

**The implementation of Competitive Intelligence tools and techniques in Public Service departments in South Africa to improve service delivery: a case study of the Department of Home Affairs**

By

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## ***Dedication***

*I wish to dedicate this thesis to my father, the late Mr Bharath Sewdass, whose courage, determination and support remains my source of inspiration forever.*

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## SUMMARY

### **The implementation of Competitive Intelligence tools and techniques in Public Service departments in South Africa to improve service delivery: a case study of the Department of Home Affairs**

Competitive Intelligence (CI) has become increasingly important for organisations in the private sector, or profit-making organisations, because the level and intensity of competition has increased in recent years. This increase in the level and intensity of competition has also affected the public sector, or non-profit-making organisations, such as Public Service departments.

In South Africa, the Public Service departments have undergone significant changes, in order to rectify the injustices of the past. Despite much progress, it is noticed that government does not have sufficient capacity to deliver and sustain a quality service to its citizens. It is further noted that improved service delivery cannot be implemented by issuing of circulars only, and it is not just an administrative activity, instead it is a dynamic process and to do this, Public Service managers require new management tools. The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) was chosen as the case study Public Service department for this study.

The purpose of this study was to ascertain how competitive intelligence tools and techniques could be implemented in Public Service departments in South Africa to enhance the delivery of services. This aim was established during this study by addressing the following issues:

- Identifying how CI tools and techniques could contribute to the functioning of the Public Service sector. The study outlined the benefits of CI for public service organisations and focussed on several tools and techniques that could be used. Most of these tools and techniques were not used in DHA.
- Assessing the current state of Public Service delivery in South Africa. It became evident from the study that the Public Service sector and in particular DHA was experiencing several problems in terms of achieving its service delivery mandate. The Department lacked structured and formal frameworks, policies and strategies for conducting its operations. The organisation was viewed to have many unskilled and de-motivated staff. The current state of service delivery in South

Africa also revealed disturbing findings of corruption, fraud, nepotism, and extreme despair in staff that had to work in these conditions.

- Identifying gaps in the Public Service current strategies for service delivery. It was established that DHA does not use reliable techniques and methods when conducting its strategic planning. Furthermore, staff lacked the competencies, skills and experience to assist in strategic planning. The existing strategic plan for DHA does not address the future desires of the organisation and can be regarded as a plan to address the immediate issues of the organisation only.
- Identifying the forms of competition that impact service delivery in Public Service departments in South Africa. Several forms of competition were encountered at DHA. These forms of competition can be divided into three different areas namely internal competition in DHA, external competition and left field competition. The information about these forms of competition was not readily available to managers and decision makers therefore appropriate actions could not be taken to counteract the impact of the competition on service delivery.
- Identifying initiatives adopted by Public Service departments to improve service delivery. It was evident from the study that while the new initiatives being implemented by DHA to improve service delivery would be able to, and in some cases, have already had a positive impact on the operating and service delivery environment, several concerns were also identified.
- Designing a new CI related framework for gathering and analysing information that can be used in all Public Service departments in South Africa to improve service delivery. From the empirical investigations it became evident that no single CI tool or technique would have been able to address the situation at DHA, therefore, a combination of tools was necessary. These tools were depicted in a CI framework that DHA could use to gather and analyse information for decision making and service delivery.
- Suggesting proposed solutions and recommendations that can assist Public Service departments in South Africa in improving its service delivery.

It was evident that CI can contribute towards the enhancement of decision making and service delivery not only in DHA but also in all other Public Service departments in South Africa.



## **KEYWORDS**

Competitive intelligence

Competitive intelligence tools and techniques

Competitive intelligence framework

Public Service

Public service delivery

Service delivery

Services

Service quality

Service sector organisations

Non-profit organisations

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Competitive Intelligence (CI) has become increasingly important for organisations in the private sector, or profit-making organisations, because the level and intensity of competition has increased in recent years. CI helps organisations in the business environment to understand and respond to their competitors and the competitive environment (Horne & Parks, 2004: 33). This increase in the level and intensity of competition has also affected the public sector, or non-profit-making organisations, such as Public Service departments.

While it can be argued that CI is of limited value or importance to public sector organisations, since there is a lack of profit motivation in this sector, and the functioning and structure of these organisations differs from the private sector organisations to which CI principles are usually applied, it is believed that public sector organisations are becoming more like traditional profit-making organisations. Given the current economic environment within which these organisations function; the increased scrutiny in the operations of these organisations; the increased level of accountability placed on them; and the new and improved service delivery options that are now available to these organisations, it is suggested that CI can benefit these organisations on a similar level as it does private sector organisations (Horne & Parks, 2004).

CI has the ability to justify its existence in profit-making organisations with regard to profit margins. "It can improve the organisation's short term profits by improving the quality of tactical decisions and can increase its long term value by guiding management to make superior strategic decisions that increase shareholder value," (Wagner, 2003: 70). This author further points out that CI fits within the operations of public sector organisations only if it maximises value to the organisation's

stakeholders. This refers to improving the quality of life of the general public or specific targeted demographic groups.

The aim of Public Service departments in most countries is to lead the modernisation of the Public Service by assisting government departments to implement their management policies, systems and structural solutions within a generally applicable framework of norms and standards, in order to improve service delivery (South Africa (Republic), 2004<sub>3</sub>). Furthermore, Public Service departments exist to serve the needs of the citizens of the country, and all citizens have the right to expect high quality Public Services that meet their needs. The aim of Public Service departments in South Africa is to improve service delivery through the transformation and improvement of human resources and the improvement of service delivery practices.

Public Service organisations also need to perform similar types of strategic planning activities to their private sector counterparts. These activities include environmental analysis, resource analysis, goal formulation, strategy formulation and organisational or systems design. For the organisations to accomplish these activities they require a vast amount of internal and external data and this data has to be analysed in terms of its objectiveness and quality. This task is best carried out by the CI function, (Wagner, 2003). Therefore, this study is needed for Public Service departments.

## **1.2 THE NEED FOR THE STUDY**

The unique nature of the services offered by Public Service departments such as intangibility, heterogeneity and perishability, make it very difficult to apply CI and tools and techniques to this sector. Hence, very little has been written about CI in the Public Service departments, (Wagner, 2003: 70-83). Since Public Service departments are not perceived to have any competition and there is no measure of profit and losses incurred by these departments, it is a challenge to stimulate service excellence.

Public Service departments do, however, compete, and the competitor is usually another service department of the government of the country. As indicated by Greenberg (1982), there are four key areas of competition for Public Service



organisations: competing for funding, for personnel, for users, and for influence and prestige.

According to Hendrikz (2003<sub>1</sub>) the fundamental driving force behind enhancing service excellence in Public Service departments should be ‘purpose’ and, in line with this, every civil servant should be focused and committed to a specific aspect of providing an excellent Public Service to their citizens. After all, each Public Service department exists for a specific purpose.

In South Africa, the Public Service departments have undergone significant changes, in order to rectify the injustices of the past. These changes have meant that several processes which have rationalised functions, structures, legislation and resources, have been adopted. Despite much progress, it is noticed that government does not have sufficient capacity to deliver and sustain a quality service to its citizens (Khumalo, 2003). Many weaknesses exist within service departments and the customers very rarely, if at all, experience the “Wow Effect” after visiting these departments for service. The Public Service departments are the sole suppliers or providers of certain products or services that the citizens need. They have no direct competition and these departments usually do not close down or depend on the customer for their survival. As a result, little importance is placed on improving customer relations or service delivery. Even when these initiatives are implemented in these departments they usually fail to show any benefit since there is no motivation to change the way things are done. This means that the customer is left with poor service and very little bargaining power for better or more effective service from these departments.

In civilised and democratic societies, Public Services are not regarded as a privilege but rather they are a legitimate expectation. The *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108* (South Africa (Republic), 1996) stipulates that Public Services and administration should adhere to a number of principles, including that:

- A high standard of professional ethics be promoted and maintained
- Services be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias
- Resources be utilised efficiently, economically and effectively

- Peoples' needs be responded to
- The public be encouraged to participate in policy making
- It will be accountable, transparent and development-oriented.

Hence, the government of South Africa introduced the concept of *Batho Pele* in 1997 in the *White paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery* (South Africa (Republic), 1997). This concept encourages the notion of “putting people first” and provides a framework for transforming Public Service delivery. It is an initiative to get public servants to be service oriented, to strive for excellence in service delivery and to commit to continuous service delivery improvement. Further, it can be regarded as a transparent mechanism that allows citizens to hold public servants accountable for the standard of service they deliver. *Batho Pele* adopts a citizen-orientated approach to service delivery and it is informed by the eight principles of consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress and value for money (South Africa (Republic), 2003<sub>1</sub>). The citizen is regarded as the valued customer of the service. Hence, the terms ‘customer’ and ‘citizen’ will be used interchangeably in this study.

Hendrikz (2003<sub>2</sub>) portrays this customer-centered Public Service as one where the needs and priorities of the customers shape the structure and policies of Public Service departments where there is no corruption and all citizens have equal access to Public Services. In this Public Service, customers are treated with courtesy and consideration; if a promised standard of service is not delivered, an apology is offered and full explanation of effective remedy to the situation is provided. It would be a service where citizens do not have to stand in long queues, being shifted from one counter to another office, only to find that they are in the wrong department. It would be a service where Public Service departments operate outside of the traditional work hours of 8.00am to 4.00pm, and employees take their lunch and tea breaks at different times so that the customer never has to be turned away.

It is now twelve years since the introduction of *Batho Pele* and while much has been done to improve the situation, customers are still standing in long queues, being

shuffled from one counter to the next office, and are being met with closed doors and offices during lunch breaks (Hendrikz, 2003<sub>2</sub>).

The Public Service is reportedly still operating within over-centralised, hierarchical and rule-bound systems that were inherited from the previous dispensation and it is difficult to hold individuals accountable because:

- Decision making is diffused
- Focus is on inputs rather than outcomes
- Value for money is not encouraged
- Innovation and creativity are not rewarded
- Uniformity above effectiveness and responsiveness is rewarded
- Inward-looking, flexible attitudes that are at odds with the vision of a Public Service whose aims are service to the people are encouraged, (South Africa (Republic), 1997).

With over a million people employed in the Public Service Sector in South Africa, (South Africa (Republic), 2005), it has become necessary to improve the quality of services that are offered. The introduction of service delivery improvement programmes cannot be achieved in isolation from the other management changes that are taking place in the Public Services. It needs to be part of a fundamental change in the Public Service work environment where the public servants see themselves as the servants of the citizens of the country and where the service to the public is their primary goal. It is further noted that improved service delivery cannot be implemented by issuing of circulars only, and it is not just an administrative activity, instead it is a dynamic process and to do this, Public Service managers require new management tools.

### **1.3 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The purpose of this study is to ascertain how competitive intelligence tools and techniques could be implemented in Public Service departments in South Africa to enhance the delivery of services.

Therefore, the aims of the study are to:

- Assess the current state of Public Service delivery in South Africa
- Identify gaps in the Public Service current strategies for service delivery
- Identify from literature how CI tools and techniques could contribute to the functioning of the service sector
- Identify the forms of competition that impact service delivery in Public Service departments in South Africa
- Identify initiatives adopted by Public Service departments to improve service delivery
- Design a new CI related framework for gathering and analysing information that can be used in all Public Service departments in South Africa to improve service delivery.

#### **1.4 VALUE OF THE STUDY**

Therefore, the focus of this study is to make recommendations to improve the quality of the services delivered by Public Service departments in South Africa by implementing CI tools and techniques in these departments. It was felt that if these departments functioned in the similar manner as the private sector or profit-making industries operated, it would help them to improve and sustain the quality of the services that they provide, and have a more positive impact on the economy of the country and the quality of the lives of the citizens.

Since a study of this nature has not been done in the Public Service departments, and the fact that very little is written about CI in Public Service or non-profit organisations, it is envisaged that the results will be beneficial in developing a CI strategy for implementation in the Public Service departments. This study will also fill the gaps that exist in this area not only in SA, but globally.

The study contributes to the fields of Development Communication and Competitive Intelligence, two of the core areas in Information Science.

Development Communication is regarded as a method of providing communities with information in a manner that enables the communities to use that information to improve their lives. It should be creative and innovative and the information received must clearly reveal how it can better the lives of the recipients, promote hope and trust within the recipients, and encourage its recipients to be interested in the contents, (Currin, 2004: 79). Development Communication also involves participation with communities or government departments to explain how programmes work and how they can be accessed. This study focuses on improving the quality of Public Service delivery to the citizens of the country and creating the means through which they can achieve a better quality of life. It also involves participation/collaboration with the Public Service departments and officials in order to collect and verify data for the study.

The CI component of the study will contribute to the innovation, creation, and quality of information that can benefit the quality of the lives of the citizens.

## **1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The following scope and limitations have been identified for the study:

- The study is aimed at the Public Service departments that fall under the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). It does not include other service departments that fall under the private sector and are profit-making.
- The identified CI tools and techniques were chosen for use in a large Public Service department but they could be also be used in all the other smaller Public Service departments in South Africa.
- The outcomes of the study will not serve as a prescribed method of practice in Public Service departments in South Africa, but rather as a recommendation for the improvement of service delivery.
- This study will not provide a historical or general overview of South African Public Services as this has been covered in literature (Naidoo, 2004) and, therefore, is not the focus of this study.

## 1.6 RELATED LITERATURE

Management strategists in most organisations in the world are relying more and more on the practice of Competitive Intelligence to succeed and sustain their businesses. Editors Prescott and Miller, in the book entitled *Proven strategies in competitive intelligence: lessons from the trenches (2001)*, provide a collection of case studies that describe the successful Competitive Intelligence operations that are used by the world's most famous market-leading companies. This provides a good background and understanding of the dynamics, reasons for implementing, and usefulness of CI. Furthermore, it identifies the most interesting innovations and innovators of the leading markets that are experimenting with the development of Competitive Intelligence systems, tools and strategies in order to contribute to sustainable and improved growth and profit. Lessons learned from these case studies can also benefit other companies planning to embark on CI activities, as they identify the best practices to follow in this field.

Since CI is a relatively new management concept, it is necessary to ensure that an accurate understanding and definition of CI is obtained. Several terms such as Business Intelligence, Competitor Intelligence, and even Industrial Espionage are found in literature to express the concept of CI. The basis of CI is knowing the difference between information and intelligence. Executives usually have to read through several reports and proposals before making decisions, and it is often found that they are overwhelmed with information and lack intelligence that will enable them to make more efficient decisions. Therefore, it can be said that companies that are able to turn information into intelligence will succeed.

A comprehensive definition of CI is “the legal collection and analysis of information regarding the capabilities, vulnerabilities, and intentions of business competitors conducted by using ‘open sources’ and ethical inquiry,” (Society for Competitive Intelligence Professionals, 2008).

Kahaner (1997) eloquently discusses what the new world of CI is by showing how companies efficiently, systematically, and economically collect information, analyse, and use it to make decisions. This understanding can assist the decision makers in the

public sector in making more informed decisions concerning improving the quality of services offered to citizens.

While much has been written about CI in large profit-making organisations, it is true that very little relevance has been placed on the value and implementation of CI in the service sector. Furthermore, when literature alludes to the service sector, it predominantly refers to private sector services or for-profit services. *Managing frontiers in Competitive Intelligence, edited by Fleisher & Blenkhorn* (2001) is a commonplace example of this. Only a single chapter in the book discusses CI in the service sector (profit-making services) while the rest of the book cuts across several dimensions of business practice and discusses new ideas, techniques and tools for managers in Competitive Intelligence.

Fleisher and Blenkhorn's single service-sector chapter refers to the unique characteristics of service industries that make it necessary to differ the traditional CI process when performed in these industries. It also discusses the differences and similarities between CI in product-based and service-based industries. The chapter culminates in the development of a CI value-chain for service industries, a framework for gathering information and competitive analysis, and a service-quality competitive analysis model. However, no empirical tests were carried out using these tools in the service sector environment to validate their usefulness, hence, room has been left for further research, (Clarke, 2001: 222). The researcher has taken this challenge and has decided to investigate the need for and use of these CI tools and techniques to enhance the quality of service delivery in Public Services in South Africa. The chapter in Fleisher and Blenkhorn's book has served as the background upon which this research has developed.

Most organisations, and individuals alike, confine competition to just the other companies performing the same function as they are, and literature usually refers to these as 'the direct competitors' or 'traditional competitors'. The basic reason for this could be the fact that it is relatively easy to spot traditional competitors, study and analyse them. However, it must be realised that in the business world, competition can be 'anything and everything' that will send the customer away from your door (Sawyer, 2002: 7). The service sector has a diversity of competition present, usually

in an intangible form, and this makes it more complex for CI processes to be implemented. Sawyer (2002: 8) is the first and only author, thus far, who focuses on CI for service-sector industries. While the work also, largely, concentrates on for-profit services, it does talk about services where human labour, with value-added expertise, or human capital, forms the core of the business. This is the situation in the Public Service and many of the cases and strategies outlined can be applicable here. Therefore, they provide a good understanding of best practice in CI for the Public Services in South Africa.

CI is about differentiating between catching up and breaking out of an industry and then positioning oneself beyond best practices to invent new practices. It is about understanding the difference between getting better and getting different and then learning how to get different in ways that will stun and thrill customers. It is for this that the Public Services in South Africa should strive. Hamel (2000) discussed these issues as well as the challenges that many companies, such as the Public Services, face in reinventing themselves not just in times of crisis, but continually. It also provides an understanding of how companies can continue to grow and thrive in ever-changing turbulent times such as the situation in South Africa at present.

It is important for the Public Service sector in South Africa to improve its quality of service delivery, not only by comparing its performance with other sectors within South Africa, but also by positioning itself among the best in the world. This can be achieved by bench-marking with other global industries and by implementing the most recent CI strategies, tools and techniques. Recent literature on these aspects can assist in making sure that the most suitable and appropriate CI tools and strategies are implemented to enhance service delivery in the Public Services (Blenkhorn & Fleisher, 2005; Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2003).

No study relating to CI can be regarded as complete without reference to the Society of Competitive Intelligence Professionals (SCIP) (Prescott & Fleisher, 1991). This professional body has produced various publications, such as the '*Competitive Intelligence Magazine*', the '*Journal of Competitive Intelligence and Management*' and the proceedings of conferences. These publications aim to further the development of CI and to encourage greater understanding of the management of



competition. They are regarded as an indispensable source of inspiration and “how to” guidance from people who understand best the challenges that organisations face (Society for Competitive Intelligence Professionals, 2008).

As far as management theory is concerned, there seems to be consensus regarding the need to develop better explanations about performance, effectiveness and productivity that can help the organisation to improve its position for success in the global environment. This is particularly true of the Public Service in South Africa as it seeks to improve its services and overcome the poor reputation that it has obtained as a result of low motivation, poor service and political obstacles. A recent publication, *Citizenship and management in Public Administration: integrating behavioral theories and managerial thinking (2004)* discusses these issues from a global perspective, thus, helping the researcher to assess the situation in South Africa with an eye on the global environment.

Most literature that has emerged from government regarding Public Services has, in recent times, alluded to the transforming and improvement of service delivery or quality service delivery or service excellence (Public Services Act South Africa (Republic), 1994; Khumalo, 2003; Ngema, 2004; White Paper on transforming Public Services, 1997; Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, South Africa (Republic), 1996). The fact that some of these are in the form of legislation highlights the seriousness of the issue, along with the commitment towards improving the quality of Public Services in South Africa.

While the above outline good policies and strategies to improve service delivery, there needs to be an emphasis on the policy and strategy implementation. As a result, public institutions should gear themselves to implement these policies and strategies by transforming their objectives into service delivery projects and activities (Du Toit, et.al, 2002). In order for the researcher to identify appropriate CI tools and strategies that can assist Public Services to enhance service delivery, it is essential to get an idea of the current state of Public Service delivery in South Africa (Van der Walt & Du Toit, 1997; State of Public Service Report, (South Africa (Republic), 2005; Diphofa, 2005). These documents can assist not only in identifying the current state of Public

Service delivery, but can also be used to identify the gaps that exist in Public Service delivery.

Hendrikz (2003<sub>2</sub>) identified six reasons why service excellence is lacking in the Public Services and why most citizens in South Africa complain about the quality of service received from these departments. These reasons are as follows:

- Internal focus of what is going on inside the organisation rather than what is happening outside
- Public sector has no competition and their sponsorship is guaranteed
- Rewarding incompetence and empire building – when work is not accomplished it is seen as not having enough staff to accomplish hence, more staff allocated to the task. This leads to more rules, responsibilities allocated to staff, more supervision and line of authority, and more red tape, rather than improving the situation
- Rewarding complication – employees complicate things that only they know how to deal with and this makes the organisation incredibly dependent upon the employee. The aim here is on the creation of dependency and not on service excellence
- Inability to motivate employees to provide customer satisfaction
- Giving employees authority without power – the power to authorise is usually passed from office to office using every trick to avoid individual responsibility. Hence, it can take months to get the simplest things done.

The above reasons align not only with the researcher's experience, but also, arguably, that of most of South Africa's citizens, in terms of how the Public Service operates. With an understanding of what the current situation is, the selection of appropriate CI tools and strategies to remedy the situation can be facilitated.

In light of the given reasons for poor service, solutions need to be obtained. Hendrikz (2003<sub>1</sub>) proposed that the secrets of service excellence in the Public Service can be found by studying a non-profit system where service excellence is applied effectively. He identified 'mother nature' as being the only system where this is the case.

However, while this may seem complicated and bizarre to apply to the Public Services, the following secrets to service excellence can be identified:

- Focus all energy on results – Service excellence is an “end” and not a “means.” We need to know what it is that we want and find ways to overcome stumbling blocks in getting there
- Empower front line staff to produce results –the moments of truth take place at the front desk and not in the executive’s offices
- Reward results – provide reasons for employees to produce results. Behaviour is conditioned when it is rewarded
- Implement service excellence through small decisions, made consistently.

The above provides an indication of the nature and extent that has gone into trying to improve the quality of service in the Public Services but to no avail since a solution is still being sort in the latest *State of the Public Service Report* (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>).

Public Service organisations are structured and operate quite differently from private-sector organisations and the key difference, with respect to CI implementation, is the lack of profit motivation in the public sector. Public Services are structured to be bureaucracies with a budget that is drawn down to provide a specific service. Management incentives and rewards tend to be related more to budget management and budget size, than organisational effectiveness (Wagner, 2003: 71).

The Public Services are characterised by the intangibility of services and the existence of multiple service objectives. The consumer, or user, has little influence on the organisation because the organisation is often a local monopoly and user payments are not a primary source of funds. These organisations sometimes fail to analyse their competitive position in terms of funds, staff, other resources and even users. This is largely because they do not utilise the basic concepts of strategic management. Often they are unable to plan strategically because they lack a clear definition of the service organisation’s mission and goals (Greenberg, 1982: 81). This provides more of a motivation for the Public Services to implement the techniques practiced by businesses such as CI.

It is important for managers to understand the landscape within which the service sector finds itself. This will allow them to be better able to realise the contribution that they can make within this competitive landscape and realise how they can benefit from a variety of strategic and tactical actions that are well suited for the service sector (Rodie & Martin, 2001: 19). Furthermore, such an understanding would provide managers with the reasons why the service sector should adopt an entrepreneurial attitude to improve its performance. This attitude is essential in order to provide sufficient background for commitment to CI process in this sector.

The key points of analysis in any CI process will depend on the characteristics of the specific service industry. Furthermore, many techniques carry over from product to service-based industries and it is important to realise that certain traditional product-based techniques may not be adequate for the service industry as these techniques are meant for the simpler offerings of products and are not able to cope with the complexity of the service industry. Therefore, it is suggested that the Public Service sector should rely on its internal experts for assistance in determining what factors impact competition and use these factors as the drivers for CI activities (Cobb, 2004: 32).

Public Service departments and other non-profit-making organisations also go through strategic planning processes regularly, just as their profit-making counterparts do. To improve the efficacy of the strategic planning process, the CI process can assist in collecting the necessary decision support information (Horne & Parks, 2004: 36). While it must be acknowledged that CI alone is not the answer, it can and does provide external background and fundamental perspectives that can compliment the traditional inward focus that Public Services usually have. This, then, can become a valuable tool for enhancing the quality of services delivered.

The one place where an organisation can really differentiate itself from others is in the quality of the services that it provides. The changing nature of customer relationships can also impose challenges for organisations that provide services. Hence, a new breed of service worker is demanded by these challenges: workers who are empathetic, flexible, informed, articulate, inventive, and able to work with minimal level of supervision (Henkoff, 1994: 49).

The Public Service departments in South Africa are also faced with these challenges as their customers are becoming more demanding and their expectations of service are increasing. The citizens are reliant on the Public Services to satisfy their needs and to perform activities that are necessary for proper public administration in South Africa.

The review of literature indicated that there is a growing amount of research conducted into CI within the profit-making sector, and also a substantial amount into improving service delivery in various sectors and environments in SA. This was supported by a search on the Nexus dataset of the National Research Foundation ([www.nrf.org](http://www.nrf.org)). However, no study was found linking CI tools and techniques with the Public Services sector.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.7.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

This section provides a description of the research procedure and methodology that was used to ascertain how CI tools and techniques could be implemented in Public Service departments in South Africa in order to enhance the quality of services delivered. The subjects and situational context within which the study took place, the instruments, and the data collection techniques and analysis are described.

This study was qualitative in nature and was divided into two components:

- Theoretical – through an extensive review of the literature
- Empirical – the ethnographic study conducted at the chosen Public Services department, namely the Department of Home Affairs (DHA).

#### **1.7.1.1 Literature review**

A review of related literature involves the systematic identification, location, and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009: 80). For this study a comprehensive literature review was

conducted by consulting articles, reviews, monographs, books, dissertations, electronic media, research reports, project findings, and newspapers.

The purpose of conducting a review of the literature was to determine what has already been researched on the topic, and also to determine the need for the study by identifying gaps that exist in the literature. The review also served to determine how these gaps could be filled and to demonstrate the underlying assumptions of the study. Furthermore, by being familiar with the research area, the researcher was able to have some insight, which assisted the facilitation of the interpretation of the results of the findings.

The results could then be discussed in terms of whether they agreed or disagreed with previous findings, thereby eliminating doubt and bias in the findings and justifying arguments by referencing previous research. The literature study was also able to assist the researcher in the selection, structuring and execution of the empirical research activities.

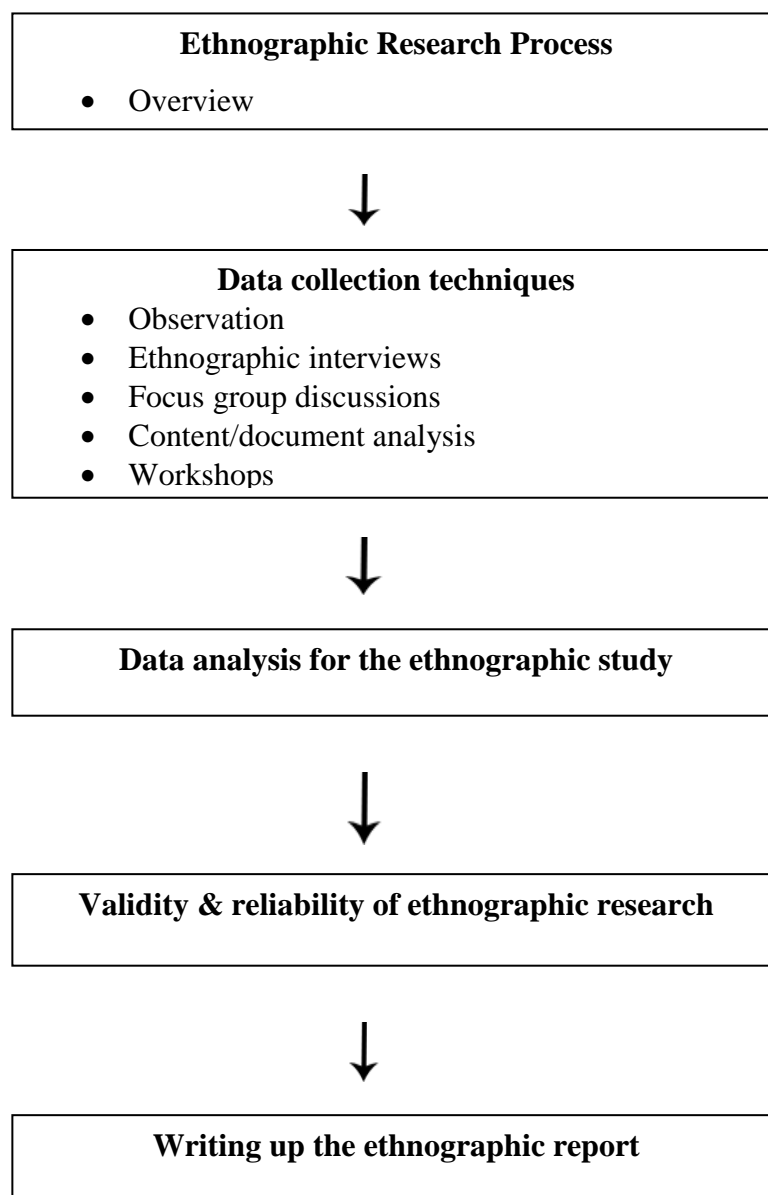
#### **1.7.1.2 Empirical component**

The empirical component of the study was conducted by means of an ethnographic study at the DHA. Ethnographic research produces a picture of a way of life of an identifiable group of people using a process (primary participant observation) enabling the researcher to discern patterns of behaviour in human social activity (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009: 415).

The researcher first identified and diagnosed the research problem. The diagnosis developed certain theoretical assumptions about the nature of the organisation and its problem domain. The researcher then collaborated with the staff of the DHA in order to take action to identify possible solutions that could improve the problem area.

These actions were guided by theoretical frameworks or models that give an indication of the desired future state of the organisation and the changes that would be needed to achieve such a state. Such changes might include determining the current state of service delivery in the Public Service, and then implementing appropriate CI

tools and techniques in order to enhance the quality of services that will be delivered in the future. Thus, ethnographic research was suitable for enhancing the understanding of the complex problem as represented in this study and the researcher was able to generate knowledge that can further enhance the development of models or theories to improve the problem area and to fill that gap that existed in this area. Figure 1.1 is a graphic representation of the ethnographic research process that will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.



**Figure 1.1** The ethnographic research process

## 1.7.2 SUBJECTS OF THE STUDY

The Department of Home Affairs in South Africa was used as the case study for this research. The research process was, therefore, negotiated through and facilitated by the Director of the Strategic Executive Support Services division of DHA. As the researcher was the first academic to be conducting a study of this nature in this department, and in the absence of a Research and Development Division, it was assumed by the staff at DHA that the focus of the study was Information Technology (IT) related and would benefit the IT division more. Hence, the researcher was placed within the IT division, managed by the Chief Information Officer of DHA.

However, since CI is usually a strategic management-level operation in organisations, the researcher, although based in the IT division, was able to collaborate with management-level staff across the Department of Home Affairs. The researcher felt it essential that management-level staff were involved because these individuals are already involved in the strategic planning and execution of the corporate plans and they have the knowledge that could assist in ascertaining the current state of service delivery and also help in identifying the gaps that existed in the department that has led to poor service delivery. It would also be easier for the new CI tools and techniques to be accepted and implemented in the department without much delay or waiting for approval and authorization from higher levels if these staff were already aware of them from the start of the study.

