

SECTION 4

FILLING OF POSTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In earlier sections of the report reference was made to the possible lack of capacity in provincial departments of education. This section of the report focuses on the filling of posts in provincial departments of education. Provincial departments of education were requested to give information on the filling of vacancies according to the following headings

Head Office

- Management echelon
- Middle management

District level

- District management
- Professional staff

Principals' posts at school level

The information obtained from the reports from Members of the Executive Council is summarized below.

4.2 HEAD OFFICE

The information received from provincial education departments regarding the filling of posts at each respective Head Office is summarized in the Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Filling of vacancies at Provincial Head Offices of the Departments of Education

Province	Total approved	Total filled	Total vacant	% Filled	%vacancies	Comments
Eastern Cape	177	57	57			
Free State	26 PS 87 CS	19 6	7 81	73% 7%	27%	Number of vacancies reported is 80
Gauteng	Not stated	Not stated	797			
KwaZulu-Natal	Not stated	Not stated				
Mpumalanga	398 PS 101 CS	173 PS 69 CS	225 PS 32 CS	43% 68%	57% 32%	All management echelon posts are filled. Vacancies occur in the other PS posts
Northern Cape	Not stated	Not stated	18 PS 25 CS	-	-	
Limpopo	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	-	-	
North West	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	-	-	
Western Cape	827 PS 119 CS	604 PS 81 CS	223 38	73% 68%	27% 32%	

PS refers to Public Service posts and CS refers to College/School posts

Only three provinces supplied information that disaggregated information into different categories. It is very difficult to assess the capacity in different categories at Head Office level owing to lack of information and the manner of presentation. From the reports only Free State and Mpumalanga have given precise information regarding the management echelon. In the Free State there are ten management posts and all are filled. In Mpumalanga there are 16 management posts and only eight are filled. The province is therefore operating with only 50% of its management echelon. The Western Cape did not disaggregate the posts at Head Office according to post level.

A critical post in any organization is that of its Chief Executive Officer. In the case of the provincial education departments, this would be the position of the Head of Education. At the time of writing the positions of Head of Education in the Eastern Cape and Western Cape are still vacant. In the case of the Eastern Cape the situation is of grave concern since this high level posts has been vacant now for over one year. In the Eastern Cape the Head of Education resigned in January 2001. In KwaZulu-Natal the Head of Education retired in March 2001 and the post has only been recently filled during the month of April, a year later. There is absolutely no doubt that both provincial

managements have suffered as a result of lack of leadership.

4.3 REGIONAL /DISTRICT LEVEL

Table 4.2: Filling of vacancies at Regional / District Offices of the Departments of Education

Province	Total approved	Total filled	Total vacant	% Filled	%Vacancies	Comments
Eastern Cape	24	22	2			The number reported refers to District Managers only
Free State	17 PS 233 CS	5 48	12 185	29% 21%	71% 79%	
Gauteng	1205 CS 2240 PS	839 1796	353 444	70% 80%	29% 20%	The report only states that these are office-based staff but does not indicate their location
KwaZulu-Natal	Not stated	103	-	-	-	The report stated only CS posts filled at regional level
Mpumalanga	1119 PS 465CS	672 PS 271 CS	447 194	60% 58%	40% 42%	The numbers include regional and circuit offices
Northern Cape	Not stated	Not stated	68	-	-	The number includes both PS and CS staff in four districts
Limpopo	Not reported	Not reported	-	-	-	
North West	Not reported	Not reported	-	-	-	
Western Cape	265 PS 555 CS	113 PS 289 CS	152 266	42% 52%	58% 48%	The numbers do not differentiate between the post levels

PS refers to Public Service posts and CS refers to College/School posts

The Eastern Cape restructured the district level and reduced its number of districts from 41 to 24. The numbers reported refer to the filling of District Managers' posts only. No indication was given of other staff except to say that posts below this level would be filled through the migration process as staffs is redeployed between the 24 districts.

Of the provincial departments that provided clear information it can be deduced that at district level the Free State is operating at less than 30% of its capacity, Gauteng at probably more than 70% capacity and Mpumalanga at approximately 60% capacity. The Western Cape appears from the table to be operating at approximately 50%. The report from the MEC, however, states that the identification of the posts as being vacant means that the posts are not appropriately filled in a permanent capacity. Most of the posts are

reserved for staff that may be declared in excess. The posts identified as vacant are filled on a temporary or contract basis where that is warranted. It seems therefore, that the department is actually operating at a level, which is higher than is indicated by the table.

4.4 FILLING OF PRINCIPALS' POSTS AT SCHOOL LEVEL

The reports from the provincial departments did not make any considered efforts in responding to the question. Table 4.3 summarises the information supplied.

Table 4.3: Filling of Principals' posts at school level in the Departments of Education

Province	Total approved	Total filled	Total vacant	% Filled	%Vacancies	Comments
Eastern Cape	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	95%	5%	
Free State	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	-	-	
Gauteng	1995	1884	111	94%	6%-	Majority of posts filled in 2001. Trend suggests attrition rate of 5 to 6%
KwaZulu-Natal	Not stated	1176	Not stated	-	-	
Mpumalanga	1873	1710	163	91%	9%	Department is currently finalizing the recommendations made by SGBs
Northern Cape	Not stated	Not stated	27	-	-	
Limpopo	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported			
North West	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	-	-	
Western Cape	Not stated	Not stated	54	-	-	

No conclusions could be made from the information reported. It is only in the case of the Eastern Cape that a further comment could be made. The Department of Education monitored the vacancy rate in the Eastern Cape from data contained in the PERSAL that was also confirmed by the Provincial Department of Education.

CONCLUSION

From the data presented above the following conclusions can be made, namely, that:

- Provincial departments of education did not report adequately to give a sense of the filling of posts at the head office and school level.
- Reporting on the filling of vacancies at district level was much better although there is still room for improvement.
- A matter of concern at district level is that there does not appear to be adequate human resource capacity to support schools. This is particularly so in view of the initiatives (phasing in the new curriculum, whole school evaluation, and many other policies that were intended to have an impact at school-level).

Increased effort on the part of the Department of Education will be required to assist the provinces to plan adequately for their human resource needs and capacity.