

REFORMING OF PUBLIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

Johan van der Westhuizen
Department of Public Administration
Unisa

INTRODUCTION

Profound changes have taken place since 1994 which will impact significantly on the future of human resource management systems in the South African Police Service. The overarching significance of these changes was, of course, its importance in extending basic services to the disadvantaged, a police service more representative of the people it serves, and more accountability to the electorate (Policy Statement on the Establishment of a Senior Management Service in the Public Service 20 December 2000: 1). Today one can really look back at a police service that has made numerous transformational strides. The past decade has seen new look police human resource management systems within most of the structures as a result of changing management policies and techniques. There is an old saying "... if you carry on doing things the way you've always done them, you will get the results you have always had" (SPA Publications 1998: 4). Surely, police human resource managers are doing things differently today. By making use of these new practices they strive to remain efficient and effective in the delivery of services (cf. The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (*Batho Pele*) of 1997).

Worldwide institutions have entered a new era referred to as the so-called "knowledge economy." The police service has not been excluded from this development. When knowledge becomes an important police service resource, workers become more valuable as the instruments of service delivery reside in people. This changing development is also referred to as the "mentofactoring" era (Makoane 2001: 18). In this era, general managers, functional managers and human resource managers act as strategic partners within the police service with the overall aim to improving service

delivery. Linking human resource strategy and operational strategy has become a new major preoccupation for the police service. In the new police service environment, which is guided by the Public Service Management Framework (hereafter referred to as the new management framework), state departments (such as the South African Police Service) and provincial administrations will be able to change the way they work. It endures the South African Police Service with the powers to develop its own policies, while taking into consideration the requirements of set policy guidelines and collective agreements of the Public Service Bargaining Council. The new management framework is about changing the way the police service works in order to provide better services to the public, both within and outside. It involves a radical change. The focus is now on the efficient and effective delivering of services as opposed to the preoccupation with rules and regulations that the police service was so well known for in the previous dispensation. In practice, the new management framework is a new management tool which will enable police managers on all levels (junior, middle and senior management level) of the police service to make appropriate decisions about how they manage their affairs (Baseline Implementation Guide 1999: 5).

Against the background of the new management framework, this article examines new practices in the field of human resource management and how it relates to the South African Police Service. The overall purpose of the article - and one that will occupy the mind of the reader - is reflected in the following question: "What kind of human resource management systems are the Government trying to put in place?" In this regard, the article flags a number of issues that sit at the heart of the future direction that changes [reforms] in police human resource management may take. The aforementioned question is

broken down into the following categories: Scope for police human resource management systems; evolving changes of human resource management systems; and new experiments with police human resource management systems. In general, the article is descriptive and offers a minor analyses of public human resource management systems. The author is not seeking comprehensive theoretical explanations for reforming the human resource management systems in the South African Police Service. It rather focuses on contemporary developments and how these unfold in practice. The author is certainly not offering any critique on the changes.

SCOPE OF POLICE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Many police officers do their jobs within a vacuum without adequate information and without knowledge of the bigger picture with regards to what the public service is all about. In order to understand the relevance of human resource management in the broader context of the public service it is necessary to demarcate the focus area for application. Needless to say that to arrive at a proper demarcation of the activities of the public service is problematic. People show different reactions and emotions with the use of the term 'public service'. Quite a variety of names have been bestowed on the public service, for example: public sector, public service sector, state sector and public administration. Similarly, different names have been given to the persons concerned with the public service. Persons who are specifically tasked with the responsibility of public duties have been referred to as public servants, public officials and even bureaucrats. From these designations one can see that it is difficult to explain the meaning of the concept of public service. What does 'public service' therefore mean for the purposes of this article?

The word 'public' as used in the term public service is rather difficult to explain because the public service covers such a wide area of activities, services, procedures and people. If an effort is made to map the boundaries of

the public service, the easiest way would be to identify the different types of public service institutions within which public services are provided (Van der Westhuizen 2000: 8). These include institutions such as state departments, administrations and departments on provincial level and statutory agencies. Which parts then are not included in the public service? The concept 'public service' excludes local governments, as well as a host of statutory bodies, parastatals, quasi-government institutions, and the like. There has occasionally been a recognition that these type of institutions, together with the public service, constitute the public sector (Public Service Review Report for the Year 1999/2000: 2). It is useful to sub-divide the public service into the different agencies it is made up of. Adler (2000: 5-8) views these agencies as:

- service delivery agencies, such as the Department of Health;
- security agencies, for example, the South African Police Service;
- administrative agencies, which refer to institutions such as the Department of Public Service and Administration; and
- statutory agencies, which include the Public Service Commission and the Auditor-General.