This form of participant selection in ethnographic research is known as key informant/participant selection and involves selecting a small number of individuals in such a way that they will be good key informants who will contribute to the researcher's understanding of a given phenomenon (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009: 135). This well-defined, pre-established criterion for selection of participants was able to ensure that the context and quality of the results received for the study was reliable and free of biases.

The Department of Home Affairs is one of the largest Public Service departments and it was purposefully selected as it is the one department that every citizen is reliant upon, from "birth to death." They hold a monopoly over the services that they offer



and citizens are compelled by law to utilise these services in order to ensure that proper public administration is practiced in the country. The results obtained from this study, however, will be applicable in all Public Service departments in South Africa.

### **1.7.3 INSTRUMENTS FOR THE STUDY**

As mentioned earlier, several methods were used for data collection in this study:

- A comprehensive literature review or document analysis was conducted to identify the current state of service delivery in Public Services departments in South Africa, particularly in the Department of Home Affairs. The literature review also assisted the researcher in providing a better understanding of Competitive Intelligence, its functioning and benefits for organisations in general and, more specifically, for its applicability in Public Service departments
- Ethnographic interviews with management-level staff, focus groups and document analysis were also used to obtain adequate information to determine the current state of Public Service delivery in South Africa. These tools have ensured that scientific methods have been followed and that the results obtained from the study will have meaning and value
- CI tools that were developed in a previous study by Clarke (2001) were then adapted for their usefulness in the Public Services. While these CI tools are useful in business environments, the researcher adapted them for use in this instance. Benchmarking was used for this purpose to determine the best practices and tools used for CI in other service-providing organisations. This helped the researcher to select the most appropriate tools that can be used in the Public Service departments to improve the delivery of services
- The final stage of the research, a new CI-related framework for gathering and analyzing information that can enhance the quality of service delivery was developed by theoretical and strategic means.

#### 1.7.4 ANALYSIS OF DATA

This research needed to be oriented towards the needs of the end users, which in this case are the citizens of the country, since they will benefit from better Public Services, and the Government, as they will then be able to achieve their goal of providing efficient and effective Public Services. Therefore, the analysis of the data became a very important aspect of the study, in order to ensure that it was useful, relevant and accurate.

A qualitative form of data analysis was used and collaboration with the managers from the Department of Home Affairs was necessary to assist in analyzing certain data and to clarify the accuracy of data received. The collaboration was also able to provide an indication of the reliability and accuracy of the data that was collected. These issues will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

### 1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS AND EXPLANATION OF ABBREVIATIONS

#### 1.8.1 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

Table 1.1 outlines the definitions of the key terms that will be used for this study.

**Table 1.1** Definition of key terms

<b>TERM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
Competitive Intelligence	Competitive Intelligence is a systematic program for gathering and analyzing information about competitors' activities and general business trends to further an own company's goals (Kahaner, 1996: 16).
Competitive Intelligence strategies	Competitive Intelligence strategies should be regarded as the road map or direction pointers for competitive intelligence (Neuland, Olivier & Venter, 2002: 31).



Excellence	The customers' perception that an organisation's product and/or performance is superior to that of its competitors (Tebbe, 1996 cited in Wagner, 2003: 72).
Services	Services are all those economic activities in which the primary output is neither a product nor a construction. Value is added to this output by means that cannot be inventoried – means like convenience, security, comfort and flexibility (Quinn & Gagnon, 1986: 95).
Public Services	Public Services can be regarded as a group of public institutions or departments that are responsible for providing essential and basic services to the citizens of a country.
Service quality	The degree of discrepancy between customers' normative expectations for the service and their perception of the service performance (Parasuraman et al, 1985).
Service delivery	The provision of a product or service by a government department or body, to the citizens of a country that the specific service or product was promised to or which the citizens expect.

## 1.8.2 ABBREVIATIONS

Table 1.2 provides a list of abbreviations used in this study together with an explanation of their meaning.

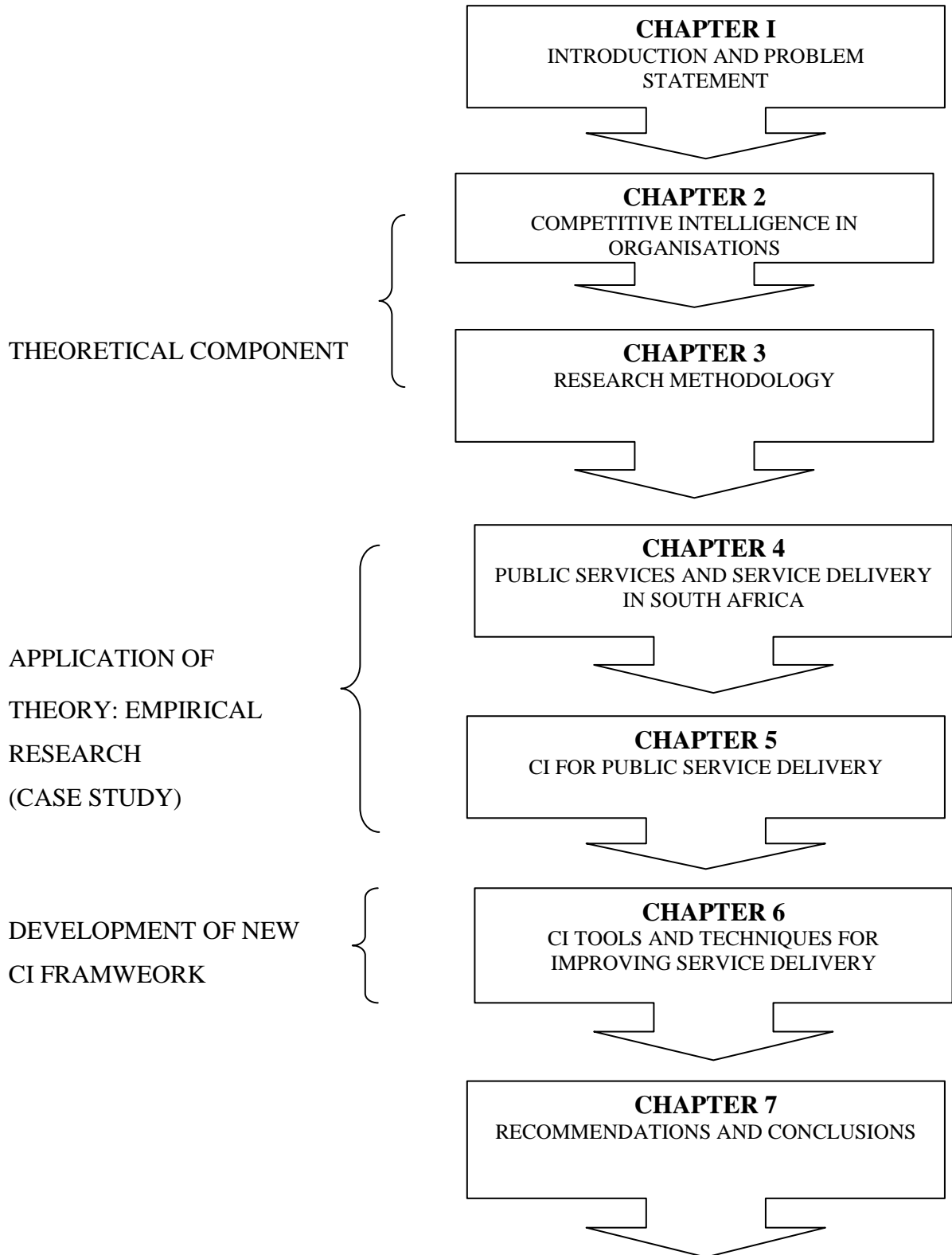


**Table 1.2** List of abbreviations and meanings

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
CI	Competitive Intelligence
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIO	Chief Information Officer
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
EI	Ethnographic Interviews
FG	Focus group
FIFA	Federation of International Football Associations
FN	Field notes
HR	Human Resources
ID	Identity Document
IT	Information Technology
PPP	Private Public Partnership
PSD	Public Service Delivery
SA	South Africa
WS	Workshop

## 1.9 FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Figure 1.2 is a graphical representation of the framework for the study.



**Figure 1.2** Framework for the study

## **1.10 ETHICAL STATEMENT**

Since the study is rather complex in nature and it applied a completely new process to the quality of services offered by Public Service departments in South Africa, it was important for the researcher to ensure that all ethical issues with regard to social science research was adhered to. Participants from the DHA were assured of confidentiality throughout the research process and the reporting of the results. Care was also taken not to become over involved in the problem and to remain as impartial as possible. Scientific methods of data collection, analysis and reporting were adhered to.

## CHAPTER 2

### COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE IN ORGANISATIONS

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the Competitive Intelligence process is not usually associated with not-for-profit organizations in general, and Public Services in particular, it is necessary to put this process into context. Firstly, this chapter will provide a comprehensive discussion of what CI really is. Having clarified this, the need for such a process and the benefits that it has for organisations, will be established. While most new concepts and processes are easy to understand and follow, the implementation of these processes in organisations remains a challenge, therefore it is essential to discuss how CI can be implemented in organisations.

Most public-service sector organisations do not believe that they have any competition, or, therefore, that CI can be useful to them. In order to demystify this belief, a discussion of CI for the service-sector organisation will be provided together with the various tools and techniques that can be used. The Public Services actually do have very different forms of competition and in order to improve the quality of services that they offer to their customers, it is essential to identify the competitors or competition that exists. The manner in which CI will be implemented in these organisations will differ from that of the private-sector organisations. This chapter provides a discussion based on the literature review on CI and commences by placing CI within the context for this study.

#### 2.2 WHAT IS COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE?

Organisations have been practicing some form of Competitive Intelligence for many years, without them even knowing it and without referring to these practices as CI. In many instances, CI has been used for strategic planning, marketing, financial

planning, policy development and re-engineering of an organisation's activities in order for the organisation to remain viable in the environment.

Managers require some form of information that can assist or compel them to take certain decisions regarding the functioning and performance of the organisation. With technological innovations and globalisation, the situation has now escalated to new levels forcing organisations to stop and take stock of what is happening and what needs to be done. This is where the emergence of CI as a business process has been noticed.

As mentioned 1.6 above, several terms can be used to describe what CI is. Therefore, no universal terminology exists that gives a name to the activities known here as CI (Prior, 1997-2009). Globally, the terms 'business intelligence', 'competitor intelligence', 'market research', 'market monitoring', 'market intelligence', 'corporate intelligence', 'competitive information', 'commercial intelligence' and 'knowledge management' are used by organisations (Global Intelligence Agency, 2005:7; McGonagle & Vella, 2002: 35). However, for the purpose of this study, CI has been chosen as it best describes the activities that the study intends to discuss.

CI can be regarded as the process that organisations use to gather actionable information about their competitors and the competitive environments within which they function, before applying this information to their decision-making and the planning processes so that it can improve their performance (Fleisher, 2001: 4). While it is mostly believed that CI is espionage or "spying" it is, in fact, a legitimate way of collecting intelligence by legal and ethical means (Horowitz, 1999). The information that the CI practitioners need is usually readily available in the public domain and requires no illegal activities to access them.

The characteristics of the CI process have been defined by Rouach & Santi (2001: 523) as, "an art of collecting, processing and storing information to be made available to people at all levels of the firm to help shape its future and protect it against current competitive threat; it should be legal and respect code of ethics; it involves the transfer of knowledge from the environment to the organisation within established rules." This definition places emphasis on information but it should be noted that CI



goes beyond the mere collection of information. It also involves the analysis of the information and its conversion into actionable processes that can benefit the organisation.

Horne & Parks (2004: 36) view CI as another tool that can help all types of organisations to better understand their current competitive environment and respond to the challenges in the marketplace. Maximum benefit is achieved when CI is integrated as part of the overall functioning and operations of the organisation. CI does not have to be a great expense, and not all organisations require the same depth and level of CI practice. CI programs may be situational in nature and operate on an “as needed” basis, or they can be perpetual, becoming part of the infrastructure of a company (Weeks Group, 2003). However, CI cannot be regarded as the answer to all an organisation’s problems. Rather it should be seen as an important tool that provides the organisation with a different angle to view its situation and a more outward focus (as compared to the traditional inward focus) on its performance.

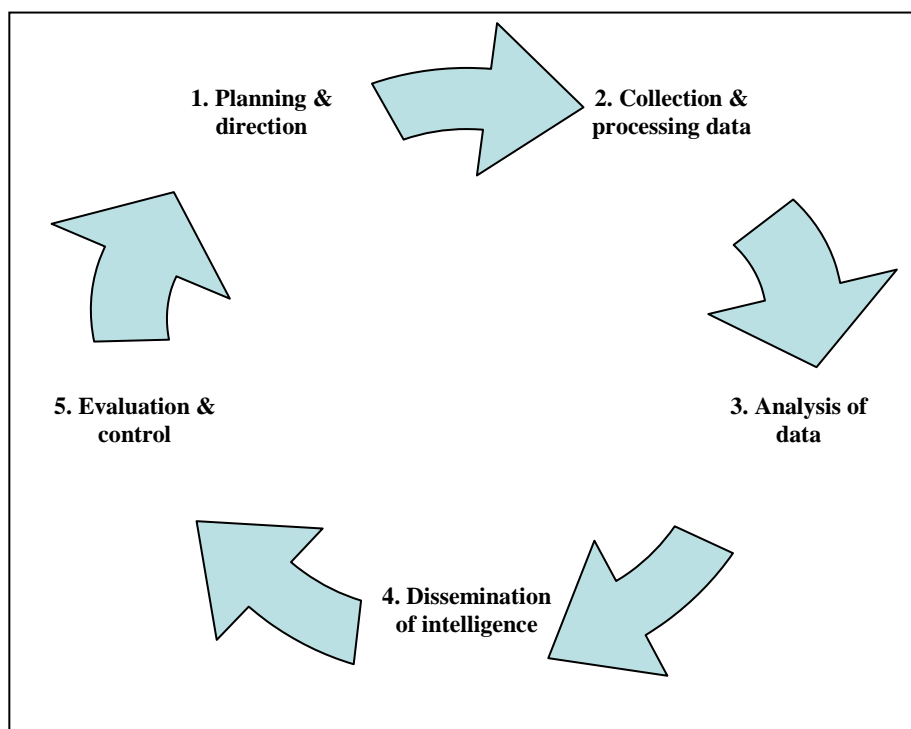
While CI is commonly associated with personnel from the marketing or strategy section of the organisation, it is a process that can, and should, be performed by any person or organisational department. After all, it is not the organisation that competes, but the people within it (Kahaner, 1997:8). Since CI is regarded as a process and not a function, it should appear in all aspects of the business as one seamless, continuous activity and not be relegated to one section or unit (Kahaner, 1997: 23).

Competitive Intelligence is able to predict the future or “probable future” of the business and their environments. This is done by means of a cyclical process known as the Intelligence Cycle (Figure 2.1). During this process, raw information is acquired, gathered, transmitted, evaluated, analysed and made available as intelligence for policymakers to use in decision-making and action (Johnson, 1995-2000). According to Kahaner (1997: 43-45), the basic unit of Competitive Intelligence is the intelligence cycle, which is made up of five stages that are repeated over time and can be applied to specific business problems or objectives.

The first stage is planning and direction. This is when management usually gets involved in deciding what intelligence is needed before an appropriate course of

action is decided upon to achieve the desired outcome. Following this is the collection and processing stage, when the actual raw information is gathered and processed so that it can be electronically transmitted and stored, facilitating the easy retrieval and analysis of the information. The analysis stage is the most difficult unit of the cycle and it demands specific skills and competencies in order to weigh the value of the information; identify patterns that appear; and then produce intelligence upon which actions will be taken. Several tools and techniques are used in this stage to analyse the information collected.

The fourth stage in the cycle is the dissemination of the intelligence to those who will be using it. Once that is done, the final stage of the intelligence cycle is the evaluation and control stage, where feedback is obtained from stakeholders to assess whether their needs were satisfied. When the needs of the stakeholders are not met or when new ideas and questions arise out of the intelligence obtained, the cycle will have to be restarted in order to satisfy these needs. Furthermore, the action taken based on the intelligence provided will result in changes within the organisation and these will result in more intelligence requirements. Thus, CI can be seen as a continuous process and not a once off activity.



**Figure 2.1** The Intelligence Cycle (adapted from Kahaner, 1997: 44; Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2007: 8)

Therefore, CI can be regarded as a process of using legal and ethical means to discover, gather, develop, process, analyse, disseminate, evaluate and control timely and reliable intelligence, so that decision makers in the organisation can take appropriate action to make the organisation more competitive, and improve its overall performance in the eyes of the customers.

### **2.3 NEED FOR CI IN ORGANISATIONS**

While it can be argued that CI is yet another ‘management hype’ similar to ‘Business Process Reengineering’, ‘Total Quality Management’, and ‘Customer Satisfaction’, it should be realized that the difference with CI is that it centrally focuses on information. This is the one factor that organisations will always need, and will never have enough of, especially if they intend to survive in the rapidly changing environment. Furthermore, with globalisation, technological advancements and networking becoming a reality of the new business environment, it is unlikely that a decrease in rapid changes taking place will be seen. This means that organisations will have to constantly re-evaluate their activities and functions. The ultimate objective of CI is to formulate sound, fact-based, rational decisions for action (Gross, 2000: 4). This is the result of intelligence work and implies that the CI process should become an essential part of the infrastructure of organisations.

The reasons why organisations need CI have been identified by Kahaner (1997: 24) as follows:

- The pace of business is increasing rapidly and decisions need to be made faster and with fewer resources, hence organisations can keep pace with this new speed by means efficient management and CI
- Managers are faced with information overload, since information is traditionally regarded as power. However, information is of no value if it is not relevant, timely, accurate and reliable. CI has the capacity to analyse and evaluate the information gathered and to offer the most relevant, high quality and accurate information to managers, thereby saving them the effort and time to sift through large quantities of information

- Organisations are faced with increased global competition from new competitors, since they are now part of a global economy, and their competition can emerge from anywhere in the world. CI can help organisations to identify these emerging competitors.
- Organisations' existing competition is becoming more aggressive, and this has resulted in the 'survival of the fittest' where organisations all compete for the same customers. CI can assist the organisation to forecast competitors' actions and allow them to be proactive, and take action before the situation becomes worse
- Political changes affect organisations either positively or negatively and all organisations need to ensure that they function within the ambit of these political changes. CI has the capability to keep organisations informed of political changes that affect their operations
- Rapid technological advancements can mean new opportunities for organisations. Keeping track of these changes in its own industry as well as other related industries is essential for the survival of the organisation.

The above is by no means an exhaustive list of the reasons for the use of CI, but it provides organisations with sufficient motivation for ensuring that CI forms a part of their management processes. Furthermore, Bernhardt (2005: 2) proposes that the executives in most companies function in an intelligence vacuum, and that strategic planning is based on "gut feel" or "instinct." Several unchallenged assumptions are made regarding certain situations and few mechanisms are available to coordinate and manage the delivery of accurate, relevant and timely intelligence about external threats or competitor capabilities, intents and plans that can benefit the organisation.

## **2.4 BENEFITS OF CI IN ORGANISATIONS**

Various benefits can be identified from the needs listed above. CI can do more than just provide the organisation with intelligence for decision-making purposes. A well-designed CI system can assist the organisation in their strategic planning process as well as in determining the intention and capabilities of its competitors, so that the extent of the risk to which the organisation is exposed, can be established.

Gross (2000: 1) confirms this by indicating that CI within an organization serves as a catalyst in the decision-making process. It also forms part of the value chain that takes data elements, converts these into actionable information, and results in strategic decisions.

The benefits of CI for organisations are identified by Kahaner (1997: 23-27) and Bernhardt (2005: 2) as follows:

- Organisations that implement CI are rarely surprised by events that affect their business and performance since they are able to anticipate these changes in the marketplace long before they occur and they are able to prepare themselves for these “predictable surprises”
- Organisations are able to anticipate the actions of their competitors and adjust their own activities accordingly in good time to outsmart the competition
- CI helps organisations to discover new or potential competitors and their activities in the marketplace
- Organisations learn from the successes and failures of others and, thus, save valuable time, money and resources
- Organisations are in a better position to increase the range and the quality of their future acquisitions, targets, mergers, and partnerships
- CI helps organisations learn more about new technologies, products and processes that affect them and so determine which are the most appropriate ones for their success
- Political, legislative and regulatory changes take place regularly and organisations are not always aware of them. CI provides an opportunity for organisations to learn about any such changes that would impact their business operations
- Organisations deciding to enter into new businesses can benefit from CI, not only in their decision-making, but also by providing foreknowledge about the potential success (or otherwise) of these new ventures
- CI exposes the organisation to new ideas and concepts, thereby providing the opportunity to view the organisation in a new light, and with an open mind. It also forces the organisation to be more outwardly focused and not have a limited, internal focus on the organisation

- Organisations, which have in the past failed to implement and sustain the latest management tools as a result of a lack of information, are now able to do so successfully as timely, accurate, unbiased, and valuable information is provided by CI
- CI sheds light on “business blindspots” and helps organisations to see and recognise the not so obvious aspects of their business
- CI reinforces the competitive culture in the organisation
- CI makes the organisation more aware of its need for counter-intelligence and information security.

A recent global study of CI in large companies that was conducted by the *Global Intelligence Alliance* (2005: 18) revealed the following benefits that companies claimed to have achieved through the use of CI:

- Increased quality of information received
- Accelerated decision making
- Improved systematically, in terms of information collection and analysis
- Improved effectiveness
- Increased awareness
- Improved dissemination of information
- Improved threat and opportunity identification
- Time and cost saving.

The study also indicated that CI was able to fill a primarily strategic role in the companies, with top managers being the most important users of CI information products. CI was also used in strategic planning and business development; continuous monitoring of the companies; and gathering of information on competitors, customers, and industries in the field (Global Intelligence Alliance, 2005).

The results of a South African study, *Evolution of CI in South Africa: early 1980's to 2003* (Viviers & Muller, 2004: 59) very positively revealed that companies in South Africa acknowledged that CI could enhance competitiveness. The study showed that CI is regarded as a legitimate business activity in South Africa. Also important in this

study was the fact that CI activities in companies did not just involve analysing competitors, but go beyond this to include customers, regulatory matters and suppliers.

CI usually involves the performance of two important tasks for an organisation. The first is Offensive CI, which helps to position the organisation in the marketplace and confidently maps out a course of future positioning. The second task is Defensive CI, which provides top management with actionable intelligence on what is happening, what is likely to happen and how to react to these events (Lueker, 2005: 56). While information on competitors is essential for organisations to succeed, the effective implementation of CI in organisations requires more than just information about the competitors. It must be able to include information about the industry in general, legal and regulatory trends, political and economic conditions. Only then can the strengths of competitors or the competition be accurately assessed within the context of these issues. Hence the implementation of CI in organisations needs now to be discussed.

## **2.5 IMPLEMENTING CI IN ORGANISATIONS**

While, in theory, the process of conducting CI seems to be a relatively logical and simple way of conducting business, the implementation of such a process is more challenging and daunting. Hence, the reason why many organisations have failed to use, or have not even considered utilising, CI in their operations. The situation is further compounded by other factors. These factors include: the negative attitudes of managers; the organisation's corporate culture not being conducive for CI; previous research failures of CI programmes that have not worked out as a result of ineffective implementation; lack of understanding of the organisation's strengths and weaknesses; the lack of resources to conduct CI; and, finally, the fact that CI is regarded as an additional cost for the organisations (Broome, 2001: 201; Kahaner, 1997; Metayer, 1999; Madden, 2001: 56).

A review of the literature indicates that there are several ways of implementing CI in organisations (Kahaner, 1997; Cook & Cook, 2000; Sawyer, 2002). The implementation also includes CI sub-processes such as assessment and reporting of

the performance benefits; efficacy of the CI and decision-making process; feedback on the future planning for CI; and the review and reassessment of the organisation's strategy, (Fleisher, 2001: 16). Prescott & Smith (1989) noted that while the functions and characteristics of implementing a specific CI programme in an organisation often reflect the unique needs of that organisation, it is possible also to identify patterns across a large number of CI programmes.

The implementation of CI is usually based on the needs of the organisation and these needs can be tactical or strategic. Depending on where the organisation is positioned, it may require different CI systems to be implemented, (Metayer, 1999: 72). The needs can be divided as:

- Tactical-urgent needs – the objective here will be to provide the operational staff with rapid information and to generate additional revenue
- Tactical-ongoing needs – the idea here is to provide different departments in the organisation with information that they require on a regular basis
- Strategic-urgent needs – calls for bold decisions and management will need support in terms of business development
- Strategic-ongoing needs – the objective is to support strategic initiatives that are less urgent in the organisation, (Metayer, 1999: 72).

Farrell (1999-2003) identified ten major steps that need to be taken when implementation of CI in an organisation and these can be broadly stated as:

- Step 1: Gain executive management's backing and commitment for CI or the process will not succeed
- Step 2: Appoint a CI manager who will lead the process by establishing clear objectives and directives for the CI function, match tasks, skills and interests of team members and prevent the team from being distracted
- Step3: Conduct a stakeholder analysis to determine who the intelligence users are, the purpose for needing intelligence, how it will be used and when it will be required
- Step 4: Determine the purpose, direction and policies from the information obtained in Step 3 and develop a statement of who it is to serve, and the products or services to be delivered



- Step 5: Conduct an information audit of what information already exists in the organisation to support the needs as identified in Step 3 and what support structure is available to communicate this information in the organisation
- Step 6: Perform a SWOT analysis to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the CI process
- Step 7: Perform a force field analysis to determine the factors that can hinder the success of the CI process
- Step 8: Determine the critical success factors that ensure the successful operation of the process
- Step 9: Decide on strategies for establishing or developing the CI capability in the organisation and the approaches that will be taken
- Step 10: Define the action plans that will be necessary to deliver the strategies and allocate responsibilities, time frames and evaluation and review of these actions.

The above steps can be used in all types of organisations, and using such a structured method of implementing CI in an organisation can ensure the success of the process.

Furthermore, while one may believe that the implementation of such a process is rather complex and has its own inherent problems, research reveals that nine out of ten large-scale companies in various markets around the world implemented CI and have been doing so for between three and five years. Of the total of 287 companies in eighteen countries surveyed, 88% already have people responsible for the implementation of CI. It was also evident from the research that there are large budgets and increasing investments in CI activities, thereby indicating that CI is already a well established practice in large-scale successful companies in the world (Global Intelligence Alliance, 2005). Furthermore, CI tools and techniques have allowed organisations to access information that they require, easily analyse, synthesise and distribute it.

## **2.6 CI TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES**

The present global environment is confronted with constant change and development as a result of technological innovations and new business developments. Access to

information is also increasingly easy, leading to information overload in certain instances. This means that it is increasingly necessary for organisations (and individuals) to have the tools, strategies, techniques and models, as well as the skills, needed to manage this vast amount of information. Tools for gathering, sorting and analysing information so that it can be converted into actionable intelligence are required to assist CI practitioners in accomplishing their tasks. It is also important to note that while several tools, techniques, and strategies are identified in the literature (Sandman, 2000: 69-95; Gieskes, 2001: 76-79; Marceau & Sawka, 2001: 160-163; Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2003), each organisation has to select appropriate tools, techniques, and strategies to suit their unique environment and needs. In certain instances, a range of CI tools may be used in an organisation to ensure that information (intelligence) gets to the users in a form that they can assimilate easily and quickly.

It is often assumed that CI only works for large companies. However, CI can work for almost any type of business irrespective of its size. McGonagle & Vella (1993: 104) suggest that when developing strategies for CI in smaller, independent organisations, one should look inward at the organisation and think about the organisation's own experiences. This will assist in analysing the constraints that the CI effort will encounter and help to provide the essential activities via appropriate tools and techniques.

Organisations make use of technological tools such as the intranet to record information and share it with everyone in the organisation. Technology also permits the organisation to merge internally produced information such as reports, memos, database contents, and minutes of meetings, with the large amount of information that is available on the internet (Gross, 2000: 5).

Fleisher & Bensoussan (2003: xviii, 12, 20) state that the analysis of collected information requires creativity and technical knowledge, intuition, models and frameworks. They have discussed over four dozen techniques, tools and frameworks that organisations can utilise in order to obtain CI that is needed. However, the authors have cautioned against the use of these formal methods as a means of taking "superficial shortcuts" to management decision making. They also indicate that while

these techniques are available and have been used by organisations for many years, there is no one right analytical tool that can solve the problems of every organisation.

The complexity and depth of the analysis and, subsequently, the tools and techniques that will be chosen, is dependent on the business situation and the needs of the organisation. Furthermore, no method by itself will be able to provide all the answers that decision makers need to improve their competitiveness. Therefore, it is advised that appropriate methods be chosen for use in specific situations and a combination of methods may be more beneficial to obtain optimal results. CI practitioners should guard against repeatedly choosing the same method and tools that they are familiar with. Apart from compromising the quality of the outcome, it can also give the competitor an idea of the organisation's strategic plans especially if they are aware of the techniques or tools on which the organisation consistently relies.

It should also be noted that many tools, techniques and models applicable for CI use, are actually the traditional business or managerial tools, techniques and models that have been used in organisations for strategic planning and management decision making. They are based on solid research that has been conducted and are usually backed up by theory but on their own may not be adequate for CI purposes. However, they are flexible enough and with slight modifications and adjustments, creativity and innovative thinking, they can be used successfully in CI activities.

Fleisher & Bensoussan (2003: 27) have categorised the tools, techniques and methods that can be used in CI into five broad categories, i.e.; strategic analytical techniques; competitive and customer analysis; environmental analysis; financial analysis; and evolutionary analysis. Some examples of such tools include the SWOT analyses, macro environmental analyses (STEEP), value chain analyses, customer value analyses, scenario analyses, and issue analyses. Some of these tools will be discussed in more detail in the Chapter 6, when CI tools and techniques for improving service delivery in the service sector will be focussed upon.

Lenz and Engledow (1986:329) suggest that the “essential character of organisational environments may be changing in ways that require new modes of thought and analysis”. The authors further indicate the mounting pressure that is placed on senior

level managers and corporate staff in organisations to develop better methods for assessing the organisations' environments. Various models for environmental analysis that could assist organisations in strategic decision making have been identified that could be used by all types of organisations. It further relates that the environment of the organisation consists of competitive forces that impact the functioning of the organisation.

## **2.7 CI FOR THE SERVICE SECTOR**

Before discussing CI for the service sector, it is essential to first ascertain what the organisation of the service sector is and what the characteristics are that pose a challenge for implementing CI within these organisations.

### **2.7.1 WHAT IS THE SERVICE SECTOR ORGANISATION?**

Service sector organisations are seen as, “those that sell customised services to their customers and they are not confined to a physical object, they can be difficult to deconstruct, they often involve lengthy sales (or marketing) cycles and they come with come with “value-added” services,” (Cobb, 2004: 29).

The service sector places a greater emphasis on the role of human capital in the organisation. Especially customised services are built around the tacit knowledge of the organisation's employees. Hence, it can be stated that the supply chain of service sector organisations is not necessarily physical in nature but it is focused on how knowledge is shared within an organisation (Cobb, 2004: 30).

