars

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The Public Service Award of Excellence (PSAE) is a symbol that recognizes employees in the Public Service who have demonstrated excellence in achieving results for a specific period of service delivery and who have reflected the key priorities of the public service, while demonstrating key leadership competencies. It should also be mentioned that this 'Award' is mainly aimed at ensuring that customer services remain at the hearts and minds of the employees who serve the citizens of the country with loyalty, pride and dignity. Through this 'award' Government employees are continuously reminded and encouraged to remain loyal to the course. Encouragement may take various forms and platforms so that employees in turn attain the much needed job enrichment, enlargement and satisfaction.



Above: The HRM Team on the verge of reaching for the stars. At the helm is Mrs BNJ Makhaye: Senior Manager: HRM (*top*) and (*fltr*) Ms C Stuart-William: Deputy Manager: HRD, Mrs L Mtolo: Deputy Manager: EHWP, Mr S Atwaru: Deputy Manager: HRP, Mr QG Mgobhozi: Deputy Manager: HR Utilization, Mrs F Luthuli: Deputy Manager: HR, E & SD and Mr J Nxumalo: Acting Deputy Manager: Labour Relations

For the purposes of our understanding the involvement of the KZN Public Works and its participation at the KwaZulu-Natal Premier's Service Excellence Awards, it is imperative for one to have an understanding as to what role this department has played in this arena, from the beginning until it reached a stage of winning a prestigious award of this magnitude.



Above: Leading the briefing session presentations herself. Ms Thobile Masondo, Assistant Manager: Service Delivery. She is the Public Works' driver behind the "Service Delivery" steering. We will see most of her at these briefing sessions



Above: Head Office management and employees attentive during the briefing session at the Trizon Towers

Since the inception of the KZN Premiers' Service Excellence Awards, the Department of Public Works has made tremendous strides in achieving positive accolades through winning of awards at various levels. It did not come as a surprise for the Public Works to scoop a **Gold Award** during the 2013 Premiers' Service Excellence Awards which were held on Tuesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 2013 at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre (ICC). We need to acknowledge and complement the Public Works' North Coast Regional Team that made all the efforts as they became winners of the prestigious award that day representing the entire KZN Public Works.

New developments feature as changes come to the fore. For the participation at the 2014 Premier's Service Excellence Awards (PSEA), the Department of Public Works will be represented by the Department's Human Resource Management Team or call it the

**'HRM Team'**. The team is led by none other than the Senior Manager: Human Resource Management, Mrs BNJ Makhaye.



Mrs BNJ Makhaye: Preparing for an exclusive audio interview after the briefing session.

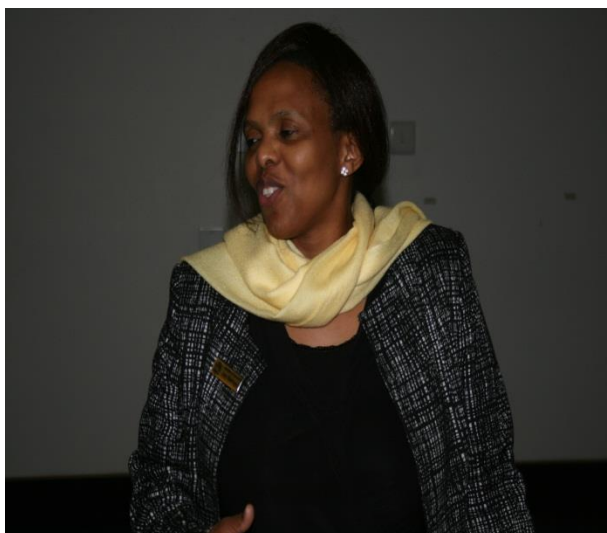
In their quest to reach for the stars, the HRM Team first goes for full shots as it begins with lobbying for **'Provincial road shows'** where briefing session will be conducted. During these sessions, management and employees will be engaged in ensuring that everyone has an understanding on the reason as to **'why?'** and **'who?'** participates during the 2014 PSE Awards as well as **'when'** will the event take place and or **'what'** criteria will be used for participation. To this instance we then zoom in to the mammoth task ahead that is faced by Mrs Makhaye and her industrious team.

The 'HRM Team' launched its first-ever briefing session at the Trizon Towers in Pietermaritzburg on Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013. This session specifically targeted all employees at Head Office. After the briefing session, individual and exclusive interviews were conducted with members of the 'HRH Team'. According to Mrs Makhaye, "as driver of continuous improvement, this is the time to allowing the employees and the entire Department to self-assess their capabilities in relation to customer focused service delivery and also identifying areas and methods for improvement". Mrs Makhaye further postulated that "by allowing individuals and teams within the Department to explore and acquire new skills in the area of customer focus and customer engagement this will assist in building their capacity for delivering improved services." Furthermore, she emphasized that "it is now that time and precious time to allow employees across the entire Department to seek formal accreditation to the Customer Service Excellence standard and that they demonstrate their competence and also identify key areas for improvement and celebrate their success through participating at the 2014 Service Excellence Awards." In a nutshell, Mrs Makhaye summed her message to key important focus areas which are ***'driving for continuous improvement, remain focus on skills development and ensure to own up to achievement.'***





Above: Briefing session underway as officials listen attentively



ABOVE LEFT: Mrs Jean Makhaye as she elaborated on the need for participation at the 2014 Service Excellence Awards and (ABOVE RIGHT): Mrs Makhaye as she briefed the National Adjudicating Team (DPSA) and all guests on the efforts and commitment delivered by Umkhanyakude Sub-District Office with the fullest support obtained from the Head Office HRM Team.