Although this section represents an early, and somewhat incomplete, demarcation of the concept of public service it serves as a starting point for the purposes of this article. The public service concept was adopted to support a holistic approach to the description of public human resource management systems and the application thereof. The reader would now have a notion of the diversity of work in the public service and where the police services fit in. Indeed, this diversity will provide a theme that ties together many aspects of public service work, including police work in the human resource management field. Throughout the sections to come, the primary emphasis will be on human resource management systems in the public service. But human resource systems never stand alone. Without some degree of

reflection, human resource systems are unguided. For this reason, the purpose here will be to introduce the theme in the public service in general. The author will then outline human resource systems in more specific terms and how it features in the South African Police Service. This implies that regardless of the level at which reform in the relevant human resource management system occurs, it should apply to virtually the entire public service, including the South African Police Service.

EVOLVING CHANGES OF POLICE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Public human resource management systems in its fullest variety are determined by the nature of the political and cultural environment in which the relevant public institution operates. Therefore, the South African Police Service human resource management systems may differ from those of corresponding institutions in other countries (Uys, van der Westhuizen, Nealer, Smith, Clapper, Rowland & Theunissen 1997: 166). To this end, different human resource management systems have been embarked upon in different countries. Because public human resource management in South Africa is based on the principles of a constitutional democracy, it is expected that the human resource management systems are likely to be influenced by the democratic concerns as reflected in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996. It is necessary to have a brief look at the evolution of human resource management systems in order to learn as much as possible about what 'good' police human resource management constitutes. The following paragraphs provide an overview of where the human resource management systems came from [early developments] to where it stands today [modern developments].

Early developments

There are a variety of different ways to present information on the early developments of the human resource management systems. The human resource

management systems discussed below are broadly classified in historical sequence.

Personal service system

The first identifiable human resource management system was developed during the time of the medieval feudal lords and was referred to as the *personal service system*. At the time, all officials were appointed by and were responsible to a king or any other kind of ruler. One feature of this system was the fact that staff were supposed to serve a king or another kind of ruler (person) and not an institution or the public (Megginson 1967 in Uys et.al 1997: 168). The personal service system did not survive the evolutionary democratic developments in the political arena. Government activities expanded during these times which made it practically impossible for one ruler to adhere to all public service functions. Eventually the ruler's functions were delegated to councils and some court officials were assigned to these institutions to perform certain public service tasks. Vestiges of the personal service system is still found in the public service today. For example, the private secretaries of ministers (including the police service) are usually exempt from employment legislation governing other public servants.

Spoils system

During the 1800s royal sovereignty [the king] was replaced by parliamentary government. This implies that the right of appointment and dismissal gradually shifted from the king or ruler to the political representatives or ministers (Uys et.al 1997: 169). Political representatives began to recognise that public servants needed to be loyal to the government of the day (in other words, the successful political party in power). In addition, they were of the opinion that public offices (jobs and salaries) could be rewards to the party faithful. The notion developed that "to the victor belongs the spoils" - the ability to give public service jobs to those who support the party. Although applied extensively in public services

throughout the world, the *spoils system* lacked stability, boosted corruption and abuse, and could not survive the growth of government functions and expansion of public service institutions (Denhardt 1995: 189-199). Because senior police officers play such an increasingly important role in policy determination and policy implementation, spoils practices and political manipulation of the police work force continue in contemporary police human resource management.

Commodity system

Another human resource system that evolved during the early times was the *commodity system*. The commodity system reached a peak during the Industrial Revolution. Although to a limited extent, the principles of the commodity system was also applied in the public service. The commodity system contained provisions whereby a worker freely sold his or her skills, and in doing this, pursued a career. Under this system labour was considered a commodity that was contractually purchased and sold at a certain negotiable price (Uys et al 1997: 171-172). Although the commodity system has never been used widely in the public service the use of consultants in the police service is a modern manifestation of this system.

There are numerous other human resource management systems mentioned in the literature which relates to the early era. Examples of these include the election, autocratic and political skill systems (cf. Stahl 1971 and Pfiffner & Presthus 1967 in Uys et al 1997: 174). However, the author is of the opinion it is not worth elaborating on these systems because it is purely of historical significance and is not applicable to present-day human resource management in the police service.

Modern developments

It soon became evident that the above human resource management systems, developed in early times, had flaws in the practical application thereof. The quality of

the public service in general declined in these periods. Abuse was rife and corruption was becoming a normal way of executing public service work. Many questions have been raised about the politicisation of the public service. It was soon acknowledged that there was a rising sentiment for reforming human resource management systems in the public service. This acknowledgement provided the basis for modern developments.

Merit system

The Pendleton Act and the Civil Service Reform Act promulgated during the sixties and seventies in the United States of America, provided the basis for the merit system. Basically the merit system rested on the following principles: (a) that the selection of subordinate public service officials should be based on merit - the ability to perform competently rather than any form of political favoritism; and (b) that those public servants hired should have tenure regardless of political changes (Denhardt 1995: 201).

In the South African public service the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service (which is also applicable to the South African Police Service), was proposed to restore the merit principle to a previous human resource management system (the apartheid system) that was ineffective, discriminatory and inefficient. To this end, the Government has embarked upon a comprehensive and changing human resource management culture with new policies. These consist of increased competition for positions, a career service, selection on merit (with the reservation of employment equity and affirmative action), recruitment from all sections of the population and promotion on the basis of competition (cf. White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service of 1997). The White Paper's confirmation of the principle of merit, its effort to put in place a new public human resource management culture and its attempt to produce greater equity have been significant. However, it remains to be seen whether there will be support for merit principles in the long run.

New public personnel administration and management systems

There have been radical changes in the human resource management systems of the public service since 1960. Some authors even refer to this phase as “new public personnel administration and management.” In short, factors contributing to the changes of new human resource management policies during this era are: (a) the rapid spread of collective bargaining; (b) constitutional, legislative, judicial and administrative policy requirements for equal job opportunities and affirmative action programmes, sexual harassment, contemporary health care dilemmas and greater management flexibility (Hays & Kearney 1995: 297-300; Uys et al 1997: 177).

What type of human resource management systems have evolved from the “new public personnel administration and management” phase? The first is the *collective bargaining system*. The collective bargaining system, though widely varied in its application among public services, generally means negotiation between representatives of the employer (the public service) and representatives of the union on issues of employment. The main purpose of the bargaining process is to reach decisions bilaterally rather than unilaterally. In reality, it is supposed to boil down to a partnership between management and the unions for the sake of improved public human resource management (Uys et al 1997: 178). Although the first Public Service Association in the South African public service already came into being in 1920, shortly after the then Public Service Act provided for the recognition of staff associations, it has only been during the past ten years that the collective bargaining system has flourished (Adler 2000: 95). It was 60 years later (in the 1980s), however, before public servants gained limited representational rights. What was evident of unionism during the 1980s is that it has been shaped by discrimination and differentiation. By the 1990s, with the advent of democratisation, the public service was brought under the ambit of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995.

One of the most striking features of unionism in the South African public service has been the rapid growth in union members since the 1990s. In the early 1980s the Public Service Association comprised 80 000 members. Today there are nearly 20 unions representing 980 000 employees. Basically, there are two associations operating in the South African Police Service, namely, the South African African Police Union (SAPU - which is regarded as a trade union with 58 801 members) and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU - which is a staff association with 57 402 members, representing mainly black police officers) (Adler 2000: 109). Over the years, collective agreements were conducted within specific institutionalised bargaining councils in the public service. At central level a bargaining body exists for the public service in the form of the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC). Recently, the Safety and Security Sectoral Bargaining Council (SSSBC), a new bargaining body, has been established in terms of agreements by the trade unions and the South African Police Service management. One of the objectives of this bargaining body is to look after collective bargaining in the safety and security sector (Reynecke & Fourie 2001: 189).

Public human resource management systems in the new public personnel administration and management era were certainly not limited to the collective bargaining system. A second system, the *equal employment opportunity and affirmative action system*, is probably one of the most prominent modern systems that was introduced into the public service. Byars and Rue (1997: 26) provides the following definition of equal employment opportunity: “The right of all persons to work and to advance on the basis of merit, ability, and potential.” Basically, this means a ban on discrimination in employment on the basis of among others race, gender, colour, religion, nationality and disability (Uys et al 1997: 179). Affirmative action is regarded as a more active approach and is defined as follows: “The additional corrective steps which must be taken in order that those who have been historically disadvantaged by unfair discrimination are

able to derive full benefit from an equitable employment environment.” (cf. The White Paper on Affirmative in the Public Service of 1998).

In moving towards a representative public service the Government has put into place a comprehensive policy framework within which national departments and provincial administrations could develop their own structures and mechanisms for equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. The policy that is reflected here should be understood within the guidelines of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996. Representativeness is firmly established in Chapter 10 of the 1996 Constitution. Similarly, a multitude of other equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policy mechanisms were created: (1) the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service of 1995 that devotes a whole chapter to representativeness and affirmative action (where targets and time-frames are spelled out); (2) the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service of 1997, which values diversity management as highly important, (3) and the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998. More specifically, the White Papers provided specific targets to the South African Police Service in terms of race, gender and disability for achievement by the end of 1999. It was also expected that within four years from 1995 the South African Police Service must endeavour to employ at least 50 percent black personnel at management level. The requirements in respect of women for the same period are that at least 30 percent of new recruits to the middle and senior management echelons should be women. Another representativeness concern was that within ten years, people with disabilities were to comprise at least 2 percent of police personnel.

In the light of the targets set in the abovementioned White Papers the Public Service Commission reported on a project with regard to the evaluation of affirmative action targets in July 2000. The Public Service Commission is a constitutionally mandated central personnel agency responsible for investigating,

monitoring and evaluating the organisation, administration and personnel practices of the public service (A Report on the State of the Public Service November 2000: 3-4). One aspect of representativeness that has received substantial attention in the Public Service Commission’s report is the monitoring of targets in the South African Police Service. The following typical observations were made: Out of the total workforce of 124 967: [a] 62 852 officials are black males and 9 625 are black females; [b] 8 117 officials are coloured males, 2 283 are coloured females and there is one coloured disabled person; [c] 3 594 officials are Indian males, 960 are Indian females and there is one Indian disabled person; and [d] 24 466 officials are white males, 13 060 are white females while there are eight white disabled persons (Report on the State of Representativeness in the Public Service July 2000: 16).

Another new public personnel administration and management system is the *client-oriented system*. Many public service institutions traditionally focused their attention on the activities executed within the institution rather than its external clients. Emphasis was placed on bureaucratic conformity and improved service delivery was not targeted. More recently, the emphasis has shifted to quality service delivery. Moreover, fundamental reasons were identified for this tendency: [1] the community (citizenry/clients) had rising and more complex expectations of public services; [2] demands on government for improved services gained public attention; and [3] devolved management authority allowed more discretion in meeting the needs of the community. The rise of the client-oriented system forced governments to become more client-focused. In this regard, the South African Government has developed a new strategy on public service delivery. This new strategy has been adopted with the emphasis on a guiding principle of the public service that will be of ‘service’ to the citizens. Eight principles for transforming public service delivery - the *Batho Pele* principles - have been identified and formulated in the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery of 1997. These

principles are expressed in broad terms in order to enable the South African Police Service to apply it in accordance with their own needs and circumstances. The *Batho Pele* principles are: [1] consulting users of services about the level and quality of services; [2] setting the level and quality of service standards; [3] increasing equal access to services; [4] ensuring courtesy and consideration to all citizens about service delivery; [5] providing full and accurate information on services; [6] increasing openness and transparency on the costs and representatives of service delivery; [7] remedying mistakes and failures in service delivery by means of apologies and explanations; and [8] providing the best possible value-for-money services (cf. The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (*Batho Pele*) of 1997)..

Within the ambit of the above White Paper the South African Police Service developed a strategy to improve service delivery to communities at local level. The strategic method followed was called the 'Service Delivery Improvement Programme'. The Service Delivery Improvement Programme is a management technique which has thus far been put into operation at 700 of the 1 400 police stations in the country. With the above *Batho Pele* principles in mind, what has the South African Police Service done to ascertain whether it is on the right track? A survey by the Public Service Commission, which was undertaken from October 1999 to February 2000, has found that there is, in general, a lack of practical skills in the police service to apply the *Batho Pele* principles. In summary, the South African Police Service complies with five of the eight principles. Evidence was found that the South African Police Service is serious in its attempts (especially through consultation with the Community Policing Forums) to gain the confidence and cooperation of the various communities they serve. Although service standards are set for the citizens they are not made public at service delivery points. In addition, surveys are also undertaken by external institutions to determine the degree of public satisfaction. One example of such a survey is 'Project Protect'. One of the findings in this survey, for example, was that 64% of adults felt very or

fairly safe in their neighbourhood at night (Survey of Compliance with the *Batho Pele* Policy August 2000: 32-34).