The service sector can also be referred to as services where human labour plus expertise (value-added) or human capital is the core function of the business (Sawyer, 2002: 8). Within the context of this study, the service sector will refer generally to organisations with the sole existence of providing services to the user, with the intention of improving the quality of life for the user. While this can also describe profit-making industries, the major focus of this study will be non-profit services.

Service sector organisations have certain unique characteristics that differentiate them from the private sector and other organisations.

### **2.7.2 NATURE OF THE SERVICE SECTOR**

Rodie & Martin (2001: 5-9) identified four generalised characteristics of service sector organisations: intangibility, simultaneity/inseparability, perishability and heterogeneity. These characteristics pose the following challenges for implementing CI in the service sector:

- Services are highly intangible in nature making implementation challenging since there is no tangible product to show to the customer
- Managers, employees and customers often have different perceptions of what the service should or should not entail, and differing perceptions of how the service can be evaluated
- The cost and value of the service offered is usually not-for-profit purposes and may not be easily apparent to the customer
- Services are usually produced and consumed simultaneously and often in a situation where the presence of the service provider and customer are inseparable. Hence, the customer may not be in the position to evaluate the service offered prior to obtaining it, which can sometimes result in the customer being dissatisfied when the service provided is not up to their expectations
- Service providers find it difficult to detect and remedy any service defects or errors that are exposed to the customer, since the customer is usually physically present when the service is produced
- The quality of the service produced and delivered may depend, to a certain extent, on the customer's contributions (e.g. the application for identity documents requires accurate details and documentation such as the birth certificate). Thus, the service is not under the complete control of the service provider
- The customer's presence and involvement in the service accentuates the need for effective interpersonal skills on the service provider's part
- In certain cases the service provider and customer involvement are essential and the service provider has to interact directly with the customer, thereby cutting out

the network of intermediaries from whom CI information could have been obtained, such as data capturers, and helpdesk support staff

- The customer's physical presence and reaction to the services received, or other behavioural traits, can influence the reaction of fellow-customers either positively or negatively
- The service provider often has some amount of flexibility to customise or mass produce services, according to the needs of the customers. However, various constraints such as lack of capacity, facilities, equipment, time and labour inhibits this from happening every time
- Services are heterogeneous in nature and, as mentioned, are subject to the expectations, attitudes, and temperaments of the customer which may vary from day to day and from customer to customer
- The lack of standardisation of services can also lead to cost-related inefficiencies as a result of work being redone, materials wasted in the process, and time spent on serving customers or making corrections to work already completed
- Service organisations usually have a high staff turnover, which means that the sector has challenges in terms of training, supervision, and motivation of employees to ensure that highly skilled and empowered front-line workers with good interpersonal skills are present to respond to the rather varied and differentiated customers.

Non-profit organisations or government agencies and departments can be referred to as typical service sector organisations, which form the focus of this study. This sector provides services at a low cost (or for no charge at all) and in order to achieve their objectives, they need CI processes and activities.

### **2.7.3 NEED FOR CI IN THE SERVICE SECTOR**

Profound changes in competitive environments and in customer values have resulted in services becoming the central focus of corporate strategies and operational agendas for most organisations in the world. This in an attempt to attract customers, retain them and keep unique competitive edge. The challenge for the service sector is to

implement strategies effectively and cost-efficiently (Vandermerwe, Lovelock & Taishoff, 1994: xxiii). Furthermore, customers have become even more educated and informed and more environmentally aware than in the past. Therefore, managers and service providers are forced to transform the way they think and behave in order to respond to these changes.

From the literature, it is evident that the service sector has grown to become a large part of the world's gross domestic product, and the markets of the world are being dominated by the service sector. Furthermore, it is reported that the service sector is growing throughout the world and in every developed and developing country and an entrepreneurial character is evident in this sector (Rodie & Martin, 2001: 5; Sawyer, 2002: 13). Sawyer (2002: 15-17) states that service sector organisations often deal with concepts and ideas as opposed to tangible products, and they need to develop tools, strategies and solutions that can help them to defend their existing business and find new ways of utilising their knowledge to grow the business. CI can be seen as the tool for doing this. By keeping the organisation informed of the various competitive threats from customers, influencers and employees, the service sector can become more proactive in responding to these threats, before they cause much harm to the organisation or its reputation.

The open systems theory of Thompson (1967) and Katz & Kahn (1978) has also been able to provide a theoretical foundation for the need to implement CI in organisations. Open systems theory suggests that bureaucracies (such as Public Service departments) do not exist in a vacuum and they respond to the environment within which they exist (Thompson, 1967). The environment also has an impact on the operations and internal functioning of the organisation and the organisation is dependent on its environment for support and continued existence. Katz & Kahn (1978) went further and developed a framework for open system theory which focussed on using energies or inputs within a business context to create products or services that are made available to consumers. The authors further emphasised that the energies or inputs could be in the form of external influences from the environment; resources from the organisation such as employees and raw materials; and intangible external influences such as status, recognition, satisfaction or rewards. Public Service departments are largely open systems and CI has the ability to assist these organisations with information that

can assist them in the design, structuring and planning of the organisation to survive within its environment.

Competitors in the service sector are usually difficult to define or identify. The reason for this is that there is a wide range of competitors, which makes it very difficult for organisations to fully understand their competition and to position themselves accordingly. Furthermore, the competition in service sector organisations is constantly changing, and the sources of the competitive threats move rapidly from one customer to the next. Therefore, there is no way of predicting exactly which competitive forces a company will be faced with from day to day, or week to week (Sawyer, 2002: 19).

The areas of competition for the service sector and non-profit organisations have been identified. Firstly, there are those that are internal to the organisation: resources; funding and other economic factors; physical resources and facilities; personnel; expertise and experience; and influence and prestige. Secondly, those aspects that are external to the organisation: users or customers. Finally, there are competing organisations: product-form competitors; generic competitors; and enterprise competitors (Greenberg, 1982: 82).

Clearly, implementing CI in the service sector presents a huge challenge. However, implementing CI for Public Service sector organisations is no easier.

## **2.8 CI FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE SECTOR**

It is difficult to motivate and justify the implementation of CI activities in the Public Service sector, mainly because of the lack of an easily quantifiable outcomes measure. Outcomes measures are usually subjective in nature for example, the improvement of the quality of life of a designated community or demographic group. Furthermore, the Public Services also have several stakeholders who are involved in the operations of the departments and these stakeholders can view the outcomes measure from varying perspectives (Wagner, 2003: 72). However, this can be regarded as an ideal motivation and opportunity for CI to be implemented, so that it adds value to the Public Services' functioning. In this case, CI activities can ensure



that appropriate, accurate and actionable intelligence is made available to the organisation in order that it can meet its challenges. An understanding of the Public Service sector is important before one is able to identify the forms of competition that exists in these organisations.

### **2.8.1 DEFINITION OF PUBLIC SERVICE SECTOR AND NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS**

Public Service sector organisations can be referred to as those organisations that generally fulfil a social or political need and are, thus, closer in nature to non-profit organisations (Wagner, 2003: 71). Public Services are usually paid for through general taxation and operate within a legal and financial framework. The workers in the public sector are committed to serving the public.

Non-profit organisations serve the community and their purpose is to help a community or a group of individuals to achieve a goal that benefits them and that of the society as a whole (Firoz & Wightman, 2002: 102). Non-profit organisations are further seen as those organisations that are able to take on tasks and provide services without the financial and legal constraints that their profit making counterparts are faced with. Most non-profit organisations are in existence to assist government to achieve its Public Service delivery mandate to the citizens and this is usually a voluntary service. These organisations have realised that no bureaucracy has all the funds, resources and time to deal with all social problems (Vigoda-Gadot, 2004<sub>2</sub>: 46).

Public sector organisations and non-profit organisations often have similar stakeholders. These stakeholders are the general public or specific groups of the public, based on their needs. For the purpose of this study, they will be regarded as customers or clients. Both public and non-profit organisations have similar organisational structures and funding systems. Sometimes, these terms are used interchangeably to refer to Public Services.

Public Services can, therefore, be regarded as the services that are provided by the government of a country to its citizens. This can be a direct service via government departments or Public Service departments, or it can be via non-profit organisations. This study will focus only on the Public Service departments, although the researcher accepts that the discussions and issues discussed are also applicable to non-profit organisations, overall. Certain general forms of competition are common to the organisations.

## **2.8.2 COMPETITION IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE ORGANISATIONS**

Within Public Service organisations, it can be noticed that very little attention is placed on the value of market research and reports that provide the organisations with competitive benchmarks for their operations. Most of these organisations function in isolation as they are the only organisations that provide specific services. As a result, they do not interact with other similar service providing organisations. Competition is not obvious in these departments or organisations, and it is a challenge for the organisation to identify and recognise any form of competition that may have an impact on its operations.

Greenberg (1982: 83-86) identified four key areas of competition that should be recognised for non-profit organisations. These areas of competition are also applicable for the Public Service and are:

- Competition for funding
- Competition for personnel
- Competition for users
- Competition for influence and prestige.

### **2.8.2.1 Competition for funding**

Public Service organisations usually rely on funding from central or local government. This money is collected through taxation, but there are certain instances when funding is supplemented by a fee-based service (a small fee may be charged to

cover the cost of the service and not to make profit). Public Service organisations have to lobby for funding or present a special case, in the event of requesting increases in funds. They are more often faced with few opportunities for increases to their budgets, as this is controlled by legislation. This means that it is essential for the organisations to collect reliable, high quality intelligence on any projects that are in progress so that these can be used to motivate for funding and be sustained to the end (Wagner, 2003: 75).

Public Service organisations have to compete for funding with other services that the government also offers. These may include essential services such as health care, welfare, education, housing, sanitation and water. They also have to compete for a larger portion of the budget with other branches that offer the same service. In certain instances, the branches that report good performances and achieve plans and projects may get more funding to sustain the reputation that they feel they have earned. Sometimes funding for a specific Public Service is influenced by politics and government priorities (especially during local and national elections). In order to impress supporters and would-be supporters, funds may be diverted to issues that the politicians regard as urgent and important, thus, leaving some Public Service organisations with limited funds to achieve their goals.

Greenberg (1982: 84) suggests that competition for funding focuses on two phases. Firstly, the analysis of all the competitive organisations or departments and how they are able to raise funds, and secondly, having clear definitions of the specific mission or competitive area for the organisation so that it can concentrate its efforts to obtain the necessary funding and resources. However, in Public Service organisations, it is often the situation where different departments compete for the same funding but are measured differently.

Competing for personnel is also a common practice in these organisations.

### **2.8.2.2 Competition for personnel**

Public Service organisations are usually labour intensive and require trained personnel with dedication and willingness to serve the needs of the citizens and to make a

difference in the community. The personnel in these organisations are, in effect, the service and workers cannot be separated from the service that is offered. Hence, staff need to be competent and skilled in what they do and be prepared to update their skills and competencies as required by the ever-changing, differentiated and more sophisticated work environments where latest business management techniques and practices are being adopted.

Therefore, Public Service organisations are subject to more competition for personnel. Any inability to recognise this can have negative consequences for the entire organisation. Furthermore, it is realised that staff in these organisations are not paid very high salaries; have low status in the community; have little room for advancement because of the absence of career ladders; and work in isolation and without any colleagues in certain cases (branches or division). Worker burnout, exhaustion and depression due to overwork and unpleasant working situations, are also regular complaints (Greenberg, 1982: 85). This results in high staff turnover in Public Service organisations and also difficulty in attracting high calibre staff in positions. Most professionals and lower level staff working in this environment do so because of their loyalty to the profession and their desire to improve the quality of life of others and not because of their loyalty to the employing organisation.

In some cases, staff with the required skills and competencies, choose not to work beyond the contracted limits that are expected of them. They are also the ones who constantly bring down the morale of the department and influence others in the department to follow their way of functioning. This attitude may be a result of several factors such as political affiliation, union impact or past experiences. This form of competition is internal to the organisation and can be more severe than any other form of competition (Sawyer, 2002).

Competing for personnel, meaning the attraction and retention of skilled workers, can be a severe challenge for the Public Service organisations as workers are more attracted to the private sector where work conditions are better and career paths well defined. Wagner (2003: 75) suggests that CI techniques be used by the Public Service organisations to better understand competitors for personnel and the decision making criteria used by potential employees when applying and evaluating jobs.

Another important form of competition identified for Public Service organisations is competing for users/customers.

### **2.8.2.3 Competing for users/customers**

The users, in the case of Public Service organisations, are the customers or clients to whom they provide a service. This includes the current users of the services and any potential users who are not aware of the service offered. Although Public Service organisations are usually the only ones providing a specific service, e.g. where the Department of Home Affairs is the sole provider of South African ID booklets and passports, they still experience competition from their customers. They will have to take action to increase the number of customers that use the service and more importantly, to improve the awareness of the service to the customer. More customers using the services mean that more people are complying with government regulations, resulting in good public administration in the country.

The competition for customers is made more difficult because prior experiences that the customer has had with a specific department and the nature of that prior relationship will impact whether the customer will return to use further services or not. A satisfied customer will be pleased to come back to the same department for future services, whereas a less satisfied customer may go to great lengths to avoid the service, even if it means getting involved in underhand (and illegal) ways of obtaining what is needed, e.g. the paying of a bribe to get passports or licences. This not only leads to poor service delivery but also to corruption and unethical behaviour both on the part of the customer and the member of staff engaged with the customer.

The customer's lack of knowledge and education with regards to new services offered or new methods of doing things can also pose a competitive barrier in Public Service organisations. Some customers may not be aware of new procedures that are adopted or they may be reluctant to change to new ways of doing things. Education, therefore, plays a role in getting customers 'up to speed' with changes and to alleviate customer perceptions of what needs to be done (Sawyer, 2002: 32).

The customer's perception of the location of Public Service organisations can also be a form of competition. Especially in the South Africa, customers may be reluctant to go to an organisation that is situated in an area known for its bad reputation for activities such as highjacking and theft. Also, most Public Service departments are usually situated in the business districts of a city, which will be busy with traffic and will have limited parking available, thereby influence the customer's perception of the service. Sawyer (2002: 34) advises that the best way to deal with competition that emanates from customers is to be aware that this form of competition exists and to keep in touch with the customers on a regular basis as this will assist the organisation to develop greater influence and prestige in the environment.

#### **2.8.2.4 Competing for influence and prestige**

Public Service organisations compete for influence and prestige and would like to be seen as the departments that make a difference. The attempt to increase their visibility and claim credit for certain services offered is visible in their activities such as Public Service awards, service excellence nominations and the recognition for outstanding performances by individuals or departments. Such awards are usually displayed in specific Public Service departments or in the media. It is also a way of gaining the confidence of the customers and to show proof of the nature of their activities. Citizens of a country usually take the Public Service departments for granted and see them as essential services offered by the government but rarely equate these departments with other private sector organisations or as best in the business.

Therefore, it can be noted that the Public Service organisations definitely do have competition that they need to take into consideration. Most of the competition is internally based and CI functions can be a very useful tool for the Public Service organisations if it intends to improve its operations and activities to meet the demands placed on it.

## 2.9 SUMMARY

Since CI is a new concept that is being adopted by more organisations, it has been necessary to discuss what CI really is and to describe the process. It has also been important to highlight the needs for such a process in organisation. No organisation will be motivated to implement a new concept unless sufficient evidence is available regarding the benefits of that concept. Hence the benefits of CI implementation in several established organisations have been shown. These organisations, both South African and international that have been implementing CI in their operations have met with successful results.

The implementation of such a process in organisations is usually met with strong reservation from staff and this mainly because of the lack of knowledge about how the process should be conducted. The implementation of CI should be based on the unique needs of the organisation and the steps for implementing CI have been identified allowing CI to be implemented in all types of organisations irrespective of the size and nature of the business.

In order to accomplish the successful implementation of CI in organisations, several tools and techniques are necessary. The discussion has identified traditional management tools and techniques that have been used in business organisations for many years. With slight modifications, innovative thinking and creativity, these can be used for CI in organisations. It was necessary to provide an explanation of the nature and characteristics of the service sector organisations and, in particular, Public Service organisations, or sector. The close similarity that exists between Public Service organisations and non-profit organisations was also established.

While all organisations have some form of competition, it is not easily identifiable in the Public Service organisations. Hence, it has been important to establish exactly who or what the competition is in this sector. These were identified as competition for funding, competition for personnel, competition for users or customers and competition for influence and prestige.

With a better understanding of CI and its usefulness in organisations, in particular the Public Service sector, it is necessary to establish if this process is suitable for the Public Service sector in order to improve the delivery of services. Hence, a review of literature in order to understand the current state of Public Service organisations in South Africa and in particular the delivery of service by this sector will continue and this will be discussed in Chapter 4. The current strategies that this sector uses will also be examined and the possible need to improve the current status quo of Public Service delivery will also be investigated in Chapter 4. Therefore, it is essential to first determine what methodology will be used to address all the aspects of this study.



## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Harvey & Myers (2002: 169), research methods can be regarded as the means by which knowledge is acquired and constructed within a discipline. These methods have to be relevant and rigorous in order for them to be accepted as legitimate within a specific field of knowledge. Fetterman (1998: 1) states that the researcher usually enters the field with an ‘open mind, not an empty head’ and before any questions are asked, the researcher has to start with a problem, a theory or model, a research design, specific data collection techniques, tools for analysis and a specific writing or reporting style.

This Chapter will, therefore, present the research approach, design and methodology that will be followed to address the main research question, as outlined in Chapter 1. It will also provide a comprehensive description of the research procedure, data collection techniques and data analysis that will be used to ascertain whether CI tools and techniques can be implemented in Public Service departments in South Africa, in order to enhance the quality of services delivered. Ethnographic research purposes, characteristics, benefits and limitations, design, validity and reliability, writing the report and ethics will be discussed. The use of ethnographic research in public administration will also be identified and discussed in this chapter.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH APPROACHES

All research is informed by particular perspectives called paradigms within a discipline. Paradigms serve as a way to look at the world, and interpret what is seen. They then also allow a researcher to decide which observations are real, valid and important to document (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>1</sub>: 41). The most common paradigms in social science research are positivism; interpretative, phenomenological

or constructivist theory; critical theory; ecological theory; and social network theory (Table 3.1). Table 3.1 also highlights the most important features of each of these paradigms, and these features serve to provide a comparison between the paradigms.

The aim of positivistic research is to provide explanations leading to the prediction of causal relationships. Critical research aims at investigations into the sources and dimensions of inequality in actions and policies of the dominant social paradigm or institution. The aim of ecological research is to look for continuous accommodation among individuals, institutions and the environment, whilst the social networking paradigm aims at providing an important analytical framework for social science research.

The terms ‘interpretive’, ‘phenomenological’ and ‘constructivist’ are used interchangeably when describing paradigms and, according to LeCompte & Schensul (1999<sub>1</sub>: 49) this approach is inherently participatory in nature because meaning can only be created through interaction, and researchers must participate in the lives of the research participants in order to observe social dialogue and interaction. Furthermore, results from such interaction can produce a deep sense of shared understanding of a particular social problem as well as a shared view that can lead to a specific direction or action to remedy the identified problem. Phenomenologically oriented studies are generally inductive and they make few explicit assumptions about sets of relationships (Mouton, 2001; Fetterman, 1998).

**Table 3.1:** A Comparison of Paradigms (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>1</sub>: 59).

	<b>POSITIVISTIC APPROACHES</b>	<b>INTERPRETIVE APPROACHES</b>	<b>CRITICAL APPROACHES</b>	<b>ECOLOGICAL APPROACHES</b>	<b>NETWORK APPROACHES</b>
<b>CONCERN</b>	Self as defined by society/ form/ social structure, i.e. what’s going on outside individuals	Society/form/social structure as defined by self, i.e., what’s going on within and between individuals	Self as defined by the structure of domination, i.e., what’s going on within and between individuals as a consequence of their given material and historical conditions	Self as defined by social structures representing levels of influence, i.e., what’s going on within individuals influenced by family, peers, school, work, community and society	Self as defined by interaction with significant others in specific cultural domains, i.e., what’s going on within and between individuals as a consequence of social relationships
<b>ORIGINS OF KNOWLEDGE</b>	By definition, by deduction from laws or theoretical statements, from experience	From shared understandings, negotiation, historical and social context	From different access to knowledge regarding historical context, political,	From beliefs and behaviors of individuals to knowledge of structural factors influencing their	From beliefs and behaviors of individuals to knowledge about their social interactions with



			economic, and social conditions	behaviors	important others
<b>ROLE OF RESEARCHER</b>	Affectively neutral, uninfluenced in the conduct of study by personal experience of the research	Involved, informed by researcher's personal experience in interaction with the study participants	Educative, analytic, transformative; active teacher/ learner	Detached, uninfluenced in the conduct of study by personal experience of the research	Involved, informed by researcher's personal experience in interaction with the study participants; may also be detached and uninfluenced
<b>ROLE OF RESEARCHED</b>	Affectively neutral, objective	Involved, subjective	Educative, analytic, transformative; active teacher/ learner	Detached, objective	May be either involved or detached; Objective or subjective
<b>FOCUS</b>	Observable behavior. Measurement and quantification. Qualitative operationalisation of variables. Controlling variances and bias.	Elicited meanings for observational behavior. Intersubjective understanding. Explaining variance and bias.	Structural asymmetries, critical consciousness, hidden meanings and assumptions, patterns of oppression. Exposing variance and bias.	Observable behavior and elicited meanings in relation to structures, policies, norms, behaviors typical of other levels in the system.	Observable and measured behavior, both qualitative and quantitative and elicited meanings in relation to explication of social relationships.
<b>PROCEDURES</b>	Definition (by researcher); Description (by researcher); Classification/ codification (by researcher); Enumeration; Correlation; Verification; Prediction	Definition (by subject); Description (by subject); Classification/ codification (by researcher subject to member checks); Enumeration; Correlation/ association; Interpretation (by researcher in conjunction with subject); Communication	Definition (by researcher and subject); Description (by researcher and subject); Classification/ codification (by researcher subject to member checks); Enumeration; Correlation/ association; Interpretation (researcher in conjunction with subject); Communication (by researcher); Action/ transformation (researcher and subject)	Definition (by researcher); Description (by researcher); Classification/ codification (by researcher possibly subject to member checks); Enumeration; Correlation/ association; Interpretation (researcher in conjunction with subject); Communication (by researcher); Verification; Prediction	Definition (by researcher); Description (by researcher); Classification/ codification (by researcher possibly subject to member checks); Enumeration; Correlation/ association; Interpretation (researcher in conjunction with subject); Communication (by researcher); Verification; Prediction.
<b>PROCESS</b>	Achieving control of behavior by modeling its study after procedures used by scientists studying the physical universe	Achieving understanding of behavior by analysis of social interaction, meaning and communication	Achieving change in structure and behavior by exposing hidden patterns of meaning, communication and control	Achieving change in structure and behavior by analysis of levels and their interaction	Achieving change in structure and behavior by identifying influence of interaction among members of a social group on one another
<b>GOALS</b>	1) Generalization of results to subsequent similar events and phenomena 2) Development of universal laws which govern human behavior in all settings	1) Comparison of results to similar and dissimilar processes and phenomena 2) Development of workable and shared understandings regarding regularities in human behavior in specific settings	1) Analysis of results to unmask inequities in process and phenomena 2) Development of emancipatory stance towards determinants of human behavior	1) Analysis of result to identify relationships across levels in a local situation 2) Development of local predictors influencing individual, group and social behaviors 3) Inductive development of regional and larger patterns and laws	1) Analysis of results to identify social relationships among related individuals; 2) Development of predictors of social influences on individual behavior 3) Generalization from local and universal rules

Fetterman (1998: 5) states that, “ethnographers recognise the importance of understanding the epistemological basis of a selected paradigm.” The selected paradigm that is typically used for ethnographic research is usually based on a phenomenologically oriented paradigm. This paradigm embraces a multicultural perspective because it accepts multiple realities. People act on their individual perceptions, and these actions have real consequences.

For the purpose of this study, and in order to improve the delivery of service by the Department of Home Affairs as identified in Chapter 1, the phenomenological paradigm has been cited as the most suitable.

### **3.3 A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD**

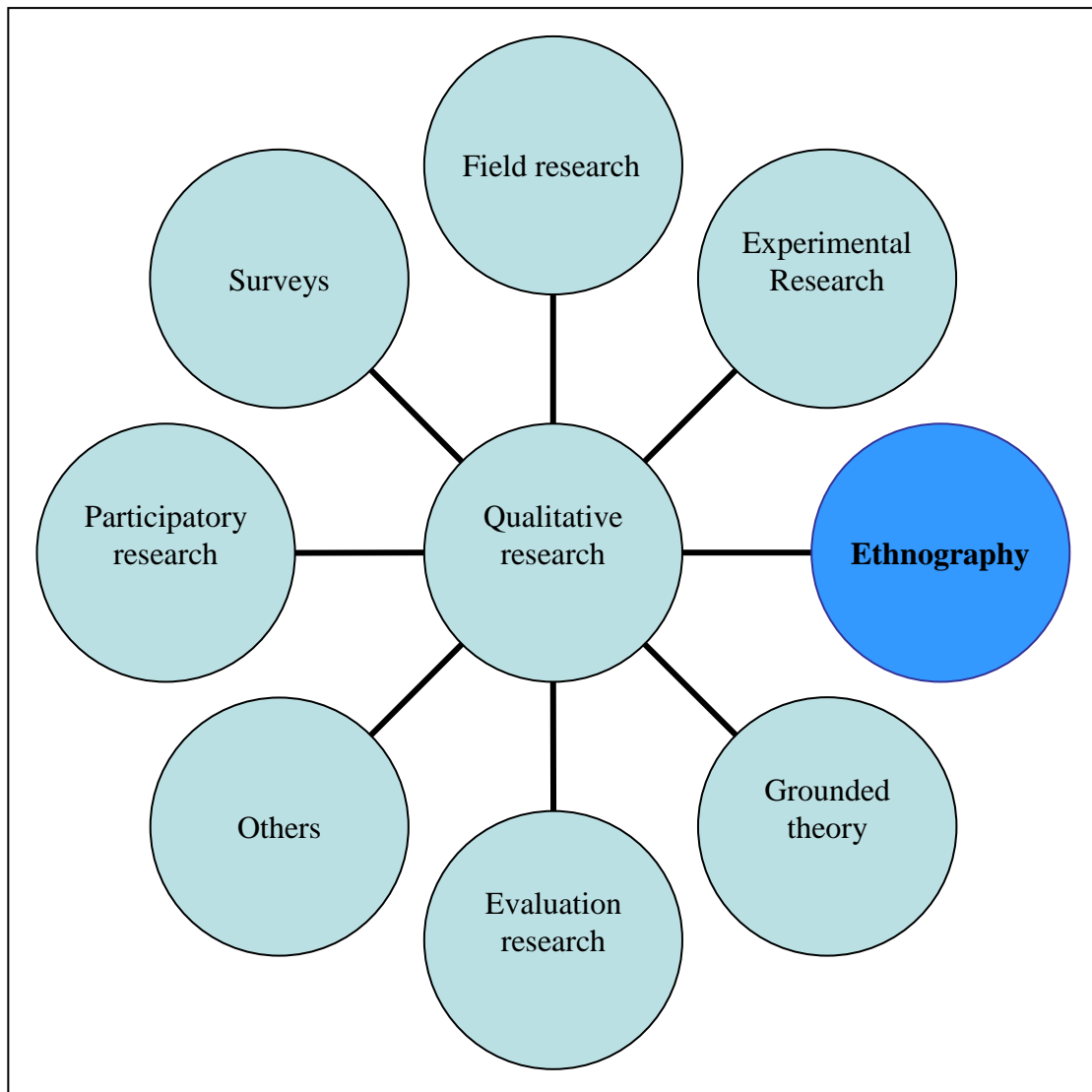
After identifying the paradigm most suitable for this study, the research method that is most appropriate was decided upon. Qualitative research allows the researcher to provide details of the study area and develop a deeper understanding of the topic. The researcher found that no single research method for data collection was able to adequately address the complex issue of improving the quality of Public Service delivery through the implementation of CI tools and techniques. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, qualitative research approach will be applied using several methods of data collection. Examples of data collection for this form of research include face-to-face interviews, focus groups, document analysis, site visits, and participant observation.

Qualitative research emphasises the human factor and utilises intimate first-hand knowledge of the research setting, thereby avoiding distancing the researcher from the people or event/situation being studied (Neuman, 2003). Furthermore, this approach to research captures and discovers meaning once the researcher becomes immersed in the data, thus it can be regarded as a naturalistic approach where the researcher studies phenomena in their natural settings and tries to interpret and make sense of the results obtained.

Qualitative research methods were developed in the social sciences to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomena and they are able to help researchers understand people and the social / cultural contexts within which they live. Examples of qualitative methods would be participative / action research, case study research and ethnography (Myers & Avison, 2002: 4). A qualitative approach has benefited this study as it examined the issue of implementing CI tools and techniques to improve Public Service delivery and a detailed view of the subject was provided.

Had a qualitative method not been suitable, then the researcher could have selected a quantitative method. While quantitative research could be useful in researching the CI tools and techniques to enhance quality service delivery, two problem areas were identified. The first problem relates to measuring the different attributes pertaining to quality service delivery and the second problem relates to the rating scales that can be used for quality service research. In measuring quality service delivery, the attributes are usually intangible, cannot be clearly specified and are abstract in nature. Therefore, standard measurements / procedures of quantitative research can be misleading. Hence quantitative research was not regarded as an option for this study.

Figure 3.1 reflects the various alternatives of qualitative research methods and these methods were carefully investigated before an appropriate method for this study was decided upon. In order to successfully analyse and understand the complexity of the intangible attributes of the study, an ethnographic research method was selected as the most beneficial.



**Figure 3.1** Qualitative research alternatives

### **3.4 ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH**

Mouton (2001: 148) describes ethnographic research as, “studies that are usually qualitative in nature which aim to provide an in-depth description of a group or community. Such descriptions are embedded in the life-worlds of the actors being studied and produce insider perspectives of the actors and their practices”. This description of ethnographic research relates to the views of Gay, Mills & Airasian (2009: 404) where they indicate that ethnographic research is the “study of the cultural patterns and perspectives of participants in their natural settings”. Usually the researcher in such a study engages in a long-term study of particular phenomena in

order to place their understanding of the phenomena into a meaningful context. By participating in varying degrees in the research setting, the researcher is able to discern patterns and regularities of human behaviour in social activity.

Ethnographic research can also be referred to as field research, participant observation research, or narratives and it involves the researcher directly observing participants in social settings (Neuman, 2003:366).

Van Donge (2006: 180) confirms the description of ethnographic research outlined above by describing it “as methods that attempt to study social life as it unfolds in the practices of day-to-day life”. This method of research avoids artificial research situations as much as possible. Further, ethnographic research can be regarded as one of the most in-depth research methods (Myers, 1999). This is because the researcher is at the research site for a long period of time and sees what people are doing, as well as what they say they are doing – the researcher obtains a deep understanding of the people, the organisation, and the broader context within which they function. This form of research is, therefore, well suited to provide rich insights into the human, social and organisational aspects of service delivery in a country.

Michael Genzuk (2003) sees ethnography as a social science research method that relies heavily on up-close, personal experiences and possible participation, not just mere observation from a researcher who is trained in the art of ethnography. This view is backed by that of Van Maanen (1995: 4) who states that, “when used as a method, ethnography typically refers to fieldwork conducted by a single investigator – who ‘lives with the lives like’ those who are studied for a lengthy period of time, usually a year or more”.

Ethnography has also been defined as, “the art and science of describing a group or culture. This description may be of a small tribal group on an exotic land or a classroom in middle-class suburbia,” (Fetterman, 1998: 1). The researcher writes about the routine, daily lives of people, and the more predictable patterns of human thought and behaviour become the focus of inquiry. Several purposes of this form of research have been identified.

### 3.4.1 PURPOSE OF ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

LeCompte & Schensul (1999<sub>1</sub>: 34), state that most ethnographic researchers are concerned with social issues and problems and their research questions focus on problems in relationship between community residents, families, or “clients,” and the institutions that are supposed to serve them. Within this context, the purpose of ethnographic research is to:

- Better understand a problem or situation
- Illustrate what is happening in a program or intervention that is implemented
- Obtain information that can complement quantitative data that has been collected, or is available, on a specific problem, situation
- Complement and better explain results of surveys and similar data, especially those outcomes that are unanticipated or unexpected
- Identify new trends, new solutions to social problems, and potential problems that may arise as a result of the implementation of new policies and practices (LeCompte & Schensul (1999<sub>1</sub>: 38).

An important strength of ethnographic research is its comprehensiveness and deeper understanding of the situation or problem in question. According to Babbie (2007: 314), field research such as ethnography, is especially appropriate to topics and processes that are: not easily quantifiable; are studied in natural settings as opposed to the artificial settings of experiments and surveys; and are studies of social processes that change over time. These topics could include practices, episodes, encounters, roles, relationships, groups, organisations, social worlds and lifestyle or subcultures.

This study examines the delivery of services, which is not easily quantifiable and the researcher studied this delivery in its natural environment, namely, the Department of Home Affairs. The delivery of service by this department has deteriorated and requires some intervention to improve (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). Ethnographic research in this case was seen as an intervention that could benefit DHA by providing a better understanding and description of the situation that exists so that appropriate corrective actions could be taken.



The goal of ethnographic research is to describe, analyse, and interpret the culture of a group in terms of the group's shared beliefs, behaviours, language, and culture. According to Gay, Mills & Airasian (2009: 404), culture in this context refers to the set of attitudes, values, concepts, beliefs and practices shared by members of a group. Furthermore, the authors also state that a unique type of understanding can be gained via ethnographic research as it focuses on everyday behaviour, which is often taken-for-granted, and the research is not about "proving" that a particular intervention "solves" a particular problem, but rather to understand what is going on in a particular setting.

The culture or group being described in this research was that of the chosen Department of Public Administration, namely, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and the participants in the study were the staff at DHA. The ethnographic study was also able to provide a description of the reality of the situation at DHA. An understanding of the development of ethnography will provide more light on why this method was appropriate for this study.

### **3.4.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ETHNOGRAPHY**

Ethnography comes from social and cultural anthropology and it means, "describing a culture and understanding another way of life from the native point of view," (Neuman, 2003: 366). Furthermore, it is believed that people display their culture through behaviour in specific social contexts. However, this behaviour does not provide meaning, rather meaning is inferred or the ethnographer has to figure out meaning. Here, the researcher is required to spend a significant amount of time in the field. Anthropologists usually lived and studied among a group that was a small, intact, self-sufficient social unit, and these groups were unknown to the researcher. The ethnographer has the responsibility to learn about, record, and ultimately portray the culture of that group in order to deepen the understanding about the different ways human beings have resolved the problems created by being human in the first place (Wolcott, 1997).

Researchers suggest that, historically, ethnography has been thought of as both a product of research and a research process (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>1</sub>; Agar, 1996). The product can be an interpretative story, reconstruction, or a narrative about a group of people. The content of this product can, and usually does, address the following: beliefs; attitudes; perceptions; emotions; verbal and non-verbal means of communication; social networks; behaviours of the group of individuals; use of tools and technology; manufacture of materials and artefacts; and the patterned use of space and time.

The ethnographic research process involves longer term face-to-face interaction with people in the community being researched and using tools of data collection (Le Compte & Schensul, 1999<sub>1</sub>: 4).

Van Donge (2006: 180) suggests that ethnography emerged in the period of European expansion to denote the observation of exotic peoples. Thus, from its origin, ethnography has been closely associated with the confrontation of different cultures. However, LeCompte & Schensul (1999<sub>1</sub>: 5) suggest that contemporary ethnographers are more focussed on a particular aspect or dimension of culture, simply because it is no longer possible for most researchers to spend years in a single site. Furthermore, these researchers tend to be problem-oriented, addressing specific issues or problems in a community context, which also serves to narrow and focus the research endeavour.

Present day researchers conduct ethnographic research in organisations and communities of all kinds such as, educational, public health, rural and urban development, and consumers and consumer goods (Genzok, 2003). Some examples of such research are the study of the Career Intern Program (study of school dropouts); the use of Drugs in specific communities; and Aids research in rural areas (cited in Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). Ethnographic research was found to be most suitable to deal with the sensitivity and seriousness of the issues being studied in an ethical and compassionate manner. The various types of ethnographic research will now be discussed.

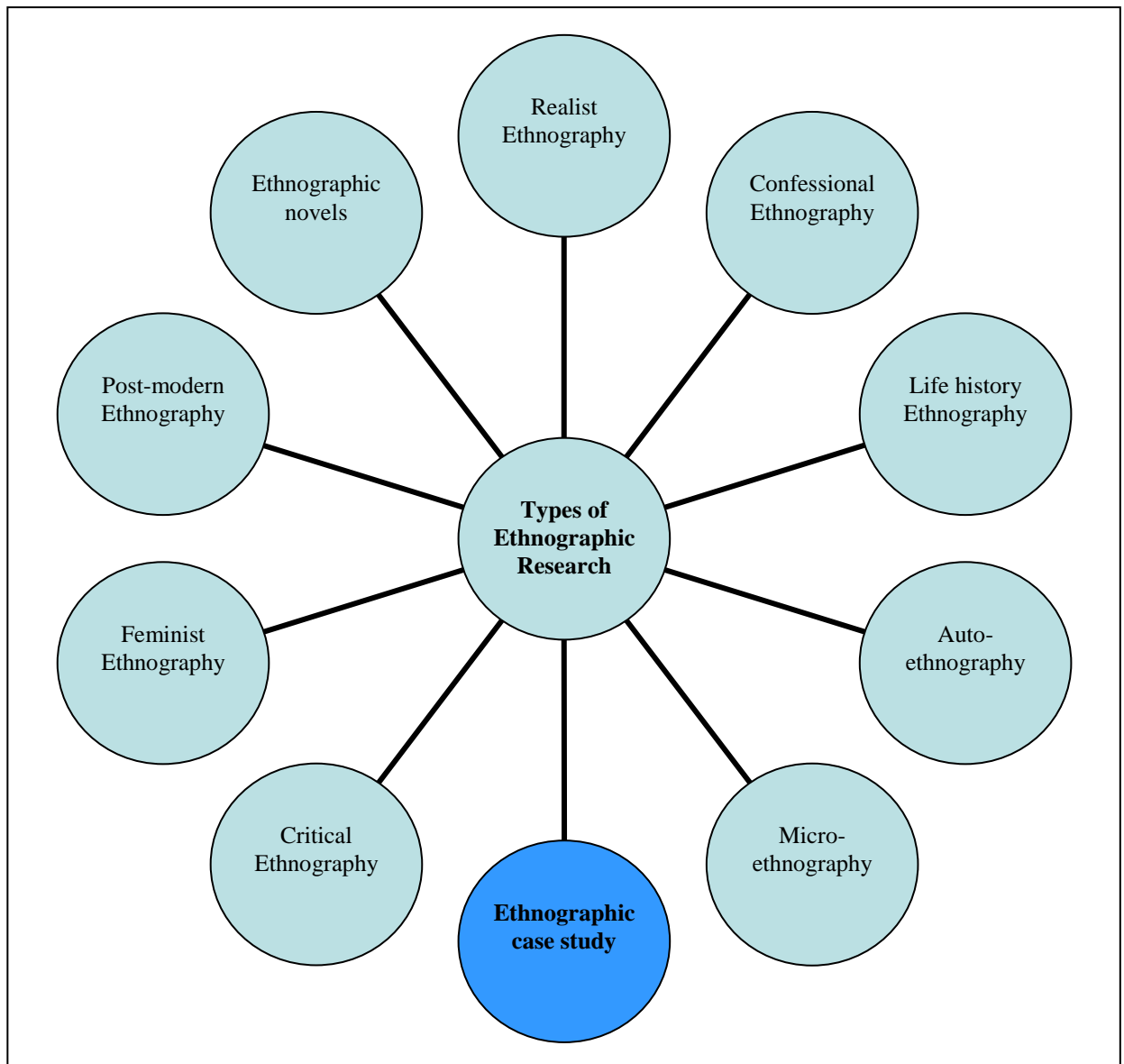
### 3.4.3 TYPES OF ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Many types of research have been identified by researchers for conducting ethnographic research (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>1</sub>; Myers, 1999; Willis, Jost & Nilakanta, 2007). These have been reflected in Figure 3.2.

However, Gay, Mills & Airasian (2006: 444-445) identified three of the most commonly used types of ethnographic research and only these will be discussed as follows:

- Critical ethnography – highly politicised form of ethnography with the aim of advocacy. These ethnographies address issues such as power, authority, emancipation, oppression and inequality.
- Realist ethnography – written with an objective style and are used mainly by cultural and educational anthropologists who study the culture of schools.
- Ethnographic case study – a case analysis of a person, event, activity, or process. Focus is on a single unit for investigation such as a single institution or program, an individual, or specific clinical studies, and they differ from other case studies because they always include the culture of the group or entity under study.

The ethnographic case study was cited as the most suitable type of research for this study since the minimal condition for its uses were, “a population, process, problem, context or phenomenon whose parameters and outcomes are unclear, unknown or unexplored and it has an identified community and target population,” (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>1</sub>: 83). This was used to investigate a single institution, namely, the Department of Home Affairs. The case study was also able to assist the researcher to determine the factors and relationships among the factors that have resulted in the current behaviour and status of Public Service delivery at the Department of Home affairs.



**Figure 3.2** Types of ethnographic research.

### **3.4.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH**

It is important for a researcher to be able to recognise what ethnographic research studies entail, and from this be able to determine if this approach is the most suitable for the problem or situation being studied. Several authors have identified the key characteristics of ethnographic research (Maxwell, 2005; Van Donge, 2006; Babbie, 2007; Forsythe, 1999; Simmons-Mackie & Damico, 1999; Hammersley, 1998; Van Maanen, 1995; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999; Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006; Agar, 1996). Gay, Mills & Airasian (2006: 445) best encapsulate what all the authors

describe, hence the following characteristics cited by them can be regarded as the most distinctive characteristics of ethnographic research:

- It is carried out in a natural setting and not in a laboratory
- It involves intimate, face-to-face interaction with participants
- It presents an accurate reflection of participants' perspectives and behaviours
- It uses inductive, interactive, and repetitious collection of "unstructured" data and analytic strategies to build local cultural theories
- Data is primarily collected through fieldwork experiences
- It typically uses multiple methods of data collection, including conducting interviews and observations, and reviewing documents, artifacts, and visual materials
- It frames all human behaviour and belief within a socio-political and historical context
- It uses the concept of culture as a lens through which to interpret results
- It places an emphasis on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena, rather than setting out to test hypotheses about them
- It investigates a small number of cases, perhaps just one case, in detail
- It uses data analysis procedures that involve the explicit interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions. Interpretations occur within the context or group setting and are presented through the description of themes
- It requires that researchers be reflective about their impact on the research site and the cultural group
- It offers interpretations of people's actions and behaviours that must be uncovered through an investigation of what people actually do and their reasons for doing it
- It offers a representation of a person's life and behaviour that is neither the researcher's nor the person's. Instead, it is built upon points of understanding and misunderstanding that occur between researcher and participant
- It cannot provide an exhaustive, absolute description of anything. Rather, ethnographic descriptions are necessarily partial, bound by what can be handled within a certain time, under specific circumstances, and from a particular perspective.

From these characteristics, it had become evident that ethnographic research was the best fit for the research environment of this study and it would also provide the researcher the flexibility to adjust and / or include other aspects into the research while it was in progress. This would ensure that no important details were either overlooked or missed out entirely and that DHA could benefit from this form of research.

### **3.4.5 BENEFITS OF ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH**

The most important value of ethnographic research is the depth that is covered in a specific area of investigation. Since the researchers spend a significant and extended period of time in the field, they are able to see for themselves what goes on in that environment and gain an in-depth understanding of the people, the organisation and the broader context within which they work (Myers, 1999). This knowledge gained from the field can also challenge the assumptions of the researcher and assist them to 'not take things for granted' without questioning their assumptions. Furthermore, the methods used in ethnographic research produce a picture of the cultures and social groups from the perspective of their members and not from the researcher's point of view (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>1</sub>: 27). It tries to understand a community or organisation from the inside (Van Donge, 2006: 185).

Ethnographic research methods and tools are designed for discovery and the researcher learns through systematic observations in the field and asking questions about what they see and hear (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>1</sub>: 2). This allows them to assign meaning to situations or problems. Not only does ethnographic research benefit the solving of human related problems, as it provides the researcher with a better understanding of the socio-cultural problems in communities and organisations, but the results of these studies can also be used to solve these problems or bring about some form of positive change in the communities or organisations.

The flexible and unobtrusive nature of this form of research allows the researcher to adopt, or create and use, appropriate aids and data collection tools that are effective and align well with the situation under study. It also enables them to detect consistent

patterns of thought and practice and to investigate the relationship between them (Forsythe, 1999: 128). Observation is usually an important tool in this form of research and it allows the researcher to correct preconceived ideas that they may have held and, since it is more of an open approach, it also avoids the framing of a research situation beforehand. This allows the researcher to deal with actual practices in the real world and to develop frameworks which can be used by practitioners and researchers (Harvey & Myers, 1995).

Another important benefit of ethnographic research is that it provides a kind of testbed against which to compare particular findings, to evaluate general theories about human behaviour, and to produce in-depth understanding of real-world social processes (Forsythe, 1999: 129).

Ethnographic research methods can, therefore, be seen as an inspiration to researchers who intend to develop new ways of studying and understanding what is happening in communities and organisations. However, it was essential for the researcher to also take into account the challenges and limitations of this method of research.

#### **3.4.6 LIMITATIONS OF ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH**

Several authors have reported on the limitations of ethnographic research (Harvey & Myers, 1995: 23; Myers, 1999: 6; Forsythe, 1999: 133; Wolcott, 1997: 334). These limitations have been summarised as follows:

- It leads to in-depth knowledge only of particular contexts and situations
- Doing ethnography takes a great deal of time. A major limitation of ethnographic research is that it takes a lot longer than other kinds of research because of the writing up and analysis of the large amount of data that is collected by several methods
- The process can be overwhelming to new researchers as they cannot enter the situation with fixed frameworks and prepared questions
- There are ethical issues that must be considered due to the in-depth and holistic nature of the discoveries which emerge

- The publication of results can be challenging, because it is more of a story-telling approach
- There is a problem of gaining entry and maintaining rapport with the participants and this requires expertise and understanding of how ethnography should be carried out
- Analysing a social situation entails much more than just having familiarity with that situation
- Ethnographic research does not have much breadth, and it is impossible to develop more general models from just one ethnographic study.

It should be noted that all methods of research, especially within the specific environment of this study (namely the study of human beings and a very contentious Department of Home Affairs) were bound to have limitations in some form. It was important that these limitations were taken into consideration at the outset, and that appropriate actions were in place to minimise the limitations' effects on the quality of the study. Furthermore, the researcher believes that most of the limitations cited cannot be regarded as serious limitations per se, but merely products of the fact that this method is not commonly used within this discipline. Throughout this study into enhancing service delivery in the DHA, the DHA was seen as an environment that has its own culture. The fact that such a diversity of individuals work in this environment, suggested that ethnographic research methods were the most suitable in order to capture the dynamics of this environment. The goal of ethnographic research differs from other forms of qualitative field based research such as participatory research.

### **3.4.7 ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH vs. PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH**

It is essential that the “participatory” aspect of the ethnographic research and the participation of the researcher in the study are not confused with another form of social research, which also focuses on the relationships linking the researcher to the subjects being researched, known as participatory research.



Several forms of participatory research have been identified by Willis, Jost & Nilakanta (2007: 232). Two of which are participatory action research and participatory instructional research. All forms of the research share the common element of involving those who are being studied, or affected in the research process, as colleagues and partners.

Furthermore, participatory research takes a participatory approach to learning as a central part of the research process and research is conducted, not just to generate facts, but also to help the participants to develop an understanding of themselves and their context. There is no off-the-shelf method or “correct” way to do any participatory research. It should be regarded as a set of principles and a process of engagement in the inquiry (Sohng, 2005). The role of the researcher in this process is to act as a facilitator of the learning process, setting up situations to allow the people to discover for themselves what they already knew and to discover new knowledge in the process.

Sohng (2005) states that participatory research methods challenge practices that separate the researcher from the researched, and promote a partnership between the researcher and the people being studied. According to Sohng (2005) this collaboration is regarded as empowering because it:

- Brings people together around common problems and needs
- Validates their experiences and the foundation for understanding and critical reflection
- Presents the knowledge and experiences of the researchers as additional information upon which to critically reflect
- Contextualises issues that have previously felt like “personal”, individual problems or weakness
- Links such personal experiences to political realities.

The above activities can all be translated into action that can benefit the individual, community or situation. Barr (2005: 55) found that there is a general trend for participatory research methods to focus on more immediate requirements of practice that address community issues.

According to the *Glossary of Research Terms* (2005), participatory research can also be referred to as action research, research in practice, field research, community-based research, reflective research, teacher research, practitioner research, program-based research or practitioner inquiry. It is further referred to as an inquiry-based research conducted by practitioner for the purpose of making change.

Participatory research remains a primary methodology for the practice of organisational or community development and is regarded as the ideal post-positivist social scientific research method. It involves two stages: First, the diagnostic stage, which involves the collaborative analysis of the social situation by the researcher and the subjects of the research. Then, the second stage involves collaborative change experiments and, it is in this stage that changes are introduced and the effects are studied (Baskerville & Wood-Harper, 2002).

Ethnographic research differs from participatory research as it commences with the selection of a problem or topic of interest. This problem then guides the entire research endeavour. For the purpose of this study, the main research problem, as identified in Chapter 1, will guide the research endeavour. Table 3.2 serves as a summary that compared and contrasted ethnographic and participatory research methods.

**Table 3.2** Comparison of ethnographic & participatory research methods (adapted from Mouton (2001: 148-151))

	<b>Ethnographic research</b>	<b>Participatory research</b>
Description	Studies that are usually qualitative in nature which aim to provide an in-depth description of a group or community. Such descriptions are embedded in the life-worlds of the actors being studied and produce insider perspectives of the actors and their practices.	Studies that involve subjects of research (research participants) as an integral part of the design. This form of research mainly uses qualitative methods to gain understanding and insight into the life-worlds of the research participants. Most types of participatory research have an explicit (political) commitment to the empowerment of participants and to change the social conditions of the participants.
Typical applications	Ethnographic studies of communities or cultures. Field studies in natural settings.	Education action research in classrooms and schools.
Conceptualisation	Inductive; a-theoretical. Usually no hypothesis- guiding ideas or expectations.	More inductive than deductive; emphasis on participants and their world-views; reluctance to impose any pre-set theory or explanation.
Selection of cases/samples	Theoretical or judgement sampling.	Non-probability selection principles.
Mode of observation/ sources of data	Participant observation; semi-structured interviewing (Individual focus group); use of documentary sources.	Participant observation; semi-structured interviewing; using documents; constructing stories and narratives.
Strengths	High construct validity; in-depth insights; establishing rapport with research subjects.	Involves participation and involvement on the part of the subjects, which enhances the chance of high construct validity, low refusal rates and “ownership” of findings.
Limitations	Lack of generalisability of results; non-standardisation of measurement; data collection and analysis can be very time consuming.	The small number of cases and low degree of control affect overall generalisability and possibility of strong casual and structural explanations.

### 3.4.8 ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

It has come to the attention of researchers such as McNabb (2002), Ospina & Dodge (2005), Perry (2000), Sandfort (2000), Mosse (2004) and Rhodes (2005) that ethnographic research methods can provide great quantities of important information in public administration. Furthermore, this form of research has the ability to produce powerful narratives that provide in-depth insight into the needs of society.

McNabb (2002: 320) motivates that the use of detailed description means that ethnographic research can be an excellent design choice when the study objective is to provide deep background information for the formation of long-term, strategic public policy. He further suggests that ethnographic research is one of several important approaches for the study of culture and the act of governance, the formation of public policy, and the administration of diverse agencies and functions of government. Furthermore, research conducted in these disciplines has often had great influence on public policy.

Ospina & Dodge (2005: 144) found that public administration and related fields such as policy, planning, and public management, have taken a narrative or ethnographic turn to interpret and experience situations from the perspective of the researcher as well as the people they study. This has contributed to the theoretical and methodological development in public administration by encouraging researchers to explore and highlight the multidimensional aspects of public institutions and their administrative and policy problems.

Ethnographic research methods in public administration have been part of the broader paradigm shift that is taking place in the arts, humanities and the natural and social sciences. Within this context, public administration is experiencing rapid changes that force these departments to re-orientate themselves, develop new goals and adopt new processes (Sandfort, 2000). Furthermore, public managers are cautioned that they will need new skills to navigate complex organisational networks, respond to increasing environmental demands, increase efficiency, and operate and accomplish their mandate within restricted budgets and timeframes.

Perry (2000: 486) also identified the important contribution that ethnographic research methods can have on the theory of Public Service motivation when linking theory, socio-historical phenomena and organisational behaviour. Furthermore, these methods are used for analysing and diagnosing the culture and operating climate of organisations and, in this instance, the ethnographic research is usually used to improve the practice of administration in the public sector by acquiring information to make the desired improvements (McNabb, 2002).

Two principles of ethnographic research as a source of data in public administration have been identified by Rhodes (2005: 20) as follows:

- It gets below and behind the surface of official accounts by providing texture, depth, and nuance, so the story of the department has richness as well as context
- It lets interviewees explain the meaning of their actions, providing an authenticity that can only come from the main character involved in the story.

The author also suggests that this form of research is fruitful, progressive and open, and it has the ability to open a wide range of new areas and styles of research about the beliefs, preferences and practices in public administration. This can also be noticed in the study by Mosse (2004) which reflects the contribution of development ethnography to aid policy and practice.

Therefore, it can be deduced that ethnographic research methods have become very valuable tools for gathering information about behaviours embedded in, and specific to, cultures and subcultures. It is also often used to identify administration options for decision making or matters of public policy. The design of the research process is essential if value is to be obtained from the research.

### **3.5 DESIGNING THE ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH PROCESS**

This section presents the design of the ethnographic research and it will serve as a blueprint that will assist the researcher to conceptualise how each process will be carried out in order to achieve the main purpose of this study, which is to ascertain whether Competitive Intelligence tools and techniques can be implemented in the Public Service departments in South Africa to enhance the delivery of service.

The process of conducting ethnographic research reveals a close parallel between the steps of the process and the outline for writing a qualitative research proposal. The following steps have been identified as the most important to conduct an ethnographic study (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006: 442):

- Identify the purpose of the research study

- Frame the study as a larger theoretical, policy, or practical problem
- Pose initial ethnographic research questions
- Describe the overall approach and rationale for the study
- Describe the site and sample selection
- Describe the researcher's role (entry to the research site, reciprocity, and ethics)
- Describe data collection methods
- Describe appropriate strategies for the analysis and interpretation of data
- Write the ethnographic account.

The researcher's entry into this study environment was negotiated through senior management from the Department of Home Affairs, and their input and suggestions for participants was encouraged. After consent had been received from the relevant parties, the researcher commenced the study as a participant observer.

The researcher entered into the research setting and refrained from asking questions until some initial observation of the setting and the participants had been established. This was followed by some start-up questions to get a better understanding of the operation of the department. Thereafter, participants were prompted to tell *who, what, where, when or how* and based on these responses, new questions emerged.

As identified in the literature review, Public Service delivery is a practical problem among Public Service departments and, more importantly, in the Department of Home Affairs. Hence, the overall approach of this study was ethnographic and the rationale for the study was based on government and the citizen's need to improve the delivery of service in Public Service departments. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 1, the Department of Home Affairs has been dogged with a bad reputation for service delivery and the fact that several attempts have been made in the past to remedy this situation to no avail, the researcher has chosen this as an appropriate Public Service delivery department in which to conduct this investigation.

Most research designs begin with the most important problem that has been identified and the subsequent questions that the researcher intends to answer. These have

already been highlighted in Chapter 1. Fieldwork is also an important element of ethnographic research design and it is exploratory in nature. Information was gathered inductively and the researcher was able to generate hypotheses as the research progressed.

Fetterman (1998: 10) indicated that while most ethnographic research requires that the researcher spends an extended period of time in the field, this is not always possible in many applied settings. What is more important is for the researcher to ensure that enough time has been devoted to work in the field to see patterns emerge. Once specific patterns begin to emerge over and over again, the researcher can move out of the field. Furthermore, in cases where it is clear that ethnography is the most appropriate design, modifications have been made to traditional ethnography to accommodate time lines and similar structures, (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>1</sub>).

For this study, the researcher has spent over four months in the chosen field. This period of stay in the environment was seen as being adequate as the researcher was already familiar with the field settings and culture and the repetitive nature of the activities in the chosen environment did not warrant a longer period in the field. Also suitable data collection techniques were chosen to ensure that sufficient data was collected and triangulation of these data sources was used to ensure accuracy and validity of the data.

### **3.5.1 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**

In ethnographic research, the researcher uses a variety of methods and techniques to ensure the integrity of the data. Furthermore, these methods and techniques also objectify and standardise the researcher's perceptions of the problem being investigated and, in most cases, the identified methods and techniques will have to be adapted to fit in with the environment or problem (Fetterman, 1998: 32).

The researcher in ethnographic research can be regarded as the human instrument for measuring field data and relies on all their senses, thoughts, feelings and perceptions to gather data and portray an holistic view of 'what is going on' within the

environment. This implies that the researcher needs to be alert and sensitive to what is happening in the field and disciplined about recording data. Social relationships and personal feelings need to be taken into consideration as they cannot be totally excluded from the study (Fetterman, 1998; Neuman, 2003).

From a study of the literature, the researcher was cautioned against relying on a single source of data. Therefore, before discussing data collection techniques that were used for this study, the importance of triangulation in ethnographic research will be discussed.

### **3.5.1.1 Triangulation**

Triangulation is the collection of data using a variety of methods (Maxwell, 2005). LeCompte & Schensul (1999: 131) further define triangulation as, “confirming or cross-checking the accuracy of data obtained from one source with data collected from other, different sources.” Fetterman (1998), states that triangulation is basic in ethnographic research and it is at the heart of ethnographic validity. During this process, the researcher compares information sources to test the quality of the information and the person sharing it, to more completely understand the contributions made by the individuals, and to ultimately place the entire situation into perspective. This strategy for data collection reduces the risk of findings being biased and provides the researcher with a more secure understanding of the situation being studied.

The four types of triangulation as cited by Neuman (2003: 138) will be used for this study:

- Triangulation of measures – Here multiple measures of the same phenomenon are taken to see all aspects of it. These include interviews, focus groups, document analysis and the researcher’s personal observations
- Triangulation of observers – combining data from a variety of observers to obtain a more accurate idea of the situation, e.g. Focus group interviews of several observers of the same situation



- Triangulation of theory – Several theories will be used to explain the implementation and value of CI in organisations
- Triangulation of methods – this will be achieved through the use of a variety of data gathering methods such as interviews, observation, document analysis, artefacts and the triangulation of the different data sources.

### **3.5.1.2 Data collection**

For the purpose of this study, data was collected from multiple sources (interviews with focus groups and participants) and in multiple ways from subjects (observation, interviews, document analysis). Different kinds of data were also collected in multiple ways from multiple subjects on the same theme (content analysis of policies and practices, focus group interviews with strategic managers and observation of strategic managers). This method helped to guide the researcher through this process, enhance the validity and reliability of the research, ensure the accuracy of the interpretations and confirm that data collected was not due to chance or circumstances.

The primary data collection techniques for this study were, therefore:

- Observation – participant observation, field notes
- Ethnographic interviews
- Focus group discussions
- Content/document analysis
- Workshops – attendance and presentation.

Each of these techniques can be regarded as a qualitative data collection technique and are explored further below.

#### **Observation**

According to Genzuk (2003), participant observation can be regarded as a field strategy that simultaneously combines document analysis, interviewing of respondents and informants, direct participation and observation, and introspection. Here the researcher shares as intimately as possible in the life and activities of the people in the observed setting with the purpose of developing an insider's view of what is taking

place. This form of participation not only allows the researcher to see what is happening but also provides the opportunity to “feel” what it is like to be part of the group.

The purpose of observation or as it is sometimes referred to: participant observation is to observe and record activities, people and physical aspects of a situation as they happen. The researcher becomes fully immersed in the research setting and is able to see how participants in the study carry out their daily activities. Furthermore, it provides the researcher with an opportunity to establish what is meaningful to participants and for what reasons (Gay, Airasian & Mills, 2006). Observation can be done at three varying degrees depending on the nature of the problem and the opportunities available to the researcher. According to Gay, Airasian & Mills (2006: 447), these degrees of observation are:

- Active participant observer – active engagement in the field
- Privileged, active observer – engaged in more active, privileged manner such as teaching a lesson or providing a workshop
- Passive observer – little engagement – just to see what is going on in the environment.

The researcher for this study played the role of both privileged, active observer (Focus group and workshop facilitation) and active observer (working alongside participants). The procedures for data collection via observation were, therefore: written field notes; written records of informal interviews and conversations; photographs and maps (only where these were permitted); and artifacts such as videoconferencing materials and photographs. Field notes captured the observations of the researcher and these were usually done either while an activity or event was taking place, or very soon after.

During the observation, the researcher targeted the activities; events and sequences; settings and participation structures; the behaviour of people and groups; and the conversations and interactions that took place. This data was then able to depict what the physical settings at the DHA are, activities that took place in the normal work

environment, Acts and policies that impact on the operations, interaction patterns among staff, and the meanings, beliefs and emotions of the participants.

### **Ethnographic interviews**

According to several authors (Fetterman, 1998; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999; Maxwell, 2005 & Kvale, 1996), unstructured, informal interviews are useful throughout an ethnographic study, as they help the researcher to determine what people think and how one person's beliefs and perceptions compare with another person's. The interview is focused and discursive allowing the researcher and the participant to explore an issue. It also allows the researcher to probe deeper into certain identified areas, to validate what has been observed and to provide direction for future observations or questioning. This also serves to ensure the accuracy of the data that is collected and can also challenge the researcher to create new hypotheses or change the existing ones. The responses of these interviews will be written up as soon as possible after they have taken place to make certain that no important information is lost.