It is quite fathomable that there is absolute need from all employees and management to supplement all the good wishes and efforts as set forth by the **'HRM Team'** with a positive view of achieving the best. Indicatively, Mrs Makhaye's vision and aim on the issue of Service Excellence within Public Works' structures is to bring about professional and high-level clientele or customer service concepts into common currency with every customer service element by offering a unique improvement tool to help employees (as they are daily involved in delivering services) to put their citizens, customers and stakeholders at the core of what they do.

With customer and stakeholder expectations continually growing, the wider Public Works' internal and external publics as well as the communities from all sectors are becoming aware of the value and role that service excellence service or customer care plays in achieving departmental or Government success. Provincial road shows for

briefings to staff are on the cards and as we witness today that the HRM Team means business indeed.

The highly demanding discipline of 'service excellence' is arguably the critical success factor for many Government Departments and well as corporate organisations. For this reason it is important that the service excellence profession has its own provincial and national awards to recognise, promote and reward excellence, professionalism and outstanding achievement to employees who displayed good integrity beyond adversities and against all odds. .



Members of the HRM Team: (left) Mrs Fikile Luthuli and (right) Ms Thobile Masondo listening attentively with Ms Nospiho Sibiya (Team Leader: Umkhanyakude Sub-District Office) who was part of the Public Works' delegates during the adjudication process.

The next day, 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2013, the HRM Team reported at Umkhanyakude Sub-District Office as to participate at the adjudication processes that were undertaken by the '*Adjudicating Team*' from the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) which also arrived on the same day as mentioned at approximately 8:55.

The '*Adjudicating Team*' was represented by Ms MSJ Moletsane, the Deputy Director: Organisational Development: Department of Finance: North West, Mr Mosalanyana Mosala, the Chief Director: Programme Support and Administration and Service Delivery: Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ & CD) as well as Mr Vincent Mabunda, the Director: Service Delivery and Organisational Transformation: Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA).



**Seated: The Adjudicating Team (ltr): Mr Vincent Mabunda, the Director: Service Delivery and Organisational Transformation: Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA); Ms MSJ Moletsane, the Deputy Director: Organisational Development: Department of Finance: North West and Mr Mosalanyana Mosala, the Chief Director: Programme Support and Administration and Service Delivery: Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ & CD)**

It was during this session where Mrs Makhaye articulated and elaborated with that brilliance on the principles of 'service excellence' and her focus were mainly pointed on the following issues:

- ✓ The principles that should be adopted by the Department of Public Works Excellence Standards and be widely accepted by many quality management frameworks;
- ✓ The principles should form the basis of 'culture within the department', standards, assessment, developmental approach and examples of evidence;
- ✓ The principles should be customer focused – Reflecting our respect and understanding of our consumer's rights to dignity, confidentiality, information, effective communication and choice;
- ✓ The principles should conform to 'customer satisfaction' with services that are measured and complaints and concerns being adequately addressed;
- ✓ Principles should be appropriate, safe and efficient services are provided ensuring a continuum of care;
- ✓ The principles should be clear direction with accountability – there should be inspirational leadership with a strong governance structure. Desired outcomes are identified in providing the best possible services and their achievement measured;
- ✓ The principles should entail continuous learning and innovation – Establishing quality systems and ensuring there are mechanisms that integrate continuous improvement which can also add value for the Department.





Above: Mrs Makhaye during the briefing session. Sharing of valuable ideas was the order of the day

Service Excellence has more to do with:

- ✓ Valuing people and diversity, i.e. tapping into people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels of the Department which should be essential. Furthermore, it provides a supportive flexible environment which would seek to allow for employees to reach their projected and anticipated potential whether it is employees, stakeholders and partners or management;
- ✓ The existence of collaborative work practices – which reflect the understanding that strengthening and developing of healthy relationships within employees, the public, partners and other key stakeholders will at the end provide many advantages in loyalty and pride within the Department.
- ✓ Incultation of customer satisfaction which must assist to building a culture of innovation and trust amongst employees and the public;
- ✓ Evidenced based decision making – which presents clear rationale, management of risks, analysis of the data and evaluation reports will assist to improve planning processes and services provided; and
- ✓ Creation or development of a social, environmental and ethical responsibility – which talks to responding to the expectations of the community or clientele and adding value to that community or clientele.

As we sum up the discussion, it is evident that the HRM team requires that support it deserves in order for the team to face all anticipated challenges with agility and confidence. We are all aware that the HRM Team is a product of the human relations movement of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century which continue to seeking ways of creating business value through the strategic management of the workforce. The *HRM Team* will as of today and beyond focus on strategic initiatives like talent management, succession planning, labor relations, and diversity which leads to effective service delivery.