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PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF VANUATU

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING QUARTERLY REPORTS IN THE VANUATU PUBLIC SERVICE

2021

Foreword

The *Guidelines for Preparing Quarterly Reports in the Vanuatu Public Service* have been prepared by the Public Service Commission with the assistance of the Workplace Innovation Team (WIT) to support Public Sector Reform – particularly in the areas of institutional improvements and innovation in the Vanuatu Public Service. Consultations have also been held with the Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC) and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM).

To track delivery, identify slippage due to emerging priorities such as a national disaster and to allow for review of Business Plans, each Ministry is required to provide a quarterly narrative report against the Business Plan and Ministry Program Narratives for the period January to June annually.

The Quarterly Report contributes to the Half Yearly Report. The two reports (Quarterly and Half Yearly) basically form the heart of what is eventually the Annual Report. Therefore, a Quarterly Report is an early indicator of policy implementation and Business Plan operationalisation progress. The Quarterly Report with the Half Yearly Report will be used as the core part of analysis for the Ministerial Budget Committee (MBC) of Ministry progress and compliant utilisation of Budget Appropriations against Business and Corporate Plans.

It is noted that the Quarterly Report reports against the approved Business Plan of each Ministry. The Quarterly Report also provides specific detail on progress made in the period January to April annually against Ministry's Annual Development Report (ADR) targets to progress the delivery of the National Sustainable Development Plan as well as progress on NPPs and allocated projects under the Government Investment Plan (GIP). *A separate ADR Report by each Ministry in April is provided to the M&E Unit of DSPPAC using an approved template.*

These revised Guidelines have been developed to assist Director Generals and the Departments and agencies of each Ministry to meet these responsibilities proscribed by the Public Service Act and the recent review of the Public Finance and Economic Management (PFEM) Act. The revision of the PFEM Act, mandating a 5 year planning framework for Corporate Plans has provided an opportunity to address amendments to the Corporate Planning Guidelines and therefore in turn to clarify the inter-related format of Annual Reports, Quarterly Reports and Half Yearly Reports.



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Simil Johnson
Chairman
Public Service Commission
2021



GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN GUIDELINES

Term	Definition
Activities	Activities are aligned within the Programs (specified in Budget Narratives) of the Ministry to deliver the objectives of Ministry Programs. Activities should be developed, bearing in mind the challenges identified to ensure delivery strategies can be implemented. Furthermore, the activities in the Corporate Plans should not only be informed by the NSDP goals and objectives but also by any other strategic policy documents that are relevant to those areas being planned, including any Sector Plans or Recovery Strategies that may be in place.
Objectives	Objectives in the Corporate Plan are the over-arching organisational goals to be reached within the main program areas of activity of the Ministry. They should derive more or less directly from the NSDP, as expressed in the Budget Narratives. They express the expected outcomes (changes in the life of the target population) of the Ministry's endeavour. These objectives will be the same objectives as appear in the Budget Narrative.
Outcome	An Outcome can be expressed as a change in skills, attitudes, knowledge, behaviours, status, or condition, including life condition. An outcome is a long term Impact Indicator. In the Vanuatu Government, outcomes are linked to the NSDP and objectives and are mapped against the Programs.
Output	Outputs (Service Targets/Indicators) are mapped against each Activity included in the Budget Narratives. In aligning targets to outcomes, Ministry planners will start with the baseline target level and project the desired level of improvement (taking into consideration available resources over a specific time period).
Program	A Program establishes the structure for internal responsibilities while providing clear line of sight regarding Ministry objectives. Programs have a broad focus, with most ministries developing at least two and most likely, no more than six strategic programs for the Corporate Plan. The identified Programs form the basis of the Budget Narratives against which the Appropriations Budget is allocated.
Risks	A risk is a factor that may make it difficult to achieve delivery of a planned activity. Options should be considered to lessen or mitigate against an identified risk
Service Targets	Service Targets or outputs are mapped against each Budget Narrative Activity. In aligning targets to outcomes, Ministry planners start with the baseline target level, and project the desired level of improvement (taking into consideration available resources over a specific time period). The Service Target indicates what the program will produce, with the resources provided to meet the identified need which the objectives are intended to address. Specific targets are expressed to measure results.
Strategic Direction	The Strategic Direction (often referred to as a Strategic Objective) of the Ministry includes the central forces that move the Ministry towards intended objectives, in particular the NSDP. This aligns the vision, mission, and core values so that strategies can be designed to reach the desired goal outcomes.
Strategy	A strategy is a plan or tactic to be followed to achieve objectives and related activities, considering resources needed and the potential risks.
SMART Indicators	A SMART indicator or target is: Specific – clearly defined to anyone that has a basic knowledge of the project, program or policy. Measurable – to be counted, observed, analysed, tested or challenged. Achievable – is practical and can be done in time & with available resources – not too ambitious Relevant – contributes to the value of the activity Time-Bound – has clear dates for implementation/completion

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Introduction

Purpose of Quarterly Reports

The Quarterly Report of Government Ministries and Agencies is a functional document designed to inform the Government, the Parliament and the people of Vanuatu what the organisation has been doing and has achieved over the periods January to end April and to end August annually.

Each Ministry is to provide a quarterly narrative report (Quarterly Report) against the Business Plan. The Quarterly Report tracks delivery, identify slippage due to emerging priorities such as a national disaster, new policy drivers and allows for a timely review of targets and delivery schedules of Business Plans.

The Quarterly Report and Half Yearly Report basically form the heart of what is eventually the Annual Report, hence both are early indicators of progress or challenges needing to be addressed.

In addition, the Quarterly Report provides an overview on progress made in the period January to April annually against Ministry's Annual Development Report (ADR) targets to progress the delivery of the National Sustainable Development Plan and as well, specific details provided on achievement of Budget Narrative targets, NPPs and allocated projects under the Government Investment Plan (GIP).

Quarterly Report Guidelines and Process

The Quarterly Report should be concise and direct. Paragraphs should be kept reasonably short. The narrative description in the Overview of the Report should be no more than 2-3 pages. The Report is a progress and issues document. To ensure the accuracy and timeliness of preparing reports, Director Generals may consider nominating an officer such as the Executive Officer to coordinate the preparation of the report on behalf of the entire Ministry.

Director Generals may introduce a standing item at monthly meetings with Directors, as required by Public Service Instruction No. 1 of 1999, in which each Director lists activities occurring in their respective Department/Unit over the preceding month, highlighting achievements, progress made against performance measures determined in the Business Plan, any difficulties experienced and proposed solutions. Such reports could be amalgamated for use in the Quarterly Report.

Timing & Recipients

The Report should be presented to the Director General to DSPPAC by 30th April and 31st August each year. At the same time a copy should also be provided to the Public Service Commission.

Items to Include in Quarterly Report

Director General's Statement

The Quarterly Report should contain a very brief introduction to the Report and a statement by the Director General outlining achievements, challenges, identification of any emerging issues leading to delivery of the Business Plan and activities defined in the Budget Narratives. A tabular presentation may be effective.

Overview for the Quarterly Report

The Quarterly Report should contain a statement of the Ministry's progress against the Business Plan Objectives a template for this is shown below.

1. Report Against Ministry Budget Narrative

Performance measures listed in the Ministry Budget Narrative should be specifically referred to, including progress achieved against each.

Assistance

For questions and suggestions regarding these Guidelines and for any assistance in the preparation of reports, contact the Manager, Corporate Services Unit (CSU) OR Manager, Performance Improvement Unit (PIU) within the Public Service Commission.

Template 1: Quarterly Report Against Budget Narrative

Department	47									
Program	Outcome Indicator	Output or Service Target	Performance to date	Activity	Performance Indicator	Target	Performance to date	Comment	Link to NRS	Link to NSDP
Increase market and commodity production	Kava production increased	YY tonnes per year	ZZ tonnes by March	47BA	No of nursery nurseries established/upgraded	6	1	On track	RO 2.2.2 Evidence of government and donor support appropriated through the Parliament and GIPs to support productive sectors Budget Narrative aligned to Business Plan indicating support to various sectors-formal and informal for 2020 onwards	ECO1.7.1 Level of production of major commodities to include cocoa and copra
				47BB	No of noble kava seedlings and cuttings	300,000	100,000	Complete		
				47BC	No of seedlings distributed	300,000	25,000	Behind schedule due to heavy rain in February		