It is further suggested by De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, et al. (2005: 298) that the ethnographic interview is used mainly to obtain cultural data, and the most important questions here are:

- Descriptive questions that allow the researcher to collect a sample of the participant's language
- Structural questions that will provide information concerning the culture of the department
- Contrast questions that are able to provide the meanings of various terms that the participant's use.

These interviews are also not always pre-arranged, instead they rely on asking questions about events, activities or interactions immediately after these occur. In this way the participant's perceptions are cross-checked against that of the researcher, and clarity is obtained immediately on certain issues. Darlington & Scott (2002) stated that these in-depth interviews are particularly useful when the phenomenon being investigated cannot be observed directly. This would be beneficial to the researcher as

ethnographic research tries to explain and explore the culture of a situation or problem under study and valuable information will be obtained via this method to present a comprehensive explanation of the current situation with regards to service delivery.

The purposes of the ethnographic interviews in this study were to obtain in-depth information on specific topics. They also provided personal histories, cultural knowledge and beliefs, as well as description of practices within the target department. The target population for the interviews was a representative group of individuals from senior management and key informants who are responsible for certain task and policy decisions at the DHA. The interviews were unstructured, informal interviews. These types of interviews are also referred to as in-depth interviews (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, et al., 2005).

### **Focus group discussions**

Focus groups are another form of qualitative data collection in ethnographic research. This method can also be referred to as group interviewing or group discussions and it is based on structured, semi-structured or unstructured interviews that allow the researcher to question several individuals systematically and simultaneously (Babbie, 2007: 308).

The focus group is, thus, a carefully planned discussion that is designed to obtain the perceptions of a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment. The subjects for the focus groups are chosen on their basis of relevance to the topic and these will include individuals from top management and those involved in decision making and strategic planning of the DHA.

Data is collected through group interaction. Such interaction can be very useful when multiple viewpoints or responses are required on a specific topic ((De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, et al., 2005). Focus group topics for this study included public attitudes to service delivery; personal behaviours of staff in DHA; new products or processes initiated to improve service delivery; and challenges experienced in terms of service delivery.

Neuman (2003) warns about the group composition and suggests that a homogenous group should be used. This view is supported by Babbie (2007: 309), who also

suggests that all members of the group should be aware of the phenomenon being studied and the researcher should encourage everyone to participate in the interview/discussion.

Focus groups were particularly useful to this study as they allowed the researcher to explore and discover new aspects of the topic, provide context and depth for the information obtained about the problem under investigation and allowed for a better interpretation of the findings. Furthermore, the researcher used these interviews to fulfil a number of primary functions: orientation to the study environment; generation of hypotheses based on the insights of the participants; development of questions for the ethnographic interview; obtaining participants' interpretations of the current state of service delivery; and becoming acquainted with the language, terminologies and culture that exists in the DHA.

The use of this method meant that the researcher was also able to generate data on group views, beliefs and reasons for collective action. This data generation is essential to the particular organisation being studied, given the already tainted reputation that it has with regard to service delivery. Using this method to gather information meant that the participants felt empowered as they were able to find strength in numbers and felt in control of the research process, by expressing their views with no fear of being singled out or other prejudices. Focus group interviews were more accessible to all staff in this organisation and were well accepted by those that were not familiar with surveys and other forms of data collection.

While this method can be used as a stand-alone research technique, for the purpose of this study, focus groups were used as part of a multi-method approach to ethnography. This is acknowledged by the views of Schensul (1999) and Babbie (2007) who recognise that that focus groups are, generally, used for exploration or project development purposes or to compliment other forms of ethnographic data collection.

For the focus group to add value to this study, it was essential that the researcher use purposive sampling and create the conditions for easy, productive conversations whilst also ensuring that while the conversations were taking place, the participants

were also serving the researcher's goals. Challenges posed by focus groups were taken into consideration before these focus group interviews commenced.

### **Content/document analysis**

Content analysis or document study as it is also referred to, is a data collection method that allows the researcher to examine information and content in written, or symbolic material (such as pictures, movies, artefacts) on a specific topic (Neuman, 2003: 36). The purpose of content analysis is to elicit themes or content in the body of written or visual media that relate to the situation or topic being investigated and this form of analysis can assist the researcher in the evaluation and selection of theories, hypotheses, assumptions and previous studies and data on the topic.

The procedure for such data collection involves repeated observations, the development of analytic categories, coding and enumeration of the content (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>1</sub>: 129). Furthermore, Strydom & Delpont (2005: 325) indicated that document study enables the researcher to investigate people, events and systems in depth, by analysing authentic written material. Hence, a variety of sources can be used.

For this study, the documents that were targeted for content analysis included personal and official documents; non-personal documents such as reports, office memos, agendas, minutes of meetings; and mass media documents such as books, newspapers, magazines, journals, newsletters, electronic material, artefacts and archival material.

### **Workshops**

Workshops provide an active learning opportunity with great face validity because participants can witness the implementation as well as the results of a recommended management practice, policy or change that affects them. Useful data can be obtained from workshops in organisations as this is usually the forum where staff get together to learn, discuss and share their experiences of certain issues that are of importance to everybody that attends.

Workshops can be regarded as interactive learning processes that are especially useful for the implementation of new programmes and where the participants' opinions, understanding, and acceptance of these programmes can be established.

Although it was found that not much was written about workshops as a data collection technique in ethnographic research, the researcher was able to use these forums successfully to obtain valuable data for this study that was not available in any other form or source. Hence, data was collected from workshop attendance and presentation. Interaction with participants at the workshop provided valuable information about the management processes and procedures, communication channels, interaction patterns, organisation culture and politics in the environment as well as the staff's feelings and attitudes and changes that were taking place in their work environment at DHA.

### **3.5.2 DATA ANALYSIS**

Once the data had been collected, it was analysed according to themes that emerged. This helped to increase the researcher's understanding of what is going on and what the current state of service delivery is. This provided a guideline to document the findings. It also included a description of the limitations of the study as well as recommendations for future research.

Analysis of the data allowed the researcher to make sense of what has been learned. As indicated by several authors (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>2</sub>; Fetterman, 1998; Myers, 1999), what is especially exciting and satisfying about ethnographic data analysis is that the process is recursive or iterative and interpretation begins as soon as the researcher enters the field and continues until a fully developed and well-supported interpretation emerges.

According to Patton (1987), data analysis does three things, in that it:

- Brings order to the piles of data that an ethnographer has accumulated throughout the study

- Transforms the piles of raw data into smaller, manageable forms of crunched or summarised data
- Permits the ethnographer to discover patterns and themes in the data and to link them to other patterns and themes.

The results of analysis provide critical steps for intervention or action in the specific situation.

This research needed to be oriented towards the needs of the end user, which, in this case, were the citizens of the country, since they would benefit from better Public Services, and the government, as they will then be able to achieve their goal of providing efficient and effective Public Services. The analysis of the data then became a very important aspect of the study. It was vital that it was useful, relevant and accurate.

Ethnographic research involves several different data collection methods, as already discussed, and this meant that different data sets were collected for analysis. Analysis was inductive in nature where themes began to emerge as soon as the data was collected, thereby affording the researcher the chance to identify and add new themes to the study well in advance.

Data analysis in this study was a twofold approach. The first analysis began as soon as the researcher commenced the collection of the data and during the data collection, and the second analysis was conducted away from the site after the data was collected. Analysis did not occur in a linear fashion, but instead it occurred simultaneously and repeatedly. The researcher summarised, indexed and classified the data according to themes. These themes were derived from the main research focus as outlined in Chapter 1. At the start of the study the researcher identified seven broad themes according to which data was collected. However, once the data collection was completed, the researcher found that these seven themes had to be increased to nine in order to incorporate additional data that was not anticipated at the start of the study. These themes are represented in chapter 4.



Theme analysis was useful for analysing the opinions, values, beliefs and attitudes of the participants, and these themes also focused on activities in relation to service delivery. Data from the interviews, focus group discussions and field notes from observations were also categorised according to themes and then coded. This can be referred to as open coding, and the researcher was able to identify and name the categories into which the phenomena observed would be grouped. Words, phrases or events that appeared to be similar were grouped into the same category (Hoepfl, 1997).

The next stage of the analysis involved a re-examination of the categories identified to determine how they were linked. This can be referred to as “axial coding”. The purpose of coding in this research was not only to describe but also to acquire new understanding of the phenomenon therefore, it was important to explore casual events contributing to the phenomenon, as well as descriptive details and ramifications of the phenomenon. This process helped the researcher to determine if sufficient data exists to support interpretations (Hoepfl, 1997).

In-depth content analysis also occurred simultaneously on all the different types of data that was collected. In the final stage of data analysis, the researcher synthesised all the data in order to obtain an overall idea of the situation and to validate or invalidate the findings of the study.

### **3.5.3 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY IN ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH**

The value of scientific research is partially dependent on the ability of the researcher to demonstrate the credibility of their research findings regardless of the discipline or method used for data collection and analysis. Therefore, reliability and validity of the findings are important (Le Compte & Goetz, 1982: 31).

According to Gay, Mills & Airasian (2009: 154), if the researchers’ interpretations of the data collected are to be valuable then the measuring instruments used to collect the data must be both valid and reliable. Hence the validity and reliability of the ethnography research will be discussed.

### **3.5.3.1 Validity of the ethnographic study**

Validity can be regarded as the degree to which the qualitative data can accurately gauge what the researcher is trying to measure (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009: 375). Furthermore, two ways of assessing the validity of research are to establish the trustworthiness and understanding of the study. This can be done by addressing the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study and its findings.

In ethnographic research, triangulation is at the heart of ethnographic validity (Fetterman, 1998: 93) as discussed in 3.5.1 above. Furthermore, since triangulation works with any topic, in any setting and on any level, it has been effective in this study and has been able to assist in improving the quality of the data and the accuracy of the findings by clearing up misunderstandings that may have arisen, confirming findings and correcting incorrect interpretations that may have been made.

### **3.5.3.2 Reliability of the ethnographic study**

Reliability refers to the degree to which study data consistently measure whatever they are supposed to measure (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009: 378). This can also refer to the reliability of the techniques used to gather the data. The researcher should, when examining the results of the study, consider whether the data would have been collected consistently if the same techniques were utilised over a period of time.

In the ethnographic study, patterns of thought and behaviour are sought, and these patterns are a form of ethnographic reliability (Fetterman, 1998: 96) The researcher looked for patterns in the analysis of the data and this assisted in grouping similar patterns that appear in the data together thereby confirming a finding. Furthermore, in this study, data was analysed according to themes and this served to confirm the reliability of the findings especially when the themes began to repeat themselves several times in the data collected. Reliability was also established by systematically identifying and examining all casual and consequential factors in DHA, as will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

### **3.6 RESEARCH REPORT WRITING AND LEGEND USED**

According to Leedy & Ormrod (2005:138), the final report for ethnography is rarely written in the impersonal style that is usually required for many other forms of research. Instead it is often a personal, literary narrative designed to engage the reader's attention and interest.

This view is supported by Neuman (2003: 478) where he states that field research reports are less objective and formal, and more personal hence they may be written in the first person (i.e. using the pronoun "I") because the researcher was directly involved in the setting, interacted with the people studied and was the measurement instrument. The decisions, feelings, reactions and personal experiences of the researcher are part of the research process.

Furthermore, research participants in ethnographic research are given a voice and this is why it is suggested that the participants' actual words be used as evidence and to convey their sense of realism of the situation.

In light of the above explanation, Chapters 4 and 5, which provide the findings of the ethnographic research, have been written in the first person. This is to ensure that the researcher is not distanced from the actual study and to show evidence that the researcher was actually present and participated of the discussions and events transpiring.

Ethnographic writings are often organised around themes that have emerged at the start when the topic was decided on, during the analysis, or through the researcher's participation in activities and their experiences (Hammersley, 1998 :21). For this study, themes were used to structure and organise the data so that the main research question could be answered. Literature on ethnographic research (Fetterman, 1998; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999<sub>2</sub>; Myers, 1999; Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009) raises caution over the overwhelming amount of data that can be collected. This would cause information overload within the study and could easily cause the researcher to lose focus of the main aims of the study. In order to avoid this scenario, the researcher was careful to identify relevant themes before the study commenced. These themes

were identified on the basis that they were the most necessary focus areas that would be able to help the researcher limit and focus the study and findings in such a manner that the main objectives were achieved. This also made it easier for categorising and analysing the data.

The following legend was used in the writing up of this report to refer directly to the data that was collected by the data collection techniques that were used, in that:

- Data collected from observations was abbreviated to “FN” to denote field notes and this was followed by the date of this observation (e.g. FN 20/06/08)
- Data collected from ethnographic interviews was abbreviated to “EI” to denote ethnographic interviews and that was followed by the date (e.g. EI 25/05/08)
- Data collected from focus group discussions was abbreviated to “FG” to denote focus groups and this followed by the date of the focus group discussion (e.g. FG 14/05/08)
- Data collected from workshops was abbreviated to “WS” to denote workshop and followed by the date of the workshop (e.g. WS 30/05/08).

### **3.7 ETHICS IN ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH**

In conducting ethnographic research, the researcher does not work in isolation, but rather with several other people. Furthermore, researchers often pry into the innermost secrets, achievements, failures, beliefs and attitudes of these people. Hence, ethnographic researchers subscribe to a code of ethics that preserves the participant’s rights, facilitates communication in the field, and leaves the door open for further research (Fetterman, 1998: 129).

The researcher is also, to a certain extent, dependent on the enthusiasm and cooperation of the respondents in ethnographic research. Therefore, ethical issues are practically as well as morally central to the research process (Desai & Potter, 2006: 123). Considerable thought and effort was, therefore, given as to how the design of this research would benefit the respondents.

In the case of this study, the researcher has taken these aspects into consideration and, therefore, conducted the research whilst ensuring that:

- No harm was suffered by people being studied or the community at large
- The feelings of individuals were not ‘trampled on’ and what their cultures hold to be sacred was not desecrated. This respect for the social environment will ensure the rights of the individuals; the integrity of the data; and a productive, enduring relationship between the individuals and the researcher
- Professionalism, respect, admiration and appreciation for the individuals’ way of life was observed
- Research goals have been made clear to the individuals when the study was undertaken
- Informed consent was obtained from the respective parties involved prior to the research
- Research results would be made available to the individuals who would like to read it
- The research does not exploit or harm those among whom the research is done (Genzruk, 2003).

### **3.8 SUMMARY**

Research is mainly concerned with the investigation of problems or situations in fresh ways, and it involves searching and re-searching the same situation or problem to see it from all perspectives and in different lights. In this chapter, several aspects with regard to the research methodology have been discussed. These included a description and purpose the chosen method of research, namely, ethnographic research. Since this is not a very common type of research used in this discipline, the researcher has described the historical development, paradigms for thinking and characteristics of ethnographic research.

Like most forms of research, ethnographic research also has certain benefits and challenges that needed to be taken into consideration. Furthermore, a discussion of the

use of ethnographic research in public administration served to provide some idea of its value and positive contributions in this area in recent times.

In order to have a clear understanding of the process for this study, the research design that was followed, was established. An indication as to how the data was collected was outlined, and this was followed by the description of the analysis process of all the different sets of data that were collected via the multi-method of data collection.

It was also important to explain the validity and reliability of the data that was collected. The writing up of the ethnographic report differs from other forms of research and this was discussed together with the legend that was used to refer to data collected via the data collection techniques. Since ethnographic research involves working with human beings for a significant period of time, it was essential to take into account the ethical issues involved in this type of study. This also ensures that that the findings of the study are not harmful to the individuals or the organisation under study and that the findings that are finally presented are reliable and accurate.

The next chapter will discuss Public Services and the current state of Public Service delivery at the Department of Home Affairs after the data had been collected and analysed, as discussed in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 4

### PUBLIC SERVICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN SOUTH AFRICA

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the first of two chapters that focus on the findings of the ethnographic study as outlined in Chapter 3. Data was collected via ethnographic interviews, focus group discussions, observations (field notes), workshop attendance and presentation and document analysis. This data has been analysed according to themes such as organisational structure and flow of information, activities that take place in the specific environment, interaction patterns in the chosen organisation, language and communication codes used, organisational culture, internal policies and procedures, strategic planning tools and techniques used, and the current state of service delivery. Each of these themes have aspects that have an impact on efficient service delivery and can also be regarded as a form of internal competition that the DHA faces in terms of achieving its mandate.

This chapter will also provide a discussion of the structure of government in South Africa, especially Public Services and administration, and, in particular, the Department of Home Affairs as the chosen Public Services department in which the study was conducted. Since government departments are rather complex entities to understand, it is necessary to first investigate the structure of government in South Africa. It is hoped that this understanding will provide context within which each department fits into.

#### 4.2 STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The government in South Africa refers to body that is responsible for governing South Africa and is usually referred to as the political executive, namely the President and his Cabinet, at the national level, and Premiers and Executive Councils at the

provincial level. Therefore, the government can be regarded as any part of the State and public administration apparatus (South Africa (Republic), 2003<sub>2</sub>: 11).

A government has structures that enable it to function properly and each component of these structures within a government contributes towards its overall functioning.

The government of the Republic of South Africa is divided into three spheres:

- National Government – led by an executive consisting of the President, the Deputy President and the Cabinet Ministers. It is responsible for policy formulation and making, developing national standards and norms, and rules and regulation
- Provincial Government – led by the Premier and his/her executive council. It focuses on functional areas such as provincial planning, provincial cultural matters, provincial roads and traffic, and abattoirs
- Local government – led by the Municipal managers and municipal councils with legislative and executive authority. This level concentrates on local amenities and local municipality matters related to their respective communities (South Africa (Republic), 2003<sub>2</sub>: 15). The local government level is closest to the people because it operates at community level. Furthermore, municipalities can also be regarded as units within the local spheres of government that have several districts within their jurisdiction.

The national government is further made up of thirty nine national departments and each department is headed by a political component (headed by a Cabinet Minister) and an administrative component (headed by Director-Generals). Various other councils and committees are present that inter-relate the different spheres. The Department of Public Services and Administration (DPSA) is one of the key departments through which government can realise its commitment to improving the quality of life of all its citizens in South Africa (South Africa (Republic), 2003<sub>2</sub>: 16).



### 4.3 PUBLIC SERVICES AND ADMINISTRATION

In order for the government (at all levels) to achieve its goals and objectives, it is obliged to supply and deliver public goods and services to their respective communities. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) in South Africa leads the delivery of Public Services by assisting government departments to implement their management policies, systems and structural solutions within a generally applicable framework of norms and standards in order to improve service delivery (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>1</sub>: 309). The DPSA is often referred to as the Public Service department and is expected to function and be structured in terms of national legislation, and it must execute the lawful policies of the government of the day.

According to Gildenhuis & Knipe (2000: 57-60), for any service to qualify as a public service, it should comply with the following requirements in that it must:

- Be non-apportionable. This means that the service cannot be divided into consumption units and cannot, therefore, be supplied per unit according to market demand, or be sold at a price determined by the supply and demand in the market
- Be non-exclusive where members of the public cannot be excluded from utilising such services irrespective of whether they are paying for them or not
- Be inexhaustible and cannot become depleted in the process of utilisation
- Have no direct quid pro quo. These services are financed by taxation due to the fact that a price per unit cannot be charged and the taxpayers receive no direct commensurate value in return for the value of the tax they pay. Some taxpayers pay more tax than others but they have the same access to Public Services. The tax systems of public authorities operate separately from the rendering of Public Services
- Be monopolistic in nature where the government maintains monopoly on these services and they cannot be obtained from any other organisation.

The above characteristics are also outlined in detail in the legislation governing public service delivery in South Africa.

The *Public Services Act, Act 103 of 1994* (South Africa (Republic), 1994) serves as a legal and guiding document for the functioning and the structure of DPSA. Section 7 of the Act states that for the purpose of administration of the Public Services, there shall be national departments and provincial administrations as well as other organisational components created.

The Department of Home Affairs is one of the national departments as identified in the *Public Services Act, Act 103 of 1994* (South Africa (Republic), 1994) with specific services that it delivers to the citizens.

#### **4.4 DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS (DHA) AS A CHOSEN PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT**

The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) is an important part of national government in South Africa. All citizens of the country, visitors and immigrants will have to make use of the services of this department on many different occasions during the course of their lives. Since DHA provides the documents that entitle people access to housing, education, health care, social grants, pensions, jobs, financial services and to exercise their most fundamental right to elect the government of their choice, this department is absolutely critical to the South African government's programme to create a better life for all (South Africa (Republic), 2004<sub>2</sub>: 6).

DHA is also responsible for protecting the territorial integrity of South Africa by deciding who may visit the country, by issuing the necessary travel documents to them. The government also acknowledged that, "DHA is the window through which our people and our guests see government and the country. The frustrations of the foreign visitors and South Africans standing in queues at home affairs offices, being exposed to often dilapidated and badly equipped offices and receiving poor service," (South Africa (Republic), 2004<sub>2</sub>: 7).

The perceptions of government service delivery can also be based on the experiences of citizens of and visitors to South Africa. Moreover, the performance of other government departments and agencies such as social services, education and health

care services who rely heavily on DHA for the enablement of their own service delivery, is as a consequence, also detrimentally affected by the performance of DHA. Therefore, DHA was selected from all the other government departments for this study.

Furthermore, not much attention is given to the good work and achievements of DHA as compared to the other national departments who consistently report activities from their departments. This is evident in the regular media coverage of mainly negative aspects of service delivery by DHA. For example, the newspaper, 'Daily Sun' has a special section called 'Home Affairs Horrors' or, more affectionately, 'Horror Affairs.' It reports mainly on this department's inability to serve the customers (EI 23/06/08; Daily Sun, 2008). Several websites also refer to Home Affairs as 'Horror Affairs' (e.g., [www.kickoff.com](http://www.kickoff.com); [www.nmgroupp.co.za](http://www.nmgroupp.co.za); [www.blacksash.org.za](http://www.blacksash.org.za)) simply due to the 'horrific' experience that individuals experience when trying to use the services of this department.

Many individuals and colleagues that I have spoken to have rolled their eyes and expressed their disgust at the mere mention of 'Home Affairs' simply due to the tainted reputation that this department already has, and also perhaps of their personal experiences in service delivery by this department. I also observed people looking very sceptical and taken aback when they learned of this being the chosen public service department for this study.

A review conducted by the Democratic Alliance (opposition party to the government) of the 2006/7 audit outcomes (2007: 7) has identified the DHA as being among the worst performing government departments for the past six years in terms of its financial management. This record has impacted on its service delivery tremendously. The findings of the Democratic Alliance have been confirmed through a study conducted by Research Surveys (2005: 1). Research Surveys looked at the reactions to and perceptions of service delivery by South African government departments in terms of customer service, service delivery orientation, speed and competence, complaints handling, access, integrity and corruption, funds mismanagement, innovation, manner and level of admiration and whether they are felt to be good places to work. A representative sample of South Africans were surveyed and the

results indicated that, “Home Affairs did not get things right.” Respondents also identified the department as being, “slow and cumbersome, most likely to be corrupt or to mismanage their funds,” (Research Surveys, 2005: 3). The final finding of the study was that service delivery was one of the biggest challenges that government departments, and in particular the DHA, faced.

In the recent years, DHA has been severely hampered in its attempt to deliver world class services to its customers. This has been claimed to be as a result of its lack of capacity to deliver on its mandate (South Africa (Republic), 2007<sub>1</sub>: 13).

It is for these reasons that I have chosen DHA for this study. The problem with regards to service delivery at the DHA is well known to most individuals and it poses a challenge that needs attention and new interventions to try to resolve them. Various aspects about DHA could have led to its poor performance according to its mandate, and these factors were investigated in order to establish their impact on strategic planning, appropriate decision making and service delivery.

#### **4.4.1 THE VISION, MISSION, AND STRATEGIC INTENT OF DHA**

My investigation into the strategic planning that is done at DHA has revealed a shift in mindset staff at management level in the department that has resulted in a review and adjustment to the vision, mission and strategic objectives. These aspects will now be discussed in detail.

##### **4.4.1.1 Vision of DHA**

The vision of DHA is, “*to build a department that provides modern, efficient, cost-effective services that are responsive to the needs of South African citizens, residents and visitors to our country,*” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 10).

This vision was agreed upon by the management team of DHA at a strategic planning workshop in 2008 and appears in its latest strategic planning document ((South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>).

During the ethnographic study, I found that while many of the activities and operations (such as immigration, civic services, support services) within the department are designed with the aim of achieving this vision, there is still a lot that needs to be done before this can become a common vision embraced by staff at all levels in the organisation. Staff at different management levels do not seem to have a clear understanding of the vision statement and this is resulting in delays in strategic decision making and is also becoming a barrier to strategy implementation efforts. I spoke to several staff at management level and asked them what they believed the vision of the organisation was. Most staff avoided answering the question or merely stated that, “it was to provide a service to the citizens and visitors.” Most managers also expressed the vision of their own departments and not that of DHA as a whole. Those managers responsible for contributing information to decision making are not complying, causing unnecessary delays in the implementation of decisions and so delaying achieving the vision of the organisation. This is evident in the statement, “staff have no respect for deadlines and when asked to provide information for strategic planning purposes, they do not respond with any urgency,” (EI 7/05/08; EI 12/05/08; EI 15 /05/08; EI 24/06/08).

Ehlers & Lazenby (2004: 50) suggest that it is as important to communicate the vision to the entire workforce as it is to developing it. They further suggest that it be communicated in such a manner that it clarifies the purpose of the organisation to all its stakeholders. Staff at DHA need to become familiar with the vision and all its activities should be designed to meet this vision. I found that very few staff could repeat the vision of the organisation without consulting the strategic plan or the intranet. These were the means used to communicate the vision of DHA to its staff (FN 15/05/08). Furthermore, it was stated that, “I am not sure if staff at lower levels are aware of what is expected of them, not sure what they are working towards or to achieve as this is not filtered to them especially now when changes have been made,” EI 20/05/08).

The vision is also meant to focus on the future direction of the organisation and look at doing something better in the long term (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2004: 54). This vision seems to respond to the current operations of DHA and it could lose its value to

motivate the staff to work towards achieving this vision. Vision statements may also form the foundation for mission statements and long term strategic objectives.

#### **4.4.1.2 Mission statement of DHA**

The mission statement of DHA is *“to assure the status of persons and manage migration according to the letter and spirit of the Constitution pursuant to national development goals and fulfilment of international conventions to which South Africa has acceded,”* ((South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 10).

Mission statements are usually derived from the vision of the organisation and comprise several components that strive to address and include the interests of all the organisation’s stakeholders. Therefore, a mission statement can be seen as a statement that indicates the organisation’s reason for existence or its purpose (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2004: 51). The mission statement should also reflect the present situation in an organisation or the reality of its actions and behaviour at that specific time (Botten & McManus, 1999: 149). The mission statement of DHA is far too broad and while it may allude to these issues, it is, “not clearly stated and this may cause problems in interpretation from its stakeholders and proper execution of activities,” to achieve this mission (EI 11/06/08).

Ehlers & Lazenby (2004: 51) identified four focus areas that are typically found in mission statements. Firstly, purpose, which addresses the reason for the organisation’s existence. Secondly, a mission statement identifies the organisation’s strategy in terms of the nature of its business. Thirdly, the statement refers to the organisation’s behaviour standards and culture in terms of the way it operates and the fourth focus area is about the values, beliefs and moral principles that support the behavioural standards. These focus areas are not clearly identifiable or obvious in the mission statement of DHA. The mission statement requires that one be familiar with the Constitution and the international conventions to which South Africa has acceded, before the essence of DHA’s mission statement can be understood. This can lead to the lack of support from stakeholders and the lack of a shared theme that guides the activities throughout the organisation.

Furthermore, mission statements also form part of the strategic management process and can be seen as the foundation for the development of long-term objectives and the selection of appropriate strategies. Hence, a clear mission statement is needed in order for it to impact strategy formulation. This is, once again, a problem with DHA's mission statement as it is not clear and understandable enough to all levels of staff. This was evident in the ethnographic observations and discussions with several members of staff. Staff indicated that, "the mission is too complicated to understand what DHA intends to do," (EI 15/05/08). Also, it was commented that there is a "lack of clear mission, I am not sure what is expected of me and my department," (EI 23/06/08).

I also found that staff working on the key performance indicators for staff at various senior levels, struggled to accomplish these indicators as the mission and vision statements were far too broad and could not provide adequate direction for the performance of the staff (EI 11/06/08). These statements have also been changed several times and this has led to confusion, as noticed in the statement, "vision and mission statements have not been settled on and the key performance indicators cannot be identified from the complicated mission statement," (EI 11/06/08).

The creation of effective leadership systems in Public Services starts with the forging of sound mission and vision statements. This is critical since the public sector is usually dependent on independent stakeholder groups such as donors, consultants, board members, and volunteers, to carry out the objectives of the organisation. The lack of a strong sense of purpose (mission), or a clear vision for the future, makes it extremely difficult for the public sector to build the "critical mass" necessary for success (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2006: 114)

DHA's mission statement also presupposes that its stakeholders know and remember the details of the Constitution and the national development goals. If this is not the case, then it runs the risk of its stakeholders not taking ownership of the mission and, hence, not diverting their actions and competencies towards realising it. It will also be difficult to identify and set appropriate strategic intents for the organisation.



#### 4.4.1.3 Strategic intent of DHA

According to Hamel & Prahalad (1994: 129) strategic intent has been defined as, “an ambitious and compelling dream that energizes a company and provides the emotional and intellectual energy to point the way to the future for the company.” If strategic architecture (a high-level blueprint for the deployment of new functionalities, the acquisition of new competencies or the migration of existing competencies, and the reconfiguration of the interface with customers (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994: 108)), is the brain, then strategic intent is the heart. Strategic intent conveys a sense of stretch for the organisation - current capabilities and resources are not sufficient for the task. Furthermore, the attributes of strategic intent can be identified as a sense of direction, discovery and destiny. The strategic intent outlined for DHA is to:

- Provide secure, efficient and accessible civic and related services and products to citizens and legitimate residents within specified timeframes
- Manage migration effectively by enabling the movement of skilled workers into the country and efficiently and securely facilitating the entry, stay and exit of visitors
- Determine the status of asylum seekers and manage refugee affairs in accordance with international treaties and the bill of rights as enshrined in the constitution
- Foster domestic, regional, and international co-operation towards improved economic growth and development, including events with strategic importance to the country, such as the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup
- Deliver the Department’s mandate effectively by implementing a new organisational model that is characterised by caring officials who serve with professionalism and by effective governance and operational control
- Create an enabling environment by putting in place support services that are effective, efficient, integrated and that prevent corruption (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 10).

For these strategic intents to be achieved, it will require the commitment and personal effort of the entire workforce of DHA. They will also have to believe passionately in its products and outcomes. This was not evident in the morale and level of de-



motivation that I observed during my participation in the DHA work environment. Staff, both at the senior management level and at the lower operational levels, did not pay enough attention to the finer details of their tasks and made many mistakes in the process. Some could not even explain the correct procedures to me and I found some staff asleep at their work posts without any concern of being caught by managers or supervisors.

Strategic planning also serves as a framework for designing the structure of the organisation and this will now be discussed.

#### **4.4.2 ORGANISATION STRUCTURE AND FLOW OF INFORMATION**

Organisational structures have an impact on the flow of information and knowledge that is needed for effective decision making and service delivery. The familiar organisational chart is a suitable description of structure. Structure involves the reporting relationships within a firm as well as the division and integration of tasks. The choice of structure involves a myriad of tradeoffs. For example a firm's structure may be centralises vs. decentralised, hierarchical vs. flattened, specialised vs. integrated, etc.

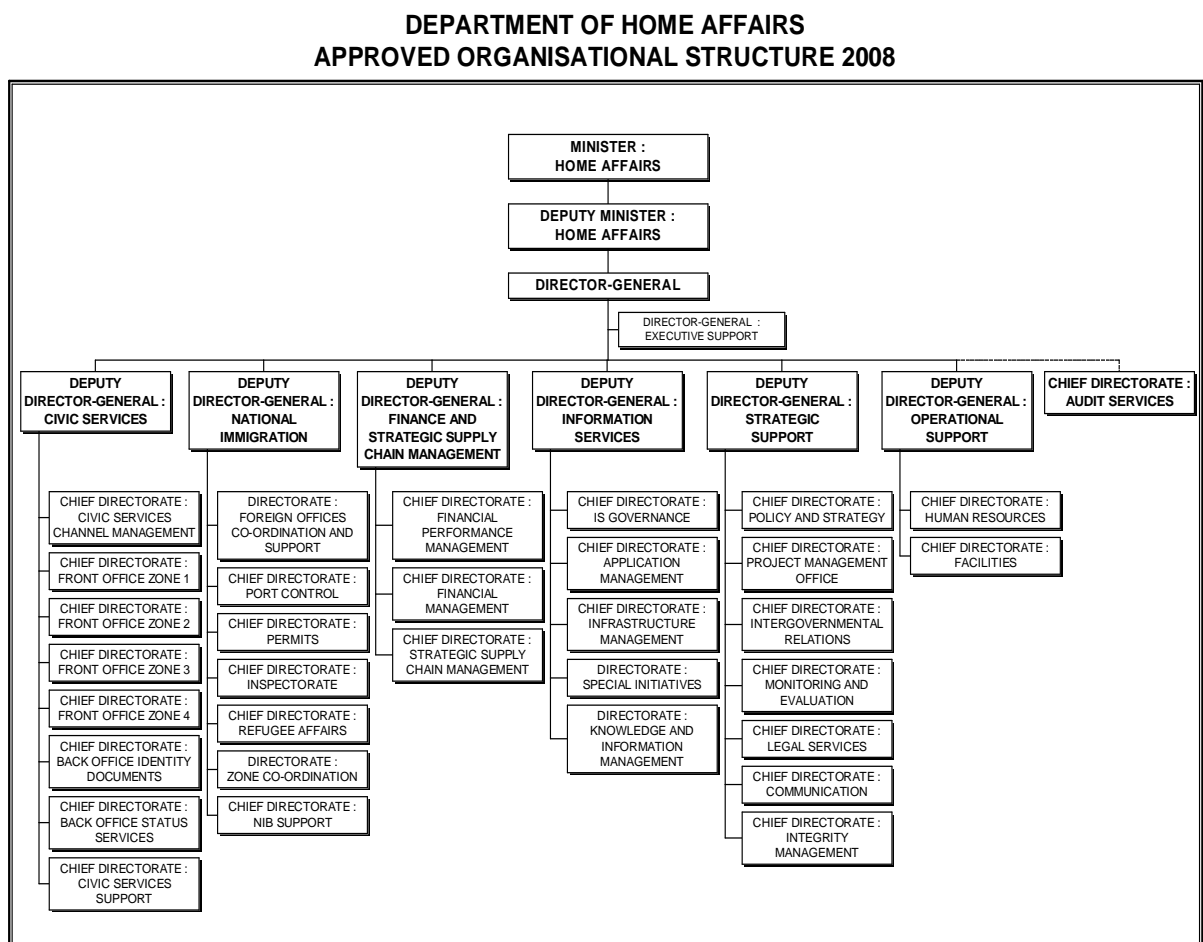
An important aspect to be considered when examining the structure of the organisation has been highlighted in behaviour theory which states that “the basic features of organisational structure and function derive from the characteristics of rational human choice. Because of the limits of human intellective capacity in comparison with the complexities of the problems that individuals and organisations face, rational behaviour calls for simplified models that capture the main features of a problem without capturing all of its complexities” March & Simon (1958:51).

The structure of DHA will be discussed, highlighting the flow of information for decision making.

#### 4.4.2.1 Organisational structure of DHA

According to Gildenhuis & Knipe (2000: 56), “all government organisations are living organisms that consist of people. The environment in which they operate changes continually, as do the demands for, and nature of, their functions. They are, therefore, regarded as being in a situation of constant flux. Therefore, it is essential for their organisational structures to be constantly adapted to keep pace with the changing demands.” Effective organisations will have to constantly review their hierarchical structures and personnel components, working procedures and work methods.

Figure 4.1, below, reflects the latest organisational structure of the DHA that was approved by DPSA.



**Figure 4.1:** Department of Home Affairs Organisational Structure (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 32).

The *State of the Public Services Report* (South Africa (Republic), 2005: 38) identified the need for Public Service departments to be more egalitarian, flatter structures as well as adopting more modern, team-based work methods for producing better results, as well as being departments that focus more on the needs of the customers. At a glance, it is evident that the organisation structure of DHA nevertheless, is still based on a clear hierarchical order where the concentration of power is still among senior officials. It is a formal structure depicting strict rule and regulations, limited channels of communication, confined openness to innovation and change, and focuses more on the functions rather than the processes. This aspect is true for most public administration departments as established by Vigoda-Gadot (2004<sub>2</sub>: 32) when he states that most bureaucracies embody a firm hierarchy of roles and duties, a vertical flow of orders and reports, accountability to highly ranked officers and lack of sufficient accountability dynamics.

These aspects are also the issues that seem to lead to the lack of motivation and commitment from staff, especially at the lower levels; those that do not feature in the structure shown in Figure 4.1. “Operations are done at the lower levels, decisions are made at the higher levels in the organisations. We at the lower levels do not have access to meetings and decisions taken about our positions in the organisation,” (EI 12/05/08; EI 15/05/08). Furthermore, staff reported that they became de-motivated and frustrated when they were, “placed in positions that they were not skilled in or had no experience in,” (EI 12/05/08). This is a situation prevalent from the higher levels in DHA to the lower positions, and it has been claimed that this has, “led to high staff turnovers in the department,” (FG 03/06/08).

The results of studies that were commissioned by the South African government to investigate the ability of the Public Services to deliver on its mandate revealed that government departments were faced with capacity limitations with regards to organisational structuring (Pienaar, 2007: 81). The findings of these investigations are no different from what I managed to discover in this study, with regards to organisational structuring at the DHA. At a *Workshop on the new DHA operating model and structure* (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>3</sub>) that was held to discuss the new structure with top management of DHA, I was able to identify the issues

discussed below that were similar to those issues found in the commissioned government study.

Firstly, organisation structure development focuses on the creation of posts with little attention paid to the purpose and functions of the department. Service delivery was not a focus of the discussions, instead more emphasis was placed on individual business units rather than on the entire functioning of DHA, and managers from business units were only interested in their specific business units. The sole purpose of the redesign should be to improve customer service, for effective coordination and decision making in this regard. It should also try to devolve responsibility and accountability to lower levels in the organisation. However, this structure merely places more checks in place and increases the number of reporting levels that staff at the lower levels have to go through before decisions can be made.

Secondly, there is insufficient consideration of the workload and interrelatedness of work in designing structures. The duplication of roles was evident when the structure in Figure 4.1 was discussed at the workshop. Service delivery needs to be integrated between the different departments and in order for DHA to provide an integrated and seamless service, the structure will need to reflect more interdepartmental teams. This is not evident. Instead, independent, silo-functioning business units are present that do not allow for much flexibility. Responding to changes in the environment may be slow and involve more of crisis management, due to the inflexible nature of the design. Little or no interaction and integration is envisaged and multi-skilling, career opportunities and promotion of staff will be hampered, as staff will only be able to advance within the same functional unit. Instead, this structure can lead to rivalry and conflict between functional units and also empire building in each division. Staff are also, “expected to do restructuring at DHA over and above the other duties” assigned to them (EI 29/05/08). At the workshop I found this was also clearly evident with only fifty percent of the invited staff present at the workshop and apologies tended for most of the others citing other urgent work responsibilities. Many of those that were present spent most of their time on their laptops doing other work and some left the workshop early due to other work-related commitments. Adequate input was also not received from key staff during the planning and design of the new structure and staff were not

certain how certain operations would function in the new structure. Hence, this could result in resistance to the new structure thereby impacting service delivery.

The third issue is that the span of control deviates substantially between departments, with some department managers having very few posts and people under their supervision while other departments have several staff and posts. This inequality in work division is also clearly visible in Figure 4.1, above. ‘Ivory towers’ are created within each department and people fear losing control of these structures even though they are not efficient. Ivory towers can be defined “as a state of seclusion or separation from the ordinary world and the harsh realities of life,” (Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English, 1995: 724). Scott & Hawkins (2008) refer to these ivory towers as knowledge silos, organisational silos or functional barriers. These silos are also reported to hinder the sharing of knowledge and while a specific division or department may appear to be functioning effectively, the performance of the organisation as a whole may be affected by these silos (Scott & Hawkins, 2008: 309). In DHA small divisions isolate themselves from the rest of the organisation and continue to function as they please and not as is expected of them. My study also revealed that, “performance evaluation of staff is focussed on how many staff are under the control of an individual, so managers surround themselves with as many staff as possible as this makes them feel safe and powerful,” (EI 12/05/08 ; EI 26/05/08; EI 28/05/08). Furthermore, they are able to claim higher budgets and more resources for their departments and their performance bonuses are based on the number of staff under their control.

Fourthly, there is a tendency to have senior posts at headquarters with few senior posts at ‘the coalface’ (frontline operations) of service delivery. The majority of the senior positions reflected on the structure in Figure 4.1 are staff working at Head Office and very few positions reflect those that work in the public offices where the daily interaction with the customers or citizens take place. Furthermore, the structure should enable empowerment of these frontline staff by devolving responsibility, accountability and authority to make decisions at these levels. Instead, the current structure requires frontline staff to consult managers at Head Office for authorisation or decision making, and this has resulted in a delay in provision of services.

Fifth and finally, organisational structures are mainly designed to cater for individuals rather than the interests of service delivery. Comments from top management and questions at the workshop indicated that most of the staff at DHA were more concerned with where they were to be placed within the structure and expressed their dissatisfaction when they were not happy with their possible positions in the new structure. The management of DHA, needs to demonstrate, via its structure, their beliefs and desire to be a more evidence-based organisation in all aspects such as strategic planning, service delivery, and performance evaluations. Service delivery is not the function of a specific business unit but it is the sole function of DHA and this is not evident in the structure of the organisation. The organisational structure will have to direct the functioning of officials towards the service to the public as opposed to them focussing on their own posts and interests.

Having discovered the alarming lack of capacity for organisational restructuring in government departments, DPSA was mandated to develop a “*Guide on how to design, implement and maintain organisational structures in the public sector,*” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>4</sub>). This guide serves as a common framework for organisational structures in the public sector and it provides a step-by-step description of each phase in the organisational structuring process. It provides guidance and tools that could be used at each stage. Furthermore, the guide is extremely comprehensive and includes over 80 tools and templates that allow practioners to choose the tools that best suit their circumstances. It also includes valuable information to assist practioners to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework appropriate for their revised structures (Pienaar, 2007: 83).

The executive summary was made available in 2007, and this was to assist all government departments with decision making about their own department’s structures and the full Guide has been available since March 2008. However, this guide was not consulted at DHA during the planning, design and development of the structure as indicated in Figure 4.1. I found that all the staff (from the strategic planning division) who were responsible for the structure were also not aware of the existence of this guide (EI 4/06/08; EI 9/06/08).

The *Guide on how to Design, Implement and Maintain Organisational Structures in the Public Sector* (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>4</sub>: 2-3), identifies the need for effective organisational structures in order to:

- Implement the strategic plan of the department. If the structure is not aligned with the strategic plan of the department, the department is not likely to achieve its objectives
- Ensure effective service delivery. Structures are the vehicle through which services are delivered
- Assist with efficiency and the optimal use of resources. The structure influences how financial and human resources are allocated and used. Duplication of roles and work, delays in decision making, unequal workloads and under-budgeting for activities are a result from poor structures and these issues as discussed earlier, are exactly what is evident from the structure of DHA
- Assist in enhancing staff morale. The way in which the organisation is structured will influence the morale, energy, and enthusiasm of the employees
- Assist in fostering the appropriate organisational culture for delivering on the mandate and strategic priorities
- Provide employees with a clear definition of their roles in the organisation and where they fit into the organisation
- Help employees and teams working together to organise their work and achieve their goals
- Provide employees with clarity on decision making structures and processes in the organisation
- Direct employees towards the kind of behaviour expected of them in the organisation. If there are no team structures, people will behave as individuals and keep all information to themselves. The hierarchy will slow down the flow of information
- Enhance internal and external communication and encourage information sharing and knowledge management.

Functional structures like the DHA do contribute to the transfer of ideas, contacts, and specialised knowledge, promote specialisation, and develop functional expertise.



According to Ehlers & Lazebby (2004: 208) such structures can also have many disadvantages for DHA, for example:

- Barriers between the functional areas could suppress cross-functional processes
- A strong focus on the various functional areas, instead of focussing on the organisation as a whole, could lead to the existence of various “silos” where there is little communication between and integration of the different functional areas as is currently the case at DHA
- Rivalry and power-play between the different functional areas could cause the organisation to place priority on a specific functional area instead of focussing on the organisation’s operations as a whole. This is prevalent in DHA and has resulted in the duplication of several activities and the wastage of resources and effort
- Even though the functional structure allows for the development of specialised managers and skills, these employees have limited exposure to the other areas of the organisation and, therefore, the development of general managers is limited. This can mean that transfers and job rotations can be a problem, especially in areas where there are skills shortages.

The use of the *Guide on how to Design, Implement and Maintain Organisational Structures in the Public Sector* (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>4</sub>) would have potentially been valuable for DHA, in that it would have helped them to develop a structure that is far more responsive to all the role-players and one that facilitates the easy flow and communication of information and knowledge that is required for decision making.

#### **4.4.2.2 Flow of information in DHA**

Information is the key to effective decision making, and in order for managers to make decisions about what needs to be done, where, how, and by whom, they must have information on the amount of resources available, the quality of these resources, and the alternatives for deploying them (Minnaar & Bekker, 2005: 97). Furthermore, organisational decision making and the functioning of the organisation in general, is



impacted by the manner in which power and authority is manifest within the organisation and this is evident in the structure of the organisation.

In bureaucratic, hierarchical structures such as DHA, organisational power focuses on subordination and it promotes loyalty to the “boss” rather than the specific goals and outcomes of the organisation. The activities and functioning of the individuals in these structures are related to rules and regulations of the organisation and not necessarily to the goals and objectives. Several staff members who I interviewed in this study also confirmed this situation and stating that, “they had to comply with the regulations.” In most cases, this hampered effective flow of information required either for decision making, or to enhance the functioning of interrelated departments (EI 12/05/08; EI 14/05/08; EI 15/05/08; EI 20/05/08; EI 17/06/08).

I found that the organisational structure, as identified in Figure 4.1 and each department’s individual structure, do not seem to make room for adequate liaison positions, cross-unit committees, integrator roles and formal structures for coordination between subunits in the organisation. These are the instances when information that is required can be transmitted easily within the organisation. Even in instances where these structures are available, they do not seem to work because employees feel that they have power as long as they are in possession of some information that others do not have. This was made evident in the statement, “Knowledge is power,” (EI 12/05/08). I also found many documents marked ‘confidential’ were kept in the offices of managers with nobody else having access to them. The contents of these documents were not of a sensitive or secret in nature, and I was able to use these documents for my study, but internal staff had no access to them.

The flow of information in DHA is further complicated by the lack of a sharing culture in the organisation, and inadequate communication channel. During my interviews with staff it became evident that a, “hoarding culture of staff, lack of sharing and little interaction,” (EI 20/05/08) was prevalent. Staff also indicated that the “filtering of information is not carried through to lower levels of staff by supervisors,” (EI 20/05/08). Staff relied on their supervisors to pass on valuable information but they were, “kept in the dark of what was happening in the

organisation,” (FN 29/05/08). This seemed to be confirmed in an interview with management staff, where I was informed that, a “management information system was required as a matter of urgency as we cannot find information to respond to important issues. There are also no records or databases to retrieve such information. It takes very long to locate the required information from interrelated departments as no formal communication channel is available to speed up the process,” (EI 17/06/08).

Senior staff also reported that, “the flow of information is fragmented at present,” and they wanted to know, “how can we make the flow of information less fragmented within the existing structure?” at DHA (EI 22/05/08). It was also interesting to note that senior staff acknowledged that, “too many hierarchical levels in the DHA were causing communication problems, inefficiencies, delayed decision-making and bureaucracy,” (EI 19/05/08). Minnaar & Bekker (2005) suggest that it is the nature of bureaucracies to suppress the willing sharing of information because it provides the individual manager with a sense of power and control over this information. I found that this statement held true for the situation at DHA.

The flow of information in an organisation can have an impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of its activities and operations.

#### **4.4.3 ACTIVITIES THAT TAKE PLACE IN THIS ENVIRONMENT**

The DHA executes its core functions and activities in keeping with its mandate. The core functions are that of Civic Services and Immigration and in the department’s quest for excellence in serving its customers, these services are delivered in accordance with specific standards set by the department (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 17). DHA has a network of offices in all provinces and mobile offices or unit services are arranged on a regular basis where the establishment of fixed offices is not warranted (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>1</sub>: 320). Each of its core functions comprises of several services and these are the major activities that take place in this environment.

#### 4.4.3.1 Civic Services

The activities that Civic Services are responsible for are as follows:

- Maintaining the National Population Register (NPR) – recording and updating the personal particulars of individuals in the NPR so that identification documents can be issued. Information in this system is used for various purposes including identity validation. The NPR forms the core of the citizenry information systems at DHA
- Management of records – these records include details of the status of the persons, such as births, marriage and deaths, addresses
- Citizenship – South African citizenship is regulated by the *South African Citizenship Act, Act 88 of 1995* (South Africa (Republic), 1995) and DHA grants citizenship to those that request it after following a set procedure
- Travel documents and passports – These include documents for people entering or departing South Africa. DHA provides processes the requests for these documents and produced the appropriate travel document
- Identification documents – These are issued to citizens of the country and all applications are handled by civic services
- Identification – this is by means of fingerprints and photographs (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 17; South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>1</sub>: 320).

Civic services are the first core activities that DHA performs to achieve its objectives to the citizens. It focuses mainly on their needs while Immigration Services focus more on the needs of visitors and non-residents of the country.

#### 4.4.3.2 Immigration Services

The activities that Immigration is responsible for include:

- Admissions – control over the admission of foreigners for residence in and departure from South Africa such as visa applications, temporary residence permits and immigration permits
- Inspectorate – to reduce the size and annual growth of illegal migration. This includes identifying and removing illegal migrants, disrupting organised

smuggling operations, taking steps to deal with fraud and other document abuses, and preventing employers from having access to unauthorised workers (South Africa (Republic), 2007<sub>1</sub>: 25)

- Refugee affairs- focus on the management of refugee services in South Africa. It deals with asylum seekers and applications from these people for refugee status and the issuing of refugee identity document which allows these asylum seekers to have access to the basic services in South Africa such as healthcare, education and employment
- Information coordination – manages information in the National Immigration Branch to facilitate regional and national operations
- Policy directives – advises refugee reception offices on policy related matters and on background information of an applicant’s country of origin
- Counter-xenophobia – strategy for this has been developed and adopted and the department intervenes to foster peace and tolerance among its citizens and refugees (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 17; South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>1</sub>: 321).

In order for these activities to function smoothly, support is required from other functions and services in DHA.

#### **4.4.3.3 Support services**

Apart from the core services, DHA performs several support functions in order for the organisation to achieve its goals and objectives. These services include:

- Strategic support – ensures the effective and efficient strategic support services in the department
- Information services – provides strategic input and direction into the department’s information services
- Finance and supply chain management – ensures effective and efficient integration of financial services and supply chain management systems
- Audit services – provides objective audit assurance and consulting service to the department

- Operation support – provides leadership and management of the operational support functions in the department (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 18).

These functions shed light on the complex and varied nature of the activities that take place in DHA. With such complexity in existence in the organisation, it is important to identify and understand the interaction patterns that exist.

#### **4.4.4 INTERACTION PATTERNS IN DHA**

Face-to-face interaction is usually seen as an important form of communication that is prevalent in most organisations. It has been discovered that most managers in Public Services spend a large portion of their day giving and receiving information, and that most of this giving and receiving takes place in face-to-face interactions (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2006: 339). I found this to be true in the case of DHA where, “most of their senior staff spend up to sixty percent of their day in meetings,” (EI 19/05/08). A major part of the managers’ day is spent responding to requests for information within these environments, hence they are seen as being reactive and more time is spent responding to these information requests than actually initiating requests.

These interaction patterns can be extremely diverse and are often informal rather than official (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2006: 339). At DHA, I was able to establish that staff rarely try to make sense of situations or problems, they merely react to them (FN 19/05/08). Informal socialisation between departments is also not common practice and the silo-functioning departments, “do not promote interaction. This leads to problems and lack of competition between departments or business units. Hence, there is no motivation to enhance performance internally,” (EI 24/06/08). The lack of interaction between staff and departments, “makes it very difficult for effective skills transfer and sharing of organisational insights and ideas,” (EI 20/05/08). This situation is further compounded by the vague and complicated reporting lines that I noticed within departments (FN 27/05/08).

According to Gupta & Govindarajan (1991: 779), interaction by means of socialisation can be a very useful means for an individual to learn what behaviours

and perspectives are customary and desirable in the organisation's work environment. It can also be helpful for building a sense of identification and commitment to the organisation as a whole and not just focussing on a specific sub-unit in which one is operating. Such forms of socialising are created through job rotations, staff development programs and management development programs. Such programs would include participants from all service units attending the program so that their values and norms become closely aligned with those of the entire organisation rather than just that of their individual subunit. At DHA staff at the branches and the remote locations have a "head office mentality," and "expect staff at head office to sort out all problems and issues that they cannot deal with. Hence become reliant of others doing the work and consequently do not take responsibility for their activities," (EI 24/06/08).

Furthermore, much of the interaction and communication patterns are that of lateral interaction, where managers interact with managers on the same rank. The interaction of senior managers with lower level staff and staff from different departments or business units was not noticed at DHA during my ethnographic study. The reason for this can be claimed to be, "because senior staff feel that they are capable of doing everything without the assistance from other departments that have the skills and competencies," (FN 12 /05/08). Discussions with senior staff revealed that, "staff are internally focused, territorial and fear job losses therefore they do not interact, and share ideas and information with other staff and other departments," (EI 20/05/08).

Effective interpersonal communication and interaction is essential in a service delivery environment, as this is the means via which staff can correctly interpret and confirm the messages and needs of the customers and also the processes and activities that are needed to be performed in the department. A lack of interpersonal interaction/communication skills can mean that staff would be insensitive to the problems, information requests and enquiries that they receive from their customers, which would result in them not listening properly to what exactly is being said (Bryson, 2006: 199).

At DHA the interaction with customers is not one of effective service motivation or delivery. Staff are more focused on the processes and procedures that have to be

followed rather than the customer and their needs, and legitimate rights to the services that they offer. This lack of customer orientation has resulted in the customer being viewed as “guilty until proven innocent” and this is what produces irate and dissatisfied customers (EI 24/06/08). Proper communication and interpretation of each customer’s needs is essential to overcome this situation.

The way in which customers interact with DHA has also changed. More self help, menu-driven systems are now being used, where the customers do not have to interact with the staff directly or by telephone ([www.dha.gov.za](http://www.dha.gov.za)). Such systems allow for the checking of marital status, obtaining applications forms, tracking-and-tracing the process of documents, and immigration applications. These can now be done online and it is essential to ensure that these online facilities are user friendly, easy to use and constantly in operation as this can lead to customers being discouraged from using such means of interaction, thereby defeating the purpose of such facilities. Security on these means of interaction has to also be very stringent in order to ensure that no fraudulent activities transpire. It is important to note that while technology cannot completely replace service delivery, it can serve as a tool for interaction and communication in organisation.

#### **4.4.5 LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION CODES IN DHA**

According to Lyles & Dhanaraj (2004: 94), communication among members of staff in organisations provides a way of resolving problems, sharing information and creating new knowledge and ideas. Furthermore, common schemata and language use helps them to communicate ideas and knowledge that cannot be easily articulated. In the DHA, and in most other public service organisations, one has to be fairly acquainted with the different internally created acronyms and abbreviations used in order to understand the processes and activities. During my stay at DHA, I had to constantly consult their list of abbreviation and acronyms in order to make sense of their documents and to understand the conversations (FN 16/05/08).

While English is the official language of communication orally and in printed and electronic sources, “staff at DHA usually communicates with each other in their



respective mother tongue languages,” (EI 20/05/08). Bureaucratic-type structures create situations where procedures and regulations are followed and communicated in much more formal channels than informal communication channels (Bryson, 2006: 245). I found this to be the case at DHA and most communication to staff is via staff meetings, workshops, reports, appraisal interviews, intranet, emails and letters.

The effectiveness of the use of the above mentioned channels to communicate with staff at DHA is doubtful as no communication audit has ever been conducted at DHA (EI 23/06/08). I also found that, “many staff, especially at the lower levels are not well trained in the use of technology and, therefore, they do not use the electronic means of communicating with each other and cannot even locate important information communicated to them via these means. Also, there is no formal communication structure from senior management to lower levels so in many instances important, work related information, is not filtered to these staff,” (EI 15/05/08).

The existing public internet and internal intranet of DHA was found to be poorly maintained and information on it was very outdated. Staff claimed that “new information is posted very late,” (EI 20/05/08) and in some cases staff usually misses the information or event being communicated to them. Many staff that I spoke with stated that they “do not bother to consult their intranet,” for these reasons (EI 19/05/08; EI 27 /05/08; EI 23/06/08).

Influencing and getting things done in an organisation requires good interpersonal communication and networking with all levels of people in the organisation and outside. Managers can enhance their interpersonal communication skills by being good communicators in the first place, or by having traits that are associated with good communication. Interpersonal skills can be ‘raised’ and further developed in organisations, by having managers be accessible, by defining each individual’s or team’s areas of responsibility and by developing effective listening skills (Bryson, 2006:198-9). Most managers who I experienced at DHA do not have an open-door policy for communication, and are not directly accessible to staff. All communication is first through the managers’ secretaries and only later through an appointment with the manager. These secretaries are not highly skilled in taking messages and in communicating them correctly to the managers and the staff. I personally had several



experiences where the managers had not received my messages and also some instances where the incorrect details were communicated to them. I also found that it usually took a long time before an appointment was granted to the staff member, and by that time the reason for the meeting was either forgotten or no longer important. I noticed that staff felt they were, “disturbing the manager when they tried to secure appointments for important discussions with them,” hence, most staff indicated that they “did not bother to meet with the manager and just let things be the way they are,” (FN 13/05/08; EI 13/05/08).

People with effective listening skills are often able to elicit invaluable information from others as they create an atmosphere of understanding and respect. This can lead to higher levels of productivity, increased motivation and a willingness to cooperate (Bryson, 2006: 200). The researcher has observed that DHA has a very powerful informal communication channel, the “grapevine”. However, managers do not listen to what is being said and there is no evidence of utilising this channel to extract valuable employee related information (FN 15/05/08; FG 3/06/08). Nicoll (1994: 25) states that the grapevine “should not be overlooked, as this is the channel most likely to reflect the underlying culture and values of the workforce itself.” It should also be noted that while the grapevine is not suitable for the provision of information of immediate operational and strategic importance, at DHA it can be used to enhance the socialising of employees. This can, in turn, enhance the corporate culture, encourage more interaction, and, probably, encourage sharing between individuals. Furthermore, strong and reliable grapevines can assist DHA to increase the flow of good information and feedback through the organisation and this will lead to a reduction in cynicism, thereby increasing allegiances to corporate goals.

According to Burke & Wise (2003: 73), “a grapevine can be a large asset to companies that have inadequate formal communication channels, or when employees do not receive important information on a timely basis. It can be a useful tool to help workers to make sense of the organisational environment and give them some advance adjustment time before impending changes are implemented.” This can be advantageous for DHA as it does not have an adequate communication channel to deliver information to its staff and it is also undergoing several large changes in terms of the restructuring and redesigning of its operations. In my interaction with staff at

DHA, they often stated that they “heard via the grapevine” of some activities and planned changes (FN 15/05/08).

Information that is needed by staff to do their jobs efficiently and effectively is not easily available at DHA due the various security classifications used on most documents for example: ‘confidential’, ‘secret’, and ‘top secret’. These classification schemes are used because most documents such as project reports, annual reports, research findings, have to be signed off by the relevant authority before they can be distributed and this delays the rapid transmission of information (FN 19/05/08). While classification and security is essential for defining the parameters of access and use of information in DHA, many managers appear to use this information to gain power over other departments and staff and, therefore, do not communicate or share this information (FN 12/05/08; FN 19/05/08).

Effective communication is essential for DHA to be able to understand and provide for the needs of the customers and hence enhance service delivery. It also has an impact on, and is impacted by the culture of the organisation.

#### **4.4.6 ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE OF DHA**

Organisational culture or corporate culture as it is also referred to (Bryson, 2006: 111), consists of the behaviours, beliefs, norms, attitudes, social arrangements and forms of expression that form a describable pattern in the lives of members of an organisation. Ethnographic research is also informed by the concept of culture as it focuses on the study of the people (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999; Fetterman, 1998). The culture of the organisation has an impact on the way individuals interact and communicate with each other and also their performance.

According to Ehlers & Lazenby (2004), organisational culture refers to a set of important, often unstated, assumptions, beliefs, behavioural norms and values the members of an organisation share and it can be regarded as the personality of the organisation. These authors go on to describe organisational culture as being manifested in stories, legends and traditions, its ways of approaching problems and

making decisions, its values and its do's and don'ts. Organisational culture can also be noticed in the organisation's belief systems, behaviour, thought patterns, its philosophy about how business ought to be conducted, its policies, in its stakeholder relationships and in its approach to corporate governance and ethics (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2004: 185).

Most organisations do not have a single homogeneous culture and different hierarchical levels and functional departments and subunits will have a different culture especially in large organisations such as DHA. Ehlers & Lazenby (2004: 185) divide organisational culture into four broad categories and these are reflected in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1** Categories of organisational culture (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2004: 185).

Organisational cultures	Elements
Strong organisational cultures	Values, norms and beliefs are deeply ingrained and difficult to eliminate and it is an added advantage to have a tight fit between the chosen strategy and the strong culture if the organisation is to achieve its objectives. This culture also has the ability to translate the cultural values at the organisational level into behaviours at the individual level (Bryson, 2006).
Weak organisational cultures	Fragmented culture where few traditions, values and beliefs are shared. Subcultures do exist and the employees do not have a sense of corporate identity and this type of a culture does not assist in strategy implementation.
Unhealthy organisational culture	A politicised internal environment is present where influential managers operate in autonomous "kingdoms". Here there is a hostile resistance to change and to people who advocate new ways of doing things. Innovation and creativity is not rewarded in such a culture and the organisation clings to the belief that it has all the solutions and answers.

Adaptive organisational culture	Members share a feeling of confidence in the organisation and this organisation is characterised by receptiveness to risk-taking, innovation and experimentation. A proactive approach to strategic change is evident and strategies are changed whenever necessary.
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I was able to ascertain that the organisational culture of DHA leans more towards being a weak and unhealthy organisational culture (as indicated in Table 4.1) and this has an impact on decision-making and influences the attitudes of the staff. A strong, dominant corporate culture does not exist and employees do not have a shared meaning or understanding of their core business (EI 15/05/08; EI 21/05/08).

Leaders care about their employees, even if they are located in distant locations or far away from the head office, as is the situation at DHA. Bryson (2006), states that strong cultures come from within the organisation and are built by the founders and individual leaders and not consultants. During my study I found that most core functions at DHA are left to consultants to accomplish and staff have very little or no input into these activities. They are usually left in the dark and are given tasks to perform that they do not have much (if any) commitment towards. Once the consultants leave the organisation, there is no sustainability of these functions as no skills transfer transpires due to their independent functioning (EI 15/05/08; EI 19/06/08). While this is partly due to lack of skills and competencies, it has resulted in a lack of a sustainable organisational culture.

The most important manifestations of culture are found in the assumptions, values and beliefs of top management, hence leadership and organisational culture are closely related and it is important for managers to establish a tight fit between the organisation's strategy and its culture if it intends to deliver on its mandate (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2004). At DHA there is a lack of sustainability of managers at top and middle-management levels due to high staff turnover in these areas in recent years. This has led to a lack of trust, support and commitment from staff at lower levels. "An organisational culture cannot be sustained in this environment. This usually leaves staff confused, and frustrated. As soon as they get used to one leader or Director

General and his style of leadership, values, norms and behaviour, the leader leaves and staff have to start over again getting used to a new leader,” (EI 2/05/08). This is perhaps the reason why DHA has not been able to succeed in its service delivery over the past years and no strong organisational culture has been developed.

The hierarchical structure of DHA, with its bureaucratic rules and regulations, results in creating a culture where staff are not encouraged to be innovative, creative or forward-looking (EI 19/05/08). Furthermore, I noticed that procedures are designed in rigid, formal and standardised ways so as to ensure that rules and regulations are not violated, and managers make sure that staff comply with these rigid controls and practices. The performance of the manager is also based on his ability to make certain that these strict controls are enforced by all staff (EI 20/05/08). These observations can also be confirmed by behavioural theorist (March & Simon, 1958; Cyert & March, 1963) who suggested that organisations’ rules, duties, rights and roles define acts as either being appropriate or inappropriate. These rules of appropriateness and standard operating procedures in routine situations have an impact the behaviour of the individuals in the organisation as was noticed as DHA.

According to Cassar & Bezzina (2005), such public administrators / managers believe that their sole capacity to take the organisation forward is by sticking to a mechanistic view of management that undervalues and, as a result undermines, the contribution of others. Hence, there is a strong reliance by staff on established norms and practices determined by the managers. Cassar & Bezzina (2005: 210) indicate that a “static culture guarantees the survival of the typical public administrator and this ensures that the status quo is always maintained.” However, this does not provide the organisation with the flexibility to respond to changing circumstances.

The behaviour and attitudes towards working relationships from managers help to nurture a dependency culture where subordinates do not see themselves as partners in the process but rather wait for their supervisors to do all the thinking and decision making (Cassar & Bezzina, 2005: 210). This is indicative of the situation at DHA and I found that in most cases the actual laws and legislations are used as work manuals or policy documents for accomplishing tasks (EI 20/05 08; EI 21/05/08; EI 20/06/08).

Furthermore, the attitudes of staff are also, to a large extent, determined by the supervisors who rely on these rules and regulations that are determined by the external policy making bodies. Any new initiatives taken by staff or creative ideas expressed are seen as a threat and are punished. In some instances, showing any initiative or new competence has resulted in staff being “overloaded with work that they cannot cope with.” Thus, staff “no longer feel it worth while trying to be the best you can be as it is not rewarded or appreciated and they fear work overload,” (EI 15/05/08). Staff talent is suppressed and in time some of these skilled and useful staff are, or feel as though they are, forced to leave the organisation (EI 19/05/08; EI 20/05/08).

The growth in DHA’s human capital has declined because of the lack of an information and knowledge sharing culture. Instead, a hoarding culture exists where individuals feel that having information and knowledge makes them powerful and, therefore, they do not share the information they have. Their lack of desire to share information and knowledge is also hampered by a lack of trust within the organisation. Liebowitz (2006: 10) suggests that an organisation can retain knowledge and information and its human capital if its culture supports sharing and development. This sharing culture is usually determined in the levels of trust that staff have in the organisation, and is reflected in a shared sense on purpose. In the case of DHA, it has already been established that sharing does not exist as there have been inconsistencies in top management, leaving staff confused, disillusioned and afraid to trust in management, uncertain about their futures and de-motivated.

DHA functions within a broader environment that is evolving and constantly changing, and like most organisations in developing countries, it will have to confront these environmental changes by changing its original functions and actions to fit the new environment. For DHA to deal with this situation it will need to depend on people who are able to cope with change and greater flexibility. Initiative taking will be required (Umeh & Andranovich, 2005). The unhealthy culture that exists in DHA makes it more difficult for it to deal with change. It is also reported that staff are “not opposed to change but they are against the way in which it was imposed upon them without sufficient consultation,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>3</sub>).

The political environment of public organisations can also restrict its professional flexibility and capability to appropriately respond to the citizens' demands (Vigada-Gadot, 2004: 211). Most of the bureaucratic activities of such organisations are directed towards the realisation of political goals rather than the achievement of the organisations objectives and there is a tendency for individuals in power to focus more on their own personal gains rather than the public's interests. Hence, status and status relationships are the prime motivating factors, rather than goal achievement (Umeh & Andranovich, 2005). This became visible during my study at DHA, where several senior staff adopted a behaviour of being status-conscious and did not really concern themselves with the operation and functioning of the organisation (FN 1/05/08; EI 12/05/08).

A culture of nepotism and favouritism also exists in this environment and top level officials select people for employment whose loyalty they trust: often meaning family and close friends. Such considerations greatly influence promotions, assignments, dismissals, and other personnel actions (Umeh & Andranovich, 2005: 41; Mafunisa, 2003: 89). Staff who I interviewed in this study confirmed that this culture is prevalent in DHA. It was claimed that "competent people were not considered for positions despite having acted in positions for years, instead people are promoted based on their affiliation to senior officials," (EI 21/05/08). Political decisions are also made, in certain instances, for staff appointments and promotions (FN 21/05/08) and such political considerations can potentially outweigh competence and merit-bases for decisions.

Culture is also reflected in the dress code of individuals in the organisation (Liebowitz, 2006). At DHA there is a dress code where staff are not allowed to come to work casually dressed. However, this is not followed by most of the staff and they are usually very relaxed in their dressing (FN 09/05/08). This casual attitude in dress code extends to their work too. Staff come to work "just to have something to do or somewhere to go to for the day," (EI 15/05/08). Many staff act as though they do not have any commitment to their work and most of them are involved in personal activities during work hours (playing games on the computer, reading the paper, or engaged in selling items through the internet (FN 15/05/08). There is usually a festive atmosphere in the departments on Fridays and it would appear as though the weekend



starts on a Friday morning at DHA. Most staff are very casually dressed and spend a lot of time in the corridors, chatting, in the canteen or on the telephone.

Time management is very lax and staff do not keep to strict working hours. Many staff were observed coming in early and then also leaving early. This situation is compounded by the fact that managers are usually not present to notice these activities that lead to poor performance (FN 09/05/08; EI 23/05/08).

The value statement of DHA states that “in the spirit of *Batho Pele*, we shall be guided by the following principles: ethical conduct, accountability, transparency, flexibility and professionalism,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 10). The value statement is an important tool for the organisation to convey its expectations and behaviours of the individuals towards each other and to the customers (Bryson, 2006). From the above, it is evident that the values that should determine the organisational culture of DHA are not adequately being practiced. Management actions through policies and procedures are essential in this regard.

#### **4.4.7 INTERNAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AND THEIR IMPACT ON OPERATIONS AT DHA**

The mandates of DHA are embedded in legislation as well as several other policy documents as outlined in its Strategic Plan (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 16). Some of these legislation and policy documents have already been discussed in this study, and will not, therefore, be repeated in this section. The aim of this section is to provide an indication of how the policies and procedures are implemented in DHA and how they impact operation in the organisation.

Policies are the specific guidelines, methods, procedures, rules, forms, and administrative practices that direct the thinking, decisions and actions of managers and employees in strategy implementation. Furthermore, policies inform employees of what is expected of them and clarify what can and cannot be done in their pursuit of the objectives of the organisation. Policies also help the organisation to standardise routine decisions, thereby reducing the time it takes to make decisions and provide a



basis for control. They promote coordination and consistency across the organisation (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2004: 220). Alongside all this, they should also assist the organisation in creating a strong corporate culture.

During the transformation in South Africa, the democratisation of public policy replaced the authoritarian mode of policy making. This new policy-making approach created opportunities for a more active role for civil societies and organisations in governance, and this led to government departments being given the responsibility to create policies and procedures relevant for the functioning of their specific departments (Muthien, Khosa & Magubane, 2000).

Policies are usually developed under the guidance of functional managers. However, at DHA I observed that they are still reliant mainly on the legislation and policies provided by DPSA (EI 11/06/08). While these are very sound world class policies, it is the implementation that poses a major problem in DHA as these policies were not specifically written for the unique operations of DHA activities. In other words, like any other world-class standards, they need to be adapted. I was also informed during my interviews that staff are also, “not skilled and competent enough to implement these policies and to link them to the organisation’s strategies and objectives,” (EI 20/05/08). It is further noted that managers do not write policies specific to their operational units and, in such instances, legislation is used as policy and as a procedures manual for certain operations. For example, the core function of immigration does not have specific in-house policies and procedures and this unit uses the *Immigration Act, Act No 13 of 2002* (South Africa (Republic), 2002) as its procedures manual for its operations (EI 19/06/08).

DHA has undergone many changes and transformations in the recent years in an attempt to reposition itself as a successful service delivery organisation. This has resulted in changes to its strategies, objectives, goals and operations. However, the department has not systematically looked at the policies that it has in place to see if they are still relevant and appropriate in the changed environment or to understand the impact that the policies have on the operations (EI 21/05/08; EI 19/06/08). Many of these policies are outdated and are from the previous dispensation and instead of assisting the organisation in moving forward, they appear to become a barrier to strategic change and implementation.

Policies should also support the chosen strategies of the organisation, and any changes in the strategies may require changes in the policies and procedures. At DHA, policies are not used effectively and even though some policies are very useful, they are not working as well as they should. This was made evident in a recent article in the media where a woman without arms was told that she could not get an identity document because she could not provide fingerprints (The Star, 2008). The article further claimed that, “DHA had failed to put in place a system that will help people with disabilities to get identity documents,” (The Star, 2008: 3). I was told that, “the correct procedure in this case was available, except the staff members attending to the customer were not aware of it,” (EI 18/06/08). The *State of Public Service Report* (South Africa (Republic), 2005) identified that internal policies and procedures are rarely in place to supplement legislation and procedures tend to be known by a few people, rather than being clearly documented and accessible to all.

Frontline employees become the contact point between the organisation and the customers, and in order to ensure a high standard of customer service it is necessary to empower these frontline employees to make decisions or to fulfil customer needs. Ehlers & Lazenby (2004: 220), state that the one way of empowering staff is through policies and for organisations to support customer-focussed strategies, it must change its policies accordingly. Several staff at DHA indicated that the policies (legislation) are far too prescriptive, do not take operations into account when they are written and, to a large extent, dictate operations that restrict service delivery (EI 21/05/08; EI 17/06/08). Some policies and procedures are more focussed on the requirements of the department and do not consider the citizens. Vigoda-Gadot (2004<sub>3</sub>: 267) suggests that when policy agrees with the public demands, citizens are more willing to accept administrative actions as being responsive to their needs and show more support in the entire democratic process.

I was also able to identify that far too much ‘red tape’ existed in the department and that “this has led to a lack of service delivery,” (EI 12/05/08; EI 21/05/08; EI 18/06/08; EI 23/06/08). ‘Red tape’ refers to the “excessive bureaucracy or adherence to formalities, especially in public businesses (seen from the red or pink tape used to secure official documents),” (Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English, 1995:

1152). DHA has several role-players when it comes to policy issues and approvals. These include DPSA, the unions, portfolio committees and executive committees. These role-players, firstly, have to give approval before anything can happen in the organisation and this slows down operations (EI 21/05/08).

Among other things, policies are also intended to protect the rights of individuals and the organisation from any misuse or fraudulent activities. This is especially important for DHA as it can be regarded as an information organisation and it deals with large volumes of information, mainly citizens' confidential personal information. The misuse of information has, in recent times, been reported to be used in several fraudulent activities such as, people being married off to foreigners without their consent, identity theft, and fraudulent selling of ID's, (Joseph, 2009: 2) However, DHA does not have specific policies, guidelines, standardised procedures and processes in place to protect staff from these forms of misuse (EI 12/05/08; EI 14/05/08; EI 20/05/08; EI 20/06/08; EI 23/06/08). A lack of the following policies in DHA is cause for concern:

- Information policy – This policy can be used to protect the intellectual capital of the organisation (EI 19/05/08)
- E-mail policy – There is no e-mail policy at DHA. This could lead to the misuse of the organisation's information and facilities or for staff spending a considerable amount of time using the e-mail for non-work related activities (EI 19/05/08).
- Internet policy - At the moment, unlimited access to the internet is present without proper audit of who uses what specific information. This can lead to fraudulent activities (EI 19/05/08)
- Financial and audit policy – DHA relies on DPSA policy for this and no department policy for budgeting and auditing of expenses exists, hence, the organisation has under-spent its budget in the past (EI 20/06/08)
- HR policy - This policy is not very sound. The Human Resource component of the organisation is meant to provide strategic support to core business by developing and implementing human resource processes, methods, systems and procedures that are needed to attract, develop, retain, reward and manage human capital towards the attainment of the organisational goals (South

Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 57). However, I found that this is not the situation at DHA. There are very few formal HR training and development opportunities and practices present in the department and most departments eventually “end up doing their own training and staff development without HR departments knowledge and support,” (EI 14/05/08). Recruitment of new employees is slow, made evident through the many vacant posts. The department operates under a bureaucratic style that leads to most of its human-related problems such as staff de-motivation, lack of trust, and poor staff attitudes, (EI 12/05/08)

- Recruitment and selection policy - DHA once again relies on DPSA policy and no internal policy for this exists. This has resulted in “staff with inappropriate skills being appointed in some position,” (EI 12/05/08)
- Communication policy – Staff in the communications department reported that they are often “not certain what we are expected to do in terms of communication both internally and externally,” (EI 23/06/08).

DHA is also not able to comply with certain legislation such as the *Promotion of Access to Information Act, Act 2 of 2000* (South Africa (Republic), 2000<sub>1</sub>). It takes “much longer than 21 days to respond to requests for information in DHA,” (EI 20/05/08). This is due to a lack of a proper archive and document management systems. Most policy-related issues are referred to the Counter Corruption and Security Division for attention, and they are not always able to assist adequately as it is not their core function and DHA is not fully resourced in the policy development process (EI 1/05/08). Policy development requires sufficient time to investigate and present different options. However, there is often the need for a quick decision to be made on a policy issue, and this limits the level of consultation with relevant stakeholders (Bryson, 2006).

Policy development is currently fitted in with other existing responsibilities such as strategic planning as there is no dedicated unit or section responsible for registering and managing policies and guidelines for DHA. Policies are then considered over and above other priority areas in strategic planning and this department is already

constrained by a lack of staff and all work is considered “urgent and due yesterday,” (EI 31/06/08).

As a result, policy solutions at DHA can be regarded as being limited in input from relevant individuals, relevant expertise, innovation and strategy. An understanding of the strategic planning tools and techniques used at DHA will be able to put this situation into perspective.

#### **4.4.8 STRATEGIC PLANNING TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES USED AT PRESENT IN DHA**

Strategic planning helps an organisation to match its objectives and capabilities to the anticipated demands of the environment in order to produce a plan of action that will ensure achievement of objectives (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2006: 32). These authors further suggest that strategic planning in the public sector is a process that must involve many individuals from different levels, and that it should be a highly participatory process as it allows the organisations to:

- Give clarity and direction to the organisation
- Choose from among competing goals and activities
- Cope with expected shifts in the environment
- Bring together the thoughts and ideas of all participants in the work environment of the organisation.

At the DHA, the strategic planning process is conducted each year mainly via workshops with top management. Planning is based on the strategic guidelines issued by the Executive Authority of the Department, Cabinet Lekgotla decisions, the President’s State of the Nation Address, and the budget speech of the Minister of Finance. This ensures that DHA’s strategic planning is aligned with the broader objectives of government and is in accord with prescribed requirements (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 34). However, Botten & McManus (1999) indicate that strategy is not only created by people at the top levels of the organisation or in its planning department, instead it needs the wealth of information and knowledge possessed by

people to make it happen. In particular, they stress the input from people who are continually dealing with customers, technologies, competitive factors, and suppliers.

Bryson (2006: 32) concurs with this view, and states that sound strategic planning benefits the communication and decision making process in the organisation and if people participate in the planning process from inception, especially with reference to their areas of responsibility, they will readily understand the purpose and objectives of the strategic planning and effectively support its implementation. DHA has a serious problem in this regard as staff ‘at the coalface’ of operations usually have to function within the strategic plans decided upon by individuals who are not involved in those specific operations. This has led to lack of cooperation from staff in terms of achieving the desired outcomes (FN 11/06/08; FN 01/07/08).

According to Bryson (2006), the strategic planning process will fail if inadequate time and resources are dedicated to it or if there is a lack of commitment to the process. I observed that very few staff members, in fact just four in total, are available to assist in strategic planning and to conduct the research that is necessary for strategic planning. Feedback from senior staff that is necessary for the planning process is also not easily forthcoming and staff doing the strategic plans have to usually, “chase after these staff,” in order to get the required information (EI 15/05/08; EI 31/07/08; FN 07/07/08).

Botten & McManus (1999: 187) indicate that, “while a rigorous, comprehensive strategy diagnosis and analysis process does not wholly guarantee an effective strategy, there is definitely a greater degree of probability of generating successful strategic options when the systems and methodologies that produce them are sound and complete.” Furthermore, they suggest that the organisation’s strategy be assessed for its quality and totality of the process and to determine whether all the appropriate personnel within the organisation were consulted. Beyond that, they suggest that the experiences of the participants be evaluated, as well as the accuracy and reliability of the techniques and methods that were used to prepare the analysis and forecasts on which the strategy is based.

DHA does not use reliable techniques and methods when conducting its strategic planning. Many of the strategic planning tools and techniques, such as environmental analysis to determine its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2003: 92-103), are not conducted and I was able to establish that the last SWOT analysis was conducted in 2006, showing that this is not a regular activity at DHA (EI 15/05/08, EI 27/05/08). Staff lack the competencies, skills and experience to regularly assist in strategic planning and so this has to be left to consultants, who do not always understand the internal operation of DHA (EI 15/05/08; EI 21/05/08). While attempts have been made to get the input from senior staff at workshops to assist in strategic planning, the entire strategic planning process and strategic plan for DHA is still largely a “consolidation exercise of putting together pieces of information received from each business unit,” (EI 15/05/08). Hence the strategic plan that results appears to be based on ‘gut feel’ and is not evidence-based with sufficient findings from research and statistics. Therefore, the existing strategic plan for DHA does not address the future desires of the organisation and can be regarded as a plan to address the immediate issues of the organisation only (EI 11/06/08). As such, the plan is not truly ‘strategic’ but more ‘operational’ or ‘tactical’ in nature, lacking the capability of helping the organisation align itself with its environment properly over longer-term periods.

It is also noted that when the output of an organisation is services or products that cannot be objectively measured, in these instances, it is more difficult to apply proper strategic management, hence the reason why many service organisations fail to use strategic management (Ehlers & Lazenby, 2004). Furthermore, the fact that revenue is obtained from government and taxes collected from the citizens and not by selling a product of service, make it easy for service organisations such as DHA to neglect sound strategic management and their focus is more on the input side and not on the output which is the service rendered and this is difficult to measure (EI 11/06/08).

As a result of lack of proper strategic management tools and techniques used by DHA to conduct its strategic planning and the development of clear strategies, the organisation is experiencing the following problems, as identified by Botten & McManus (1999: 191) in trying to implement its strategies and changes:



- Insufficient time is available for implementation of strategies leading to delays in achieving its targets
- Unanticipated major problems have arisen that have to be dealt with by crisis management
- Ineffective coordination of activities exists in the organisation that leads to duplication of efforts in most cases
- Crises that distract attention away from implementation of strategies
- Insufficient capabilities of the involved employees
- Inadequate training and instruction of lower level employees
- Uncontrollable external environmental factors, such as the recent xenophobic problems in the country and the illegal migration of Zimbabweans to South Africa due to the unrest in that country
- Inadequate leadership and direction by departmental managers
- Poor definition of key implementation tasks and activities
- Inadequate monitoring of activities by the information system.

DHA is in a situation where it has to deal with a future that is accompanied by uncertainty, as a result of the major changes taking place both internally and in the external environment. These are changes like the National Government elections that take place in 2009, and the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup. The department will, therefore, have to prepare for these uncertainties and this means planning and strategising to respond to the situations.

Both strategic planning management and thinking, can assist DHA to reduce its levels of uncertainty, and can act as a proactive technique that can help the organisation to achieve its desired results. Good strategic plans will also include new activities that will allow DHA to meet the changing needs of its stakeholders rather than adjust or respond to aspects that are imposed upon it (Bryson, 2006). I found that DHA has had to “make certain strategies fit into its structure and the structure seems to be completed before the strategic planning was done,” (EI 11/06/08). Botten & McManus (1999) emphasise that managers should change the formal organisation structure to implement the new behaviours appropriate to a new strategy. Hence, changes in the strategy lead to changes in the structure. In other words, the structure



of the organisation should be designed to facilitate the strategic pursuits of the organisation and, therefore, should follow strategy.

The above understanding of the strategic planning process at DHA provides a basis for the identification of the current state of service delivery.

#### 4.4.9 CURRENT STATE OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN DHA

The above discussion has, to a large extent, alluded to the current state of service delivery at DHA. During the study, several themes repeated themselves repeatedly. It is for this reason, and in an attempt to avoid repetition, that the researcher has decided to focus the discussion on the current state of service delivery to the nine prescribed Constitutional basic values and principles for public administration and service delivery. These are outlined in section 195(1) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996* (South Africa (Republic), 1996) and discussed in chapter 1.2. These basic values and principles are reflected in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2** Constitutional basic values and principles for Public Administration and service delivery.

No.	Values and principles
1	A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.
2	Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted.
3	Public administration must be development-oriented.
4	Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.
5	People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making.
6	Public administration must be accountable.
7	Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.
8	Good human resource management and career development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated.
9	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.

Each of these values and principles shown in Table 4.2 will be discussed in terms of service delivery at DHA and will provide an indication of the current state of service delivery by this department.

#### **4.4.9.1 A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained**

According to the *State of Public Service Report 2008* (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>), it is expected that the Public Service will serve as exemplars and promote and maintain a high standard of professional ethics. In order to achieve this standard, a strong ethics infrastructure is needed that is supported by enabling policies and commitment from staff to implement them. This is essential in the current context of service delivery where reports suggest that the public confidence in the country's institutions and leaders has dropped (South Africa (Republic), 2007<sub>3</sub>). While efforts are being made on the part of government to promote ethical administration, for example, the promulgation of the *Prevention and Combating of Corruption Activities Act, Act 12 of 2004*, the public still believe that the standard of ethics is deteriorating instead of improving (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>).

This is also the perception of the public as communicated through the media with regards to the services offered by DHA evidenced through the recent press and media coverage of incidents pertaining to the services offered by them and “the public go directly to the media with their problems as they lack confidence in DHA,” (EI 18/06/08).

Recent corruption charges brought against employees at DHA reveal that at least some staff do not comply with the ethics and standards. These charges involve, firstly, an employee being arrested after he was found to be in possession of ten identity documents taken from the Department's ID factory and, secondly, another who was found selling blank South African passports to a Nigerian citizen (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>6</sub>). This non-compliance will have an impact on service delivery. Furthermore, there is a tendency by the media to sensationalise aspects of the problem of ethics and corruption, and this is largely due to the lack of continued research and information on ethics management. DHA continues to suffer the consequences of bad publicity, as noted through the incident of the woman without arms. The media found

this story sensational (“no arm, no ID”) and covered it extensively, but this study found that there is a procedure in place to deal with such situations. (The Star, 2008: 3; EI 18/06/08).

Public servants at DHA can/may be tempted to behave in corrupt and fraudulent ways as a result of their de-motivation in their work and the poor incentive/salary that they receive. They are tempted to receive bribes for processing documents unofficially as this supplements their income. Also, many documents do go missing internally from the department and several study respondents suggest that very few instances of corrective action are taken against staff found guilty of such activities (EI 2/06/08). Much effort still needs to be done in order to improve the moral fibre of society so that public servants are less vulnerable to being corrupted by the public (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>).

DHA lacks the capacity and specialised skills that are needed to deal with cases of alleged corruption and this compromises the effectiveness of the department (FN 9/05/08; EI 15/05/08). This has meant that effective partnerships are essential for DHA to fight corruption and, hence, it requires cooperation from other stakeholders and role players in the fight against corruption. This situation is further compounded by a lack of a national integrity system that can help facilitate better collaboration between different anti-corruption agencies of government and to obviate a duplication of efforts and to promote efficiency and effectiveness. The more traditional means of investigating corruption are complicated and takes a very long time before any action is taken on the perpetrators.

The conduct and sense of professionalism displayed by senior management staff at DHA has tainted the image of this department and caused severe damage to the operations of the organisation and the effective delivery of services. In 2007 alone, the Chief Financial Officer, Deputy Director General: Civic Services and the Director: Procurement, were suspended from their duties for serious misconduct and fraudulent activities (South Africa (Republic), 2007<sub>1</sub>). Furthermore, it has also been identified that many senior managers fail to report and disclose their financial interests, as is expected of them in terms of the Financial Disclosure Framework (South Africa (Republic), 2007<sub>1</sub>). With some cases of alleged corruption still unresolved (South

Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>6</sub>) the perceptions of a corrupt Public Services, and DHA in particular, will remain. This does have an impact on the economic and effective use of resources at DHA.

#### **4.4.9.2 Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted**

Public Services are usually faced with limited resources that have to be spent or utilised in ways that achieve maximum value for money. Products and services offered by DHA are complex and, in delivering its services to the citizens, DHA has to also pursue certain social objectives such as equity. However, it is not always possible to establish the cost-benefit analysis from these services offered. This complexity tends to be perceived by the public as a form of inefficiency in service delivery while, in essence, it tries to redress the past inequalities (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>). Furthermore, the real benefits of service delivery are not always immediately noticed and only reveal their benefits long after the service was delivered.

In order for services to be delivered in an efficient, economic and effective way, DHA will need to ensure proper alignment of planning, expenditure, and reporting as this facilitates a monitoring of efficiency and effectiveness by linking the planned outputs and outcomes to achievements. DHA does not have a proper monitoring and evaluation structure in place for its financial management. The “auditing of its finances seems to be a mere paper exercise with no checks and balances in place and it is not an investigation of value for money or cost benefits thereby paving the way for corruption and misuse of funds,” (EI 20/06/08). My discussion with the Acting Financial Officer also revealed that, “Finance does not have skilled staff to plan and strategise for the spending of the budget,” (EI 20/06/08). Furthermore, I also noted that staff do not have to justify their expenditure, “if budgeted for, it can be freely used for that purpose without any monitoring of value for money, etc.”

The *Public Service Commission* (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>), also found that a tighter alignment of objectives, strategy and performance reports can facilitate a better understanding of how the spending patterns of the department impacts the achievement of its key service delivery goals. This, unfortunately, has not happened at

DHA which has resulted in an under-spending of the budget in the last financial year (South Africa (Republic), 2007<sub>1</sub>). This under spending may suggest that it is not the lack of funds and resources that is preventing the delivery of services but rather the lack of appropriate capacity to use the resources effectively and efficiently (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>). DHA has had to suspend its Chief Financial Officer, as discussed in 4.4.9.1 above, and this has correspondingly left the department constrained in terms of its financial capacity, while an acting person has been appointed in the interim. It will take a while before he can adjust to the new environment and budget, along with the financial procedures of government (FN 2/06/08). For DHA to be more development-oriented, it will have to ensure that it utilises its resources appropriately in the delivery of its services.

#### **4.4.9.3 Public administration must be development-oriented**

According to the *Public Service Commission* (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>), the principle of development-orientation requires public service institutions to ensure that they prioritise in their programmes and policies the creation of a better life for the people. This means that Public Service departments, such as DHA, have to use all their resources in such a manner that they help to invigorate the implementation of programmes that promote growth and development and assist in the reduction of poverty and the improvement of the quality of life of all people within their Constitutional jurisdiction. .

While many efforts have been made to achieve this principle, some published evidence reveals that DHA is failing in its delivery of services to citizens. Citizens are becoming frustrated and have taken to drastic measures to get service from this department. For example, a man waiting for almost two years for his identity book eventually lost his patience and cool and resorted to taking an official hostage with a toy gun (Eliseev, Mashego & Gifford, 2005). Without an identity document, the man was unable to apply for a job, study at any educational institution, travel within and outside the country, purchase any assets, obtain social service grants, and obtain medical health in hospitals. The fact that the processes at DHA take far too long to deliver appropriate documentation to individuals means that the quality of life of these individuals is being impacted in a negative way. The man had just finished

researching a business venture and could not go ahead with his dream to start his own business because he did not have an identity document. Many people sympathised and backed the sentiments of the hostage taker as they have also experienced similar frustrations from DHA. Along these lines, one person indicated that “Everybody knows how bad things are. We are frustrated with the attitude of staff at the department,” (Eliseev, Mashego & Gifford, 2005).

In order for DHA to achieve a development-oriented organization, it will need greater coordination of efforts, planning and the generation of appropriate services in a fair and equitable manner.

#### **4.4.9.4 Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias**

The *State of the Public Service Report* (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>: 44), indicates that, “there is a growing awareness by the citizens of South Africa of their rights to hold government accountable for service delivery and this has been evident in recent service delivery protests and demands that public institutions apply a very informed and grounded approach to fairness, equity and impartiality.” The *Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, Act 3 of 2000* (South Africa (Republic), 2000<sub>2</sub>) provides the framework, and acts as a benchmark, for impartiality, fairness, equity and non-biasness.

However, the implementation of this Act, and other similar initiatives such as *Batho Pele Principles* (South Africa (Republic), 1997), requires competent, trained staff and resource capacity. At DHA this seems to be a major problem because of inadequate and inappropriately skilled staff, at present, and staff acting in positions without being appointed to them permanently, making them unsure of the roles and responsibilities that will allow them to act decisively (EI 12/05/08; EI 15/05/08; EI 20/05/08; EI 01/07/08). I also observed that several posts are vacant and need to be filled, and this is probably the reason why services are not dealt with effectively (FN 26/05/08; FN 01/07/08).

Vigoda-Gadot (2004<sub>1</sub>: 217) found that customers expect public service officials to be skilled and professional in their jobs. The same customers expected to feel more

comfortable and less stressed and strained following conversations / confrontations with public officials. He further noted that non-qualified, non-skilled, passionless and apathetic public officials are more likely to treat customers insensitively and, thus, encourage reactions of dissatisfaction, helplessness or even anger towards the Public Service system as a whole. There is evidence that will suggest that this describes the climate that has been created at DHA. De-motivation of staff has led to a lack of a service-delivery ethic or customer service culture. Staff do not consistently display any '*Batho Pele*' principles when dealing with customers (EI 23/06/08). They often do not treat the customer with care and respect and do not have a sense of urgency when responding to enquiries or people's needs.

Some DHA staff members regularly show a disinterest towards the public they are serving (EI 24/06/08). A culture of tolerance and understanding needs to be developed as Public Services delivery cannot be an ad hoc function of DHA since this is the sole reason for its existence (EI 17/06/08). In many instances, staff are impatient to the needs of customers and are not tolerant to the mistakes of customers (e.g. incorrect filling in of forms). These attitudes lead to a lack of prompt service delivery. Staff often feel that they are "doing the customer a favour by assisting them," and do not realise that this is actually their mandate (EI 20/05/08).

Furthermore, DHA has embarked on bringing services closer to the people, and in this regard has launched several mobile units that have been fully equipped to function in the same manner as ordinary DHA offices do. These mobile units are located mainly in rural areas where no proper offices are present and they are also used for special events such as rallies, or campaigns. However, during my ethnographic study, I noticed that these mobile units are no longer functioning as they were intended to and now stand all day at the DHA head office. This situation is largely due to a lack of skilled staff to operate these facilities and lack of policies and procedures to ensure the efficient operation of these units (FN 18/06/08). These units have now become 'white elephants' at Home Affairs, and have not contributed significantly to service delivery.

DHA does not implement the service standards set out by the organisation. This is most noticeable when citizens challenge the department or try to hold them



accountable for certain aspects. Staff handle complaints inadequately and they do not have sound redress mechanisms in place to deal with such situations, hence it has been found that the citizens prefer to go directly to the media with their problems because DHA then responds very promptly to these complaints. Additionally, many fear being victimised and do not complain at all even though they are dissatisfied with the services provided (EI 18/06/08; EI 25/06/08).

Once DHA is able to ensure that an impartial, fair and equitable service is offered without bias to the citizens, it will be able to respond to the needs of the people more readily and they will be able to gain the confidence and support from the citizens.

#### **4.4.9.5 People’s needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making.**

In order to address this principle, a consultative and participatory culture is required to ensure that the services delivered match the needs and expectations of the people. In an effort to enhance participatory governance, formal policies and clear procedures will be necessary. These are not as yet available at DHA and many activities are conducted on an ad-hoc basis (EI 23/06/08).

While other public service departments use *Izimbizos*<sup>1</sup> as a forum for interacting with communities and getting them to participate in decision making that affects them, DHA has not used these regularly; consequently, citizens are not informed of new strategies to be implemented by DHA. As a result, they resist these initiatives at a later stage. This was evident with the recent xenophobic attacks on people in several communities and the refugee resistance to register for the new smart cards provided by DHA (Johnston, 2008). Lack of consultation and interaction with the communities led to these incidents reaching seriously dangerous levels. Potentially, these incidents could have been minimised or lessened if more participation and involvement was present between these communities and DHA.

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<sup>1</sup> *Izimbizo* is derived from a word in isiZulu, meaning “a gathering or meeting” (Buccus, et al., 2008:5)



Furthermore, community forums and community liaison is not used by the communications division of DHA. Some respondents from this group reported that they usually go to a specific community, despite the fact that they do not have a proper understanding of the culture of that community. This creates additional challenges in their attempts to provide a constructive service to the people of that community (EI 23/06/08).

Therefore, active participation and decision making from the citizens will improve DHA's service delivery to these people and will also assist them in becoming more accountable to the citizens.

#### **4.4.9.6 Public administration must be accountable**

Accountability involves an obligation on the part of public service officials to be answerable for what they deliver and how they deliver it. In other words, it is not enough to only account for performance, but rather there should be accountability for how this performance takes place (South Africa (Republic). 2008<sub>5</sub>: 60). A key instrument for accountability in Public Services is the system of performance management and development. However, at DHA I observed that most staff do not take responsibility for their activities and performance. "Staff at the branch offices have the head office mentality, expecting things to be done at the head office and it is not their responsibility. They also use the head office as an excuse for delays and poor service delivery, the blame is shifted to the head office and not themselves," (EI 24/06/08).

The performance of staff should be evaluated every quarter by supervisors. However, this does not happen because, "supervisors are not around enough to really evaluate the performance of staff and because they do not want to be seen as being incompetent, performance appraisals are signed off without much consideration and it has become a mere paper exercise," (EI 15/05/08; EI 11/06/08; FG 03/06/08). Staff development needs should be identified jointly between supervisors and staff. However, because most supervisors lack proper management skills, this does not happen. Also, "when staff attend training and development courses, no follow up or evaluation of performance is conducted to establish if the training has had an impact

on the performance of the individual,” (EI 20/05/08; EI 21/05/08). In many instances the performance of staff is poor simply because there is a lack of clarity of what is expected from the staff, “no clear job descriptions and performance indicators are in place,” (EI 29/05/08; EI 11/06/08; FG 03/06/08).

Effective accountability needs to be supported by a strong monitoring and evaluation base that ensures that appropriate performance information is collected regularly, analysed and reported on. Achieving this could help to improve public confidence in the department (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>). During the study, I found that senior managers and supervisors responsible for service units, do not show enough commitment to this and often send in reports too late or after deadlines have passed (EI 15/05/08; WS 30/05/08).

The effective and timely presentation of evidence to show the accountability of DHA to the provision of service to the people will also be able to provide the citizens with a transparent view of the department.

#### **4.4.9.7 Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.**

The transparent sharing of information enables the public to participate in policy-making and implementation from an informed perspective, and most government departments struggle to strike a balance between transparency and the provision of information, which for some reason, should be protected (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>). The capacity of DHA to provide information is a major challenge especially if this information is very specific, is requested by individuals and does not fall into the general category of reports or legislation. DHA does not have a central repository where it stores all its information. A lot of its archive information is not documented on an electronic document management system, so anyone looking for something specific has to sift through several shelves of boxes to find the desired information (EI 15/05/08; EI 19/05/08; EI 21/05/08; FN 09/05/08).

The lack of a central document management system means that documents cannot be easily retrieved or located when needed, a fact which is further complicated because

each department keeps its own documents. It usually takes staff “a long time to locate the information,” (EI 19/05/08). Even information required by other service units for work related purposes and for decision making, cannot be located easily. “This means that effective and efficient services cannot be delivered,” (EI 17/06/08).

The resource centre and the records-keeping processes are also not adequate at DHA and not enough emphasis is given to these activities by senior management, although I was able to meet with skilled and competent staff in this area who are available to do these tasks. Despite this, “the furniture and equipment for the resource centre is already purchased and stored in a room. Staff are awaiting the decision of management so that they can set up the resource centre.” (EI 28/05/08; FN 28/05/08 2008; South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>6</sub>). It appears that all initiatives are focused on information technology and only a little emphasis is given to the process of capturing, storing and retrieving information (EI 01/07/08; EI 08/07/08).

Many documents at DHA are also “classified as confidential and usually this information is kept away from the public,” (EI 12/05/080). The DHA web page is the interface that most members of the public use to get the information that they require. However, a lot of the information contained on the website is outdated and viewed by the citizens and visitors as being irrelevant (FN 03/06/08; FN 06/06/08; EI 23/06/08). This is mainly due to the lack of capacity and human resources training and development, further negatively impacting service delivery.

#### **4.4.9.8 Good human resource management and career development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated**

Human resources management refers to the measures that are put in place to ensure that employees are willing and able to implement the programmes of the organisation and career development ensures reward, promotion and advancement of staff. Furthermore, the creation of a work environment where staff have a clear sense of being nurtured and supported, promotes productivity and creates a positive dynamic that enhances service delivery (South Africa (Republic), 2005). Almost every individual interview conducted for this study during the four month period indicated

that DHA had a major problem in terms of their human capacity and this is one of the primary reasons why service delivery has failed.

The following human resources challenges are also identified in the latest strategic plan document for DHA (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 58):

- Resource capacity levels: The current employees' capacity in terms of numbers, competencies and utilisation are not at the levels required to meet service delivery demands. The Department is also not able to attract and retain the critical skills it requires. Thus, it is important to be proactive in planning for future resources in line with service delivery requirements
- Organisation design: The critical elements of the structure that are required to optimise employee performance are not in place; the job families are not clearly defined; there are no flexible career path; and the majority of the jobs are neither profiled nor evaluated
- Competency framework: The Department has not implemented a comprehensive competency framework against which employees can manage their careers and performance. There is a need to assess the competency gaps of employees in order to appropriately address them
- Limited development of appropriate skills: Learning and development interventions are not aligned to the business requirements: there is a need for a comprehensive workplace skills plan that will facilitate targeted learning and development of employees
- Leadership and management capacity: The Department is experiencing changes in leadership, and a majority of management positions have remained vacant for a long time. Over and above this, there is a gap in terms of management capability to manage and discipline employees
- Employee well-being: The Department is currently experiencing the effects of the HIV/ AIDS and other pandemic diseases through increased absenteeism; higher sick leave; temporary/permanent disability; lower levels of utilisation; and an increased rate of mortality. Other critical challenges in this area are the employees' attitudes towards clients, teamwork and morale
- HR systems: The current Human Resources (HR) policies and procedures are outdated and do not facilitate the alignment of HR practices with DHA

strategy. The current HR structure is centralized with limited IT support, which results in HR being inaccessible to managers and employees and hinders efficient service delivery

- Decentralisation of the HR function: Although the Chief Directorate: Human Resources is responsible for the management thereof, it is the responsibility of all managers to take on responsibility for human capital management. In support of the Departmental direction to decentralize the HR function, the Chief Directorate: Human Resources will need to provide the necessary support to line managers, taking particular caution to ensure control but not stifle service delivery. Delegation of the HR function is aimed at speeding up service delivery and managing the decentralization through appropriate HR controls and delegations.

The effective utilization of human resources requires sound monitoring of how individuals are recruited, deployed, managed and developed (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>5</sub>). It was perceived by several respondents that, “staff in senior posts at DHA do not possess the required skills and competencies that are necessary to accomplish the tasks,” (EI 15/05/08; FN 26/05/08). This perception was confirmed by DHA’s Director General when he revealed the findings of a competency test on all the senior managers of DHA. The results of the test indicated that, “more than seventy percent of senior managers at DHA did not have the necessary skills to perform their jobs,” (Msimang, 2008). He reported that the majority of the managers could not pass a competency test evaluating their capabilities. “As long as we have people who are not efficient, things will just collapse (Msimang, 2008). Furthermore, staff turnover at senior levels has been very rapid. This has left the department with newly appointed, unskilled staff who seek to solutions to problems in text books rather than from experience (EI 19/05/08; FN 26 /05/08).

The advertisements for the senior staff job vacancies at DHA also reflect that DHA does not demand the required skills for the available job often resulting in the acquisition of individuals who cannot perform well. For example, the advertised job descriptions requested a minimum educational level of a three-year bachelors degree (which is no longer regarded as a professional qualification), for people to do professional, high quality operations that demanded innovation, creativity and

integrity allowing them to make informed decisions (Sunday Times, 2008). The problem is further compounded by the fact that DHA does not have a systematic continuing skills development program that can help these individuals to learn more job-specific skills and competencies. The fact is that the last time most of the senior staff ever had any form of education and training was when they were at tertiary education institutions (EI 15/07/08, 2008; FN 17/07/08).

Implementing good human resource management and career development of staff will ensure that service delivery and public administration will be successful and also help to ensure that required local skills are available for service delivery.

**4.4.9.9 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.**

This principle requires that the Public Services reflect the demographic composition of the country in its workforce and to ensure that their staff are balanced and representative in terms of race, gender, disabilities, and all other similarly disadvantaged groupings. DHA has placed people in senior positions in its attempt to achieve its representative targets. However, some staff have apparently been promoted on the basis of their affiliation to senior officials rather than their skills and competencies (EI 15/07/08). This has created an environment of dissatisfaction, demotivation and lack of trust in senior officials. It has also, at least in part, resulted in poor service delivery and a poor reputation among the customers. The *Presidential Review Commission Report* (South Africa (Republic), 1998<sub>1</sub>) also found that many senior public service officials are appointed without any previous experience or formal training and no phasing in or formal hand-over from their predecessors was evident. This has exacerbated the sense of insecurity and incapacitation experienced by Public Services.

Furthermore, several international consultants have been appointed to complete specific projects and activities that cannot be done with the existing capacity. I also observed that these external, international consultations receive more empowerment and support within DHA than the permanent staff and this has led to de-motivation

and lack of performance in terms of service delivery (EI 24/06/08; FN 15/07/08; FG 03/06/08).

Staff claim that, “external consultants also use the idea, innovation and plans of internal staff to make changes or accomplish tasks and they receive the credit for this while staff do all the work,” (EI 24/07/08). While there is a definite skills shortage at DHA specifically in information technology skills and financial skills (EI 12/05/08; EI 14/05/08; EI 20/06/08), there is a tendency for DHA to source these skills from outside South Africa rather than partner with institutional experts locally available to help solve the skills shortage.

#### **4.5 SUMMARY**

The discussion in this chapter has focussed on the findings of the ethnographic study conducted at the DHA. The findings of this study were analysed according to the themes covered above and are able to provide an understanding of public service administration in South Africa. I have carefully identified aspects of the public sector that contribute to, or impact on, the delivery of services.

The complex nature of government in South Africa was discussed, in order to establish how Public Services and Administration fits into this environment. The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) was the chosen Public Service department for this study and a brief overview of this organisation was provided. This was then followed by a more in-depth look at the vision, mission and strategic intent of the organisation before discussing the themes that impact service delivery.

Aspects such as the structure and flow of information in the organisation have an impact on effective decision making and, hence, efficient service delivery. It has been found that DHA has several challenges in this regard. The complex nature of the activities in DHA requires that it have a structure that is more flexible so as to respond to the diverse requirements of its stakeholders.



The core activities of DHA such as Civic Services, Immigration Services and Support services reveal the importance of this department which is often not acknowledged and appreciated by the citizens. For this organisation to achieve its core functions and meet its service delivery mandate, it requires efficient interaction and communication channels both internally and externally so that the needs of the people can be addressed. The discussion of the language and communication patterns adopted by DHA indicates that they are not assisting the organisation to provide for the needs of the people and that it does also impact the culture of the organisation.

DHA does not have a strong organisational or corporate culture, but instead has a weak and unhealthy organisational culture, that has an impact on decision making and also influences the attitudes of the staff. Furthermore, due to this lack of a strong corporate culture, staff do not have a shared meaning of their core business. This has a negative impact on service delivery as staff do not work towards a common goal.

The development of sound policies and procedures can assist the organisation to complete its operations within specific set standards, however, DHA does not have several policies and practices in place for its operations. Where these policies do exist, the proper implementation of them is hampered due to the lack of skills and capacity.

Strategic planning provides the organisation with a guideline for achieving its objectives, but DHA does not use several important strategic management tools and techniques when it does its strategic planning. Instead this is based on 'gut feel' and is more of a consolidation exercise of pieces of information from the various service units. The strategic plans therefore, focus mainly on the immediate issues and do not adequately take the future of the organisation into consideration.

During the study, several themes repeated themselves over and over again and it is for this reason, and in an attempt to avoid repetition, that the researcher had decided to focus the discussion on the current state of service delivery to the nine prescribed Constitutional basic values and principles for public administration and service delivery. These are outlined in section 195(1) of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996* (South Africa (Republic), 1996). It was found that in DHA's attempt to achieve these principles, there are several areas where DHA has



failed and has not been able to adequately meet the set standards. Hence, there has been an impact on service delivery to the citizens.

The themes covered in the discussion have an impact on service delivery and certainly can be regarded as internal competition that DHA faces in terms of achieving its mandate. The next chapter continues this analysis and reporting of the ethnographic study and focuses more on the new interventions initiated at DHA to improve service delivery. It will also look at the key intelligence needs of the department, the specific forms of competition identified in this work environment ('left-field' competition), and identify any CI-related tools and techniques that are applied in DHA to improve service delivery.

## CHAPTER 5

### CI FOR PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter continues the analysis and reporting of the findings of the ethnographic study at the DHA. It will focus mainly on competitive intelligence for Public Service delivery. In the light of this, the discussion will cover four themes. Firstly, this chapter will discuss new interventions initiated by DHA in an attempt to improve service delivery. Secondly, the intelligence needs of DHA will be examined. This will be followed by a discussion on the specific forms of competition that already exist in the work environment (in particular, left field competition), and the chapter will conclude with an identification of CI tools and techniques adopted and used by DHA, without associating these tools and techniques to CI.

As has been discussed in the previous chapter, the DHA is beset with problems, such as the lack of skills and resources, not to mention corruption. In this regard, DHA has undertaken a major transformation of the department and new interventions have been introduced to improve service delivery.

#### 5.2 NEW INTERVENTIONS INITIATED BY DHA TO IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY

The transformation of the DHA has been acknowledged by the Minister of Home Affairs in its Strategic Plan (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 4). There she stated that, “we fully recognised the serious effects of poor and erratic service delivery on the lives of people, especially the poor and the vulnerable.” The Director-General: Home Affairs, Mavuso Msimang (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 28), concurs with this viewpoint, stating that the transformation process of DHA must include the following elements in order to deliver on its mandate effectively:

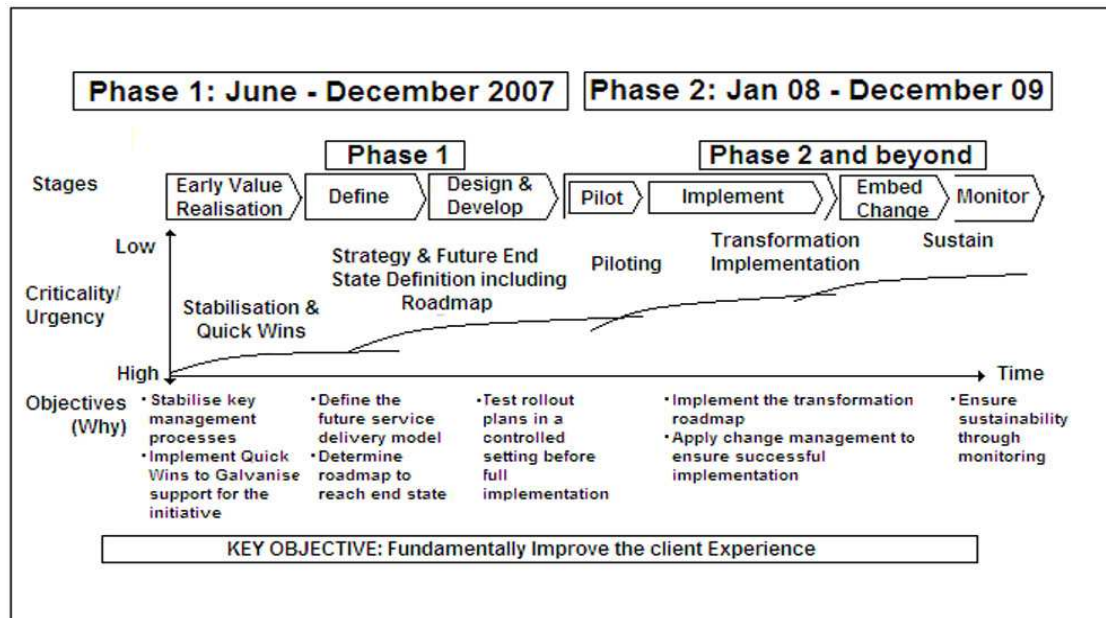
- It must be citizen- and client-centred and designed to meet actual needs, as well as address national priorities
- Staff must have the skills, the values and the environment necessary to manage the systems and to deliver services in a manner that is professional and human-rights based
- The operating and organisational model must include the following:
  - Good governance and a management and leadership team that can exercise sufficient oversight and control of all levels of operations
  - The effective management of channels and tiers of service delivery
  - Service delivery that is able to consistently meet acceptable and improving standards, including those standards that are set for offices and other infrastructure
  - Efficient and cost effective business processes that are enabled by secure systems and that empower management and staff in general.

Since these viewpoints were made public, several new interventions have been initiated to address the situation. In terms of this study, it was important to examine and identify the nature of these new interventions in DHA before CI-related tools and techniques could be suggested for the improvement of service delivery. The first major intervention, the Turnaround Programme, will be discussed below.

### **5.2.1 TURNAROUND PROGRAMME**

The vehicle used to address the current state of service delivery at DHA and to transform the department into a new public-friendly, corruption-free and efficient service provider was launched in 2007 and is known as the Turnaround Programme. The services of a company with a proven international track record in organisational transformation were procured, and these specialists/consultants worked together with DHA officials. Furthermore, a governance structure (Figure 5.3) was established to ensure that DHA had control and responsibility for the Turnaround Programme (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 28). The Turnaround Programme consists of over fifty projects that have been divided in eight work streams and this programme reflects the

most comprehensive process of departmental transformation ever undertaken by DHA. The Programme was divided into two phases when it commenced in June 2007 as indicated in Figure 5.1 below.



**Figure 5.1** Phases of the Turnaround Programme of DHA (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 9).

Phase One of the Turnaround Programme was conducted from June to December 2007 and focussed on identifying and analysing a host of deep-rooted problems. The aim of this phase was to redesign DHA from the ground up. This included restructuring the entire organisation, making changes to the existing processes and procedures, changing the organisation’s culture and values, revising the organisations mission and vision statements and improving its human resource capacity. Phase One had 140 desired deliverables.

As the programme commenced, DHA realised the need for certain “quick win” projects to be initiated in order to fast track the positive impact of the Turnaround Programme on the lives of people. “Quick wins” refers to urgent issues which the DHA would be able to finalise in a short time period having the potential of creating energy within the department and building momentum for the entire transformation

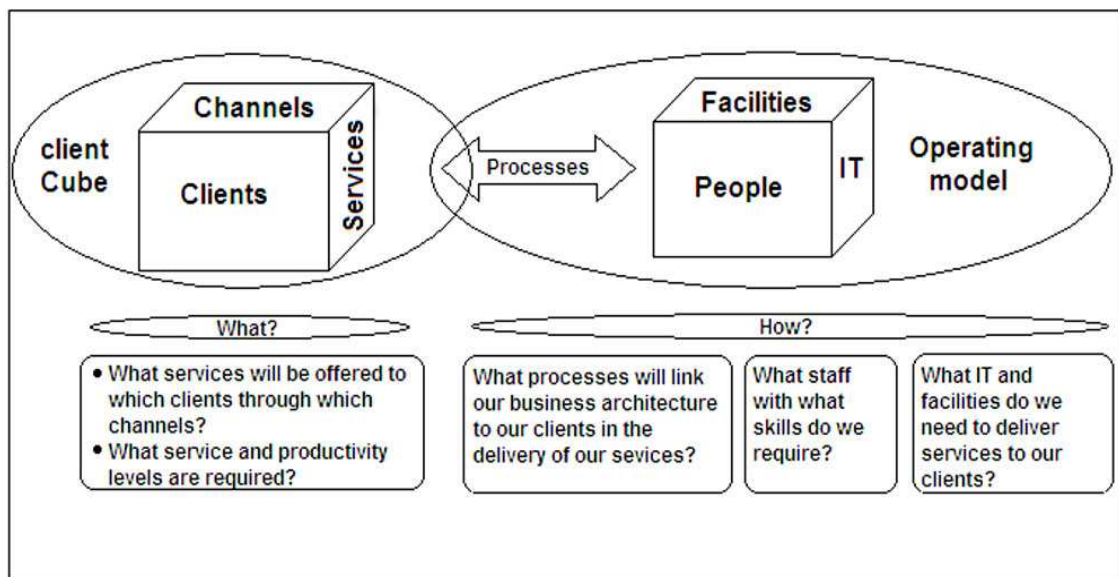
process (South Africa (Republic), 2004). Examples of “quick win” projects that were initiated in Phase One included the:

- Introduction of a track-and-trace system for identity document applications to assist the public to determine the status and the stages of their applications online. This system also provides valuable management information that is needed for strategic planning
- Enhancement of information systems security and integrity by means of a biometric access control system in the majority of DHA offices
- Installation of satellite connectivity at ports of entry to allow access to the mainframe and other systems at head office
- Digitisation of approximately 30 million fingerprint records as part of the Home Affairs National Identification System (HANIS) to ensure improved and quicker service delivery to clients due to the improvement in turnaround time of online fingerprint verification
- Introduction of quarterly senior management service progress review meetings to enhance accountability amongst senior managers and to ensure that the achievement of strategic objectives is monitored and evaluated periodically. It also assists in tracking progress achieved against the strategic objectives and major service delivery challenges that DHA can encounter in the future
- Establishment of the 2010 Project in preparation of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup to ensure that DHA is properly capacitated to render its core services during 2010 (South Africa (Republic), 2007<sub>1</sub>: 4).

Phase One of the Turnaround Programme as reflected in Figure 5.1 above, addressed deep seated problems that existed in DHA by implementing a new organisational model, redesigning business processes and revising its vision and mission statements accordingly. These problems have already been reflected upon in Chapter 4.

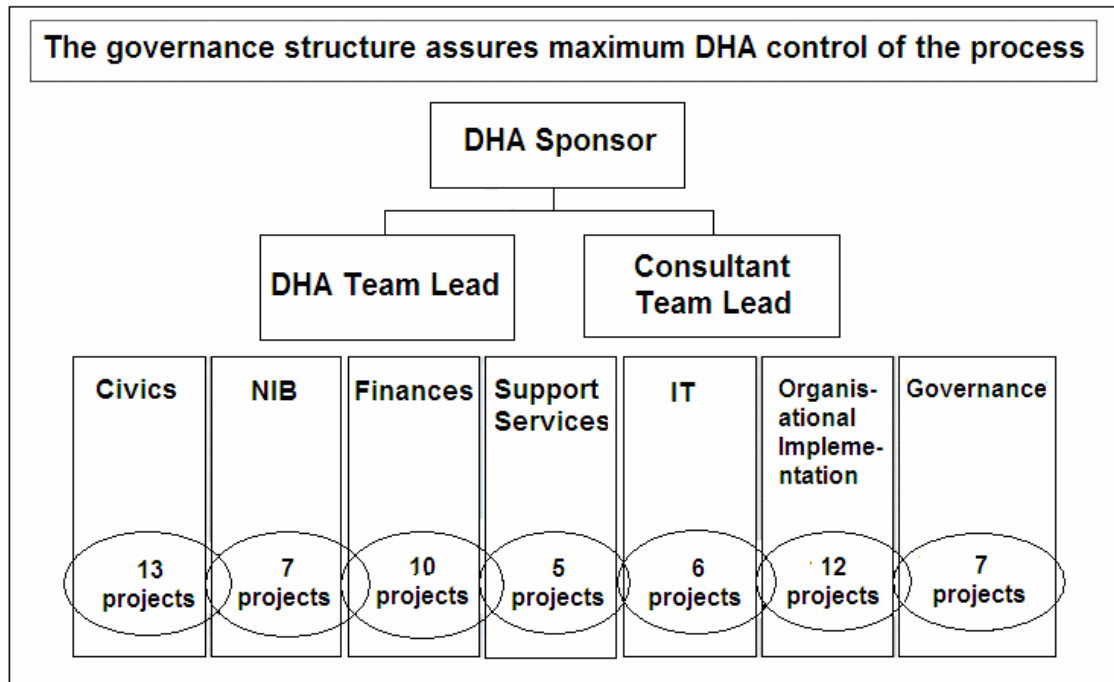
Furthermore, this phase also produced a new organisational and service delivery model, shown in Figure 5.2. This model was designed to create conditions for the DHA to produce secure enabling documents such as ID's and passports within a greatly improved and consistent delivery time (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 31). The model also identifies the “what” and “how” aspects that can improve service

delivery, as indicated in Figure 5.2. It also appears that the new model attempts to make DHA more client-centred and, therefore, has the potential to enable the department to fulfil its mandate more effectively. This was reported through the pilot of Phase One of the Turnaround Programme where productivity gains in the form enabling documents and service delivery improved by more than 300%. A visible improvement in staff morale was also noted (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 30).



**Figure 5.2** Department of Home Affairs Service Delivery Model (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 31).

Phase Two of the Turnaround Programme focussed on the planning, budgeting and implementation of the transformation processes. This phase was launched in January 2008 and is expected to continue until December 2009 (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>). Figure 5.3 below reflects the Programme Governance Structure and Phase 2 Project Breakdown.



**Figure 5.3** Programme Governance Structure and Phase 2 Project Breakdown (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 15).

The Turnaround Projects are clustered under the various service units and responsibility for achieving these projects is assigned to the head of these service units. The structuring of the projects in Phase Two in this manner is to ensure that DHA has maximum control of the process and can refine the processes as required. Furthermore, the governance structure, as reflected in Figure 5.3 also ensures that the Turnaround Programme is directed by DHA and that skills are transferred as effectively as possible so that the processes can still be maintained and sustained after the specialists commissioned to assist in the transformation of DHA leave the department. Phase Two of the Turnaround Programme is likely to have several benefits for DHA, in particular the implementation of the programme to enhance the delivery of services.

The benefits of Phase Two regarding the improvement of service delivery are estimated to be as follows (South Africa (Republic), 2007<sub>1</sub>):

- The turnaround time for the processing of identity documents for citizens will be less than 60 days as compared to the usual 180 days. Recent reports indicate that, “the turnaround time for the issuing of identity documents has improved to 47 days and this has remained constant for the past three months,”



(Mail & Guardian, 2008)

- The pilot of the new ID card with a memory chip will be launched in this phase and this will reflect a far more secure document which will be issued more quickly
- A new system to produce passports more speedily will also be made fully operational in this phase, with a target time of 10 days. I tested this new system by applying to renew my own passport and I was pleasantly surprised to have my new passport in 10 days
- Improvements will be made to operational control and efficiency so that corruption and the issue of low skills levels and poor management can be rooted out.
- Preparations for 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup are being fast-tracked and integrated with other developments in DHA to ensure that the department is prepared to deal with the influx of individuals entering South Africa. The system for movement control has been improved.

The Turnaround Programme is an irreversible programme and DHA envisages this as a means of producing short-term gains that will have a positive impact on the lives of the citizens and other clients. However, DