

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER  
VOTE 1  
ACCOUNTING POLICIES  
for the year ended 31 March 2005

The Annual Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the following policies, which have been applied consistently in all material aspects, unless otherwise indicated. However, the appropriate and meaningful, additional information has been disclosed to enhance the usefulness of the Annual Financial Statements and to comply with the statutory requirements of the Public Finance Management Act, Act 1 of 1999 (as amended by Act 29 of 1999), the Treasury Regulations for Departments and Constitutional Institutions issued in terms of the Act and the Division of Revenue Act, Act 5 of 2004. The following issued, but not yet effective Standards of Generally Recognised Accounting Practice have not been fully complied with in the Annual Financial Statements: GRAP 1, 2 and 3.

1. Basis of preparation

The Annual Financial Statements have been prepared on a modified cash basis of accounting, except where stated otherwise. The modified cash basis constitutes the cash basis of accounting supplemented with additional disclosure items. Under the cash basis of accounting transactions and other events are recognised when cash is received or paid. Under the accrual basis of accounting transactions and other events are recognised when incurred and not when cash is received or paid.

2. Revenue

Appropriated funds

Voted funds are the amounts appropriated to a department in accordance with the final budget known as the Adjusted Estimates of National/Provincial Expenditure. Unexpended voted funds are surrendered to the National/Provincial Revenue Fund, unless otherwise stated.

Departmental revenue

Tax revenue

A tax receipt is defined as compulsory, irrecoverable revenue collected by entities. Tax receipts are recognised as revenue in the statement of financial performance on receipt of the funds.

Sale of goods and services other than capital assets

This comprises the proceeds from the sale of goods and/or services produced by the entity. Revenue is recognised in the statement of financial performance on receipt of the funds.

Sale of capital assets

The proceeds from the sale of capital assets is recognised as revenue in the statement of financial performance on receipt of the funds.

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Financial transactions in assets and liabilities

Repayments of loans and advances previously extended to employees and public corporations for policy purposes are recognised as revenue in the statement of financial performance on receipt of the funds.

Cheques issued in previous accounting periods that expire before being banked are recognised as revenue in the statement of financial performance when the cheque becomes stale. When the cheque is reissued the payment is made from Revenue.

Local and foreign aid assistance

Local and foreign aid assistance is recognised in the statement of financial performance on receipt of funds. Where amounts are expensed before funds are received, a receivable is raised. Where amounts have been inappropriately expensed using Local and Foreign aid assistance, a payable is raised. In the situation where the department is allowed to retain surplus funds, these funds are shown as a reserve.

3. Expenditure

Compensation of employees

Salaries and wages comprise payments to employees. Salaries and wages are recognised as an expense in the statement of financial performance when the final authorisation for payment is effected on the system. The expenditure is classified as capital where the employees were involved, on a full time basis, on capital projects during the financial year. All other payments are classified as current expense.

Social contributions include the entities' contribution to social insurance schemes paid on behalf of the employee. Social contributions are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Financial Performance when the final authorisation for payment is effected on the system.

Short-term employee benefits

The cost of short-term employee benefits is expensed in the Statement of Financial Performance in the reporting period when the final authorisation for payment is effected on the system. Short-term employee benefits, that give rise to a present legal or constructive obligation are disclosed as a disclosure note to the Annual Financial Statements and are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance.

Long-term employee benefits and other post employment benefits

Termination benefits

Termination benefits are recognised and expensed only when the final authorisation for payment is effected on the system.

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Medical benefits

The department provides medical benefits for its employees through defined benefit plans. Employer contributions to the fund are incurred when the final authorisation for payment is effected on the system. No provision is made for medical benefits in the Annual Financial Statements of the department.

Post employment retirement benefits

The department provides retirement benefits for certain of its employees through a defined benefit plan for government employees. These benefits are funded by both employer and employee contributions. Employer contributions to the fund are expensed when the final authorisation for payment to the fund is effected on the system. No provision is made for retirement benefits in the Annual Financial Statements of the department. Any potential liabilities are disclosed in the Annual Financial Statements of the National/Provincial Revenue Fund and not in the Annual Financial Statements of the employer department.

Other employee benefits

Obligations arising from leave entitlement, thirteenth cheque and performance bonus that are reflected in the disclosure notes have not been paid for at year-end.

Goods and services

Payments made for goods and/or services are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Financial Performance when the final authorisation for payment is effected on the system. The expense is classified as capital if the goods and services was used on a capital project.

Financial transactions in assets and liabilities

Financial transactions in assets and liabilities include bad debts written off. Debts are written off when identified as irrecoverable. Debts written-off are limited to the amount of savings and/or underspending available to the department. The write off occurs at year-end or when funds are available. No provision is made for irrecoverable amounts.

Unauthorised expenditure

Unauthorised expenditure, is defined as:

- The overspending of a vote or a main division within a vote, or
- Expenditure that was not made in accordance with the purpose of a vote or, in the case of a main division, not in accordance with the purpose of the main division.

Such expenditure is treated as a current asset in the Statement of Financial Position until such expenditure is approved by the relevant authority, recovered or written off as irrecoverable.

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Irregular expenditure

Irregular expenditure, is defined as :  
expenditure, other than unauthorised expenditure, incurred in contravention or not in accordance with a requirement of any applicable legislation, including:

- the Public Finance Management Act
- the State Tender Board Act, or any regulations made in terms of this act, or
- any provincial legislation providing for procurement procedures in that provincial government.

It is treated as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Performance. If such expenditure is not condoned and it is possibly recoverable it is disclosed as receivable in the Statement of Financial Position at year-end.

Fruitless and wasteful expenditure

Fruitless and wasteful expenditure, is defined as:  
expenditure that was made in vain and would have been avoided had reasonable care been exercised, therefore

- it must be recovered from a responsible official (a debtor account should be raised), or
- the vote. (If responsibility cannot be determined.)

Such expenditure is treated as a current asset in the Statement of Financial Position until such expenditure is recovered from the responsible official or written off as irrecoverable.

4. Transfers and subsidies

Transfers and subsidies include all irrecoverable payments made by the entity. Transfers and subsidies are recognised as an expense when the final authorisation for payment is effected on the system.

5. Expenditure for capital assets

Capital assets are assets that can be used repeatedly and continuously in production for more than one year. Payments made for capital assets are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Financial Performance when the final authorisation for payment is effected on the system.

6. Receivables

Receivables are not normally recognised under the modified cash basis of accounting. However, receivables included in the Statement of Financial Position arise from cash payments that are recoverable from another party, when the payments are made.

Receivables for services delivered are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position as a current asset or as income in the Statement of Financial Performance, as the Annual Financial Statements are prepared on a modified cash basis of accounting, but are disclosed separately as part of the disclosure notes to enhance the usefulness of the Annual Financial Statements.

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7. Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents consists of cash on hand and balances with banks, short term investments in money market instruments and demand deposits. Cash equivalents are short term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

8. Payables

Payables are not normally recognised under the modified cash basis of accounting. However, payables included in the Statement of Financial Position arise from advances received that are due to the Provincial/National Revenue Fund or another party.

9. Lease commitments

Lease commitments for the period remaining from the reporting date until the end of the lease contract are disclosed as part of the disclosure notes to the Annual Financial Statements. These commitments are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position as a liability or as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Performance as the Annual Financial Statements are prepared on the cash basis of accounting. Operating lease expenditure is expensed when the payment is made.

Finance lease expenditure is expensed when the payment is made, but results in the acquisition of the asset under the lease agreement. A finance lease is not allowed in terms of the Public Finance Management Act.

10. Accruals

This amount represents goods/services that have been received, but no invoice has been received from the supplier at the reporting date, OR an invoice has been received but final authorisation for payment has not been effected on the system. These amounts are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position as a liability or as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Performance as the Annual Financial Statements are prepared on a modified cash basis of accounting, but are however disclosed as part of the disclosure notes.

11. Contingent liability

This is a possible obligation that arises from past events and whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the department; or

a present obligation that arises from past events but is not recognised because:

- it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits or service potential will be required to settle the obligation; or
- the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability

Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Statement of Financial position, but the information is disclosed as part of the disclosure notes.

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12. Commitments

This amount represents goods/services that have been approved and/or contracted, but no delivery has taken place at the reporting date. These amounts are not recognised in the Statement of financial position as a liability or as expenditure in the Statement of Financial Performance as the Annual Financial Statements are prepared on a modified cash basis of accounting, but are however disclosed as part of the disclosure notes.

13. Recoverable revenue

Recoverable revenue represents payments made and recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance as an expense in previous years due to non-performance in accordance with an agreement, which have now become recoverable from a debtor. Repayments are transferred to the Revenue Fund as and when the repayment is received.

14. Comparative figures

Where necessary, comparative figures have been restated to conform to the changes in the presentation in the current year. The comparative figures shown in these Annual Financial Statements are limited to the figures shown in the previous year's audited Annual Financial Statements and such other comparative figures that the department may reasonably have available for reporting. Reclassification of expenditure has occurred due to the implementation of the Standard Chart of Accounts. It is not practical to present comparative amounts in the Cash Flow Statements as this would involve reclassification of amounts dating back to the 2002/03 year-end.