Measured against the access yardstick it was found that although the South African Police Service has implemented plans to remove resources to high priority areas, police stations are still distributed unequally across communities. In some instances it is almost impossible for citizens to obtain services from police stations due to mountains, the absence of roads and telephones. Although nothing about courtesy has been displayed at police stations a survey suggests a number of ways in which courtesy is planned for. For example, the courtesy programme will provide for trauma rooms for victims of crime. The South African Police Service regularly provides information to the citizens by means of pamphlets, posters, visits, use of local newspapers and radio stations, help lines and community police officers. An interesting issue that cuts across the field of the Service Delivery Improvement Programme is that the South African Police Service is open and transparent. At some police stations an information directory of all police officials is displayed in full view of the public. In addition, Service Delivery Improvement Programme statistics are as a rule displayed and any member of the public has access to it. With the establishment of the redress principle positive results are also visible. The South African Police Service has a standing procedure which prescribes how complaints should be handled. Based on the findings of the Public Service Commission survey, community police officers are appointed at every police station to attend to the concerns of citizens. There have been several efforts to provide value-for-money police services. In general, the South African Police Service makes use of partnerships with its social stakeholders (for example, reservists and members of the community police forums) to strengthen the police. By doing this, access to resources is increased in order to provide services more efficiently and effectively (Survey of Compliance with the *Batho Pele* Policy August 2000: 27-40). In contrast to the client-oriented system career public officials and others

find another interpretation of the new public personnel administration and management phase, namely the *managerialist system*. The managerialist system has many names: 'managerialism,' 'new public management,' 'market-based public administration,' 'the post-bureaucratic paradigm,' and 'entrepreneurial government.' (Hughes 1998: 52). Hoods (1991), in Hughes (1998: 61-62), considers the managerialist system as comprising the following main points: [1] hands-on professional management in the public service; [2] explicit standards and measures of performance; [3] greater emphasis on output controls; [4] a shift to disaggregation of units in the public service; [5] greater competition; [6] more stress on private sector styles of management and practice; and [7] greater discipline and parsimony in resource use. The concept of managerialism soon developed a firm basis in the United States of America under the colours of the senior executive services. Closely related to the senior executive services is the senior management service for the South African Public Service. Obviously, the South African Police Service is also responsible for the implementation of the senior management service. One of the key principles of the senior management service is to 'professionalise' the senior management echelon of the public service (Senior Management Service 21 December 2001: 1). In addition, the focus is on strengthening management capacity so that government departments can convert policy efficiently into practice and utilise the resources allocated to them effectively (Policy Statement on the Establishment of a Senior Management Service in the Public Service 20 December 2000: 1). The principles of the senior management service is applicable to the National Commissioner of the South African Police Service and all the other senior managers in the force. This would include 549 senior police managers (Report on the Verification of Qualifications of Senior Managers in the Public Service August 2001: 11). More specifically, the senior management service shall consist of employees who immediately before 1 January 2001 were remunerated at a salary of grade 13 and higher. Finally, the Public Service Act 103 of 1994, the Public Service Regulations of

2001 (promulgated under section 41 of the Public Service Act 103 of 1994), the Handbook for the Senior Management Service and other directives issued by the Ministers of the Public Service and Administration and the South African Police Service constitute the overall framework for the senior management service.

Perhaps the most recent new development during the new public personnel administration and management phase is the *management flexibility system*. This system emphasises the need of political executives and senior management to control the human resource function. Supporters of this model believe that central personnel agencies (such as the Department of Public Service and Administration) and the personnel offices in the line departments should eliminate the multiplicity of unnecessary control measures over line functionaries in human resource management affairs (Uys et al 1997: 183). One of the most heralded initiatives in public human resource management in recent years, which is related to the principles of the management flexibility system, is the Public Service Management Framework. The new management framework is also applicable to the South African Police Service. It assists the police service in becoming more customer-centred. The prime emphasis is to devolve and decentralise powers to executing authorities in the police service. It is embodied in the Public Service Regulations of 2001 and serves as a management tool by setting minimum requirements for police managers in realising management objectives. Upon reflection, the following requirements are set for the new management framework: [1] upholding of constitutional guidelines; [2] shifting from a rule-bound culture to a results-orientated culture; [3] developing of a performance-orientated culture; [4] planning for better results; [5] formulating of policies that consider departmental needs; [6] managing compensation with discretion; and [7] continuous developing and reviewing of administrative procedures and management practices (Baseline Implementation Guide 1999: 9-11).

It is clear from the above statements that public human

resource management systems have evolved in response to a variety of competing demands. Much of the earliest developments was directed toward centralisation of public service activities. More recent efforts have sought greater decentralisation with a view to assuring greater responsiveness and the transformation of service delivery. When one looks at the leading efforts of reforming public human resource management systems it is apparent that the public service attempted to maximise differing values at different times. However, the basic dilemma is still one of balancing the conflict between the values of democracy and that of bureaucracy. Normally, democracy requires values such as plurality, diversity, equal access, liberty, freedom, openness and participation. In contrast, bureaucracy demands unity, hierarchy, command, control and long tenure (Hays & Kearney 1995: 291-292). As public services try different human resource management systems they attempt to strike a balance between these two sets of values. Obviously, the two sets of values do not work together well. Examination of some of the newest efforts in reforming human resource management systems should demonstrate a number of these inherent conflicts.

NEW EXPERIMENTS WITH POLICE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Over the last decade the public service registered significant progress regarding transformation. Adler (2000: 14) even describes the improvements that have been made as 'remarkable'. These improvements include, amongst others: (i) the creation of a unified public service; (ii) a new policy and legislative framework; (iii) improved budgeting and financial management; (iv) ongoing institutional building; (v) more effective deployment of human resources; (vi) capacity building; and (vii) decentralised management (Annual Report of the Department of Public Service and Administration for the Year 1999/2000: 6). Police managers are currently still in the process of addressing these challenges which have been brought about by the White Paper on Public Service Transformation that was adopted by the Government in

1995. The priorities for the police service, as articulated in the above White Paper, is to create a strategic framework for change (White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service 1995: 13). Two interconnected but distinct phases of reform can be identified in the above White Paper. First, there are the so-called first-generation changes which were marked by the rationalisation and integration of previous administrations between 1992 and 1996. The second phase is highlighted by the second generation changes where attempts have been made to transform the police service as a whole (Public Service Review Report for the Year 1999/2000: 58).

The experiments contained within the second phase are bound to be problematic and never-ending, especially when the broader global field is also taken into consideration. It has become a trend in the international public service world to: (i) cooperate and compete in new ways; (ii) optimise the allocation of public resources; (iii) respond to the ever-increasing expectations of the citizens; (iv) and globalisation (Hughes 1998: 8; O' Faircheallaigh, Wanna & Weller 1999 3). Although one needs to be learning from experiences globally the contextual demands and requirements must inform the direction. Against this background there are numerous new challenges facing police human resource management. What then, specifically, are these contextual challenges?

Upholding of Constitutional guidelines

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996 (hereafter referred to as the New Constitution), which has supreme power over all living in South Africa, thus also governs the operationalising of all police service objectives. In essence, this means that the New Constitution provides the essential foundation within which all police service work must be dealt with. Moreover, it provides the formal framework and guidelines that have a direct impact on all police service activities. For example, according to section 195 (1) (e) of the New Constitution: "Good human resource

management and career development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated. Public Administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.” Two key measures are relevant here. First, it emphasises a professional police human resource management system. Second, through the second stipulation, the police service is basically forced to place a high priority on employment equity and affirmative action. In moving towards this constitutional instruction the new management framework has, since 1999, been implemented.

Under the new dispensation, police managers are required to manage staff in a manner that is consistent and in line with the constitutional framework. The new framework makes several demands on police managers. On the one hand it requires that police officers be fair, reasonable and respectful of others’ rights. The South African Police Service is also constrained by section 14 of the New Constitution in that the off-duty rights (privacy) of fellow employees have to be respected. On the other hand it also demands that police officers be cognisant of the legal and constitutional implications of their possibly wrongful action (Lee 1992: 2).

Developing a performance-orientated culture

A closer study of the new management framework reveals that it has a substantial impact on redefining the roles and responsibilities of the different roleplayers in the police service. In the main it requires a new mindset. Moreover, reference is made to a new paradigm shift that is required or a new way of thinking, planning and decision-making. Since 1999, greater clarity has emerged on this paradigm shift. In practical terms, it means a shift away from the rule-bound culture (which the public service is so well-known for) to a performance-orientated culture (Baseline Implementation Guide June 1999: 9).

In practice, it means that the Department of Public Service and Administration will no longer give detailed stipulations on every aspect of human resource operations. It’s policy-making responsibility has shifted. The prime emphasis is now on the putting into operation of a broad policy framework and to support both state departments and provincial administrations in the implementation thereof. This notion of ‘devolving human resource management decisions’ scarcely applied, means that accounting officers (minister, national commissioner and other commissioners) will have the jurisdiction to make decisions and are directly accountable for the performance and output of their institutions. This principle is further operationalised by making police service managers sign performance agreements regularly (Annual Report of the Department of Public Service and Administration for the Year 1999/2000: 1).

Obviously, a performance-orientated culture would require a new way of thinking in terms of public service delivery where the prime emphasis is on a customer-centred police service. This means that giving good service to the customers needs to be reflected in the administrative and operational policies at all levels of service delivery. Throughout the process it may require a review of the role of police service managers, frontline service personnel and supporting staff, for example, police personnel managers (Baseline Implementation Guide June 1999: 9).

Integrated planning

In the previous dispensation, public service acts, regulations, and codes demanded obedience to rules. Most significantly, the comprehensive nature of this rule-bound approach had a substantial impact on service delivery, because there was less emphasis on results. The priority given to rules, resulted in a police service which was ill-suited to serving the development needs of the majority of the population (Baseline Implementation Guide June 1999: 9; Adler 2000: 12). Now the emphasis is on managing for better results. From this point of view

planning entails an integrative approach which means a commitment to aligning the operational vision, mission and objectives with human resource strategies, information programmes, financial plans and organisation structures (Makoane 2001: 20).

A strong case could be made for a so-called “integrative approach.” The integrative approach of planning allows for co-operation from all the different roleplayers in order to enhance service delivery capacity. Tompkins (1995: 4) argues that although, line workers are directly responsible for accomplishing institutional objectives, the efforts of the supporting staff can greatly influence whether objectives are achieved. This places even more emphasises on close co-operation between line and human resource officers in planning for better results (Baseline Implementation Guide June 1999: 9). The argument here is that there is more to planning for better results than merely rule-following. To be effective, planning depends on the police service’s degree of success in forging a partnership between line and human resource staff. Linking human resource management strategy with the operational strategies has become a new major preoccupation for police human resource practitioners. The significance of this shift is immense because it also requires a thorough examination of technology-related human resource practices. The Internet has changed the face of human resource systems through e-learning, e-human resources, e-training, web-based training, virtual teams and computer-based performance appraisal systems (Makoane 2001: 18). All of these developments have had an impact on the nature of police human resource management systems. What is important, however, is that police human resource practitioners and line function managers need to act as partners in addressing these challenges in order to plan for better results.

Other issues

O’ Fairchaellaigh, Wanna and Weller (1999: 53) argue that public human resource responsibilities are relatively fluid

and open to debate and political contention. Even today, there is no broad consensus about the exact role and responsibilities of public human resource management. At the opening of the parliamentary session in 2000, the President in the ‘State of the Nation Address’ said: “We are still faced with the task of completing the process of the restructuring of the machinery of government.” (State of the Nation Address by President Mbeki 4 February 2000: 11). The President referred to a ‘process’ in his address. This is another acknowledgement that public human resource activities cannot and will not be exactly demarcated. Indeed, it is a never-ending process.

One thing is for certain, reform in public human resource management systems is a continuing process that deals with basically all the aspects of police work. Thus, there are always attempts to improve the human resource policies, structures, procedures and programmes. Among the most troublesome contemporary issues, which are of equal importance, but were not highlighted in this article, are pay for performance, pay equity, sexual harassment, aids, drug testing, smoking in the workplace, disclosing of information, promotion of access to information and prevention of unfair discrimination. These themes will be the subject of further investigations by the author, but will not be addressed in this article. The implications of these contextual challenges are profound for police human resource management. As these challenges unfold, they create a need for police managers to take a new look at what they do, how they do it and what is expected of what they do in terms of human resource management systems.

Whatever the form of the new human resource management systems in the police service, they will only be justified on the basis that they improve human resource management, add value to the existing processes and promise the most professional service possible. The overall objective is to promote efficiency, effectiveness and productivity. At the same time, it should be realised that reform takes place in a political environment (Hays & Kearney 1995: 303). This means

that all human resource management systems reform efforts are largely dependent on political credibility. It will be difficult to bring about reform if the politicians and the public are not willing to support these efforts.

CONCLUSION

Public human resource management systems went through different phases of development. In this article, an attempt was made to outline the main phases of development. Early developments such as the personal service system and spoils system were not successful because it politicised the public service. Therefore, the focus shifted to more modern developments, namely the merit system and new public personnel administration and management systems. The development of the new public personnel administration and management system reflects concerns such as greater decentralisation, responsiveness and service delivery. This system has achieved widespread acceptance in a global context and could be regarded as a paradigm shift. At the root of the system, collective bargaining processes are now executed for successful employee/employer relations. Equal employment opportunity and affirmative action plans are administered. Public services are more client-focused and pay attention to improved service delivery. Senior management services are in operation in most police services and more flexibility is built into the human resource management systems.

Although the development of public human resource management systems have travelled a long way, most of the progress occurred during recent times. In this, the early developments are put to rest and new experiments come to the fore. As discussed, one of the new experiments call for the upholding of constitutional guidelines. The new approach recognises that the South African Police Service operates within the constitutional framework. In this approach, the constitutional principles demand that police officers be accountable in terms of the Constitution. Equally significant is the developing of a performance-orientated culture. There is a growing

reliance of devolved human resource management decision-making, rather than the bureaucratic ideals of centralisation. There has also been a shift away from a rule-bound culture to a culture of cooperation, the so-called 'integrative approach'. In practice, this means linking human resource management strategies with the operational strategies of policing. Obviously, there is still a long trek ahead toward professionalism in public human resource management systems. The basic dilemma is still that new experiments have alleviated but not eliminated some problems. Today police human resource management is still faced with issues of pay equity, sexual harassment, aids, drug testing and discrimination, to mention but a few. Whether these new human resource management systems will work as effectively, or more effectively, than the earlier systems, is still to be tested in practice. Certainly, the systems of police human resource management have changed over the years. However, the political environment in which police officers operate has not. Consequently, police officers will be held accountable for their activities, judged by a set of criteria that are based on values originated in the political field.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adler, G. 2000. *Public Service Labour Relations in a Democratic South Africa*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Annual Report of the Department of Public Service and Administration for the Year 1999/2000. 21 December 2000. [online] Available at <http://www.dpsa.gov.za/docs/reports/annual99-00.html>.

Byars, LL & Rue, LW. 1997. *Human Resource Management*. Chicago: Irwin.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Denhardt, R B. 1995. *Public Administration: An Action Orientation*. Bonn: Wadsworth.

Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Hays, SW & Kearney, RC. 1995. *Public Personnel Administration: Problems and Prospects*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

- Hughes, O E. 1998. *Public Management and Administration: An Introduction*. New York: Palgrave.
- Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Lee, Y S. 1992. *Public Personnel Administration and Constitutional Values*. London: Quorum.
- Makoane, S. July 2001. "Challenges of the New HR World". *HR Future. South Africa's Independent Human Resource Magazine*. 1 (5).
- O'Faircheallaigh, C; Wanna, J & Weller, P. 1999. *Public Sector Management in Australia: New Challenges New Directions*. Brisbane: Centre for Australian Public Sector Management.
- Policy Statement on the Establishment of a Senior Management Service in the Public Service*. 20 December 2000. [online] Available at <http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/policy/sms-aug00.html>.
- Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Protected Disclosures Act 26 of 2000*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Public Service Act 103 of 1994*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Public Service Regulations of 2001* (promulgated under section 41 of the Public Service Act 103 of 1994). Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Reynecke, F & Fourie, M. 2001. *Police Management Beyond 2000*. Landsdowne: Juta.
- Senior Management Service*. 21 December 2001. [online] Available at <http://www.dpsa.gov.za/projects/sms/index.htm>.
- South Africa. 1998. *Exchequer Report*. Department of Public Service and Administration. Pretoria.
- South Africa. 22 June 1999. *Baseline Implementation Guide*. Department of Public Service and Administration. Pretoria. ISBN 0-621-29291-5.
- South Africa. *Public Service Review Report for the Year 1999/2000*. Department of Public Service and Administration. Pretoria. ISBN 0-621-29985-5.
- South Africa. July 2000. *Report on the State of Representativeness in the Public Service*. Public Service Commission. Pretoria. ISBN 0-621-30183-3.
- South Africa. August 2001. *Report on the Verification of Qualifications of Senior Managers in the Public Service*. Public Service Commission. Pretoria. ISBN 0-621-31457-9.
- South Africa. November 2001. *A Report on the State of the Public Service*. Public Service Commission. Pretoria. ISBN 621-31703-9.
- South Africa. August 2000. *Survey of Compliance with the Batho Pele Policy*. Public Service Commission. Pretoria.
- SPA Publications. 1998. *Human Resources Strategy, 1998 and Beyond*. Johannesburg: SPA Publications.
- State of the Nation Address by President Mbeki*. 4 February 2000. [online] Available at <http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/speeches/2000/sp0204.html>.
- Sylvia, R D. 1994. *Public Personnel Administration*. Belmont California: Wadsworth.
- Tompkins, J. 1995. *Human Resource Management in Government: Hitting the Ground Running*. University of Montana: Harper Collins College.
- Uys, F; Van der Westhuizen, E J; Nealer, EJ; Smith, F H; Clapper, VA; Rowland, RW & Van Wyk, W J. 1997. *Organisational Theory & Personnel Administration*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Van der Westhuizen, E J. 2000. *Public Human Resource Management*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service. 24 November 1995. *Government Gazette*. 365 (16838).
- White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (*Batho Pele*). 1 October 1997. *Government Gazette*. 388 (18340).
- White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service. 31 December 1997. *Government Gazette*. 390 (18595).
- White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service. 23 April 1998. *Government Gazette*. 564 (18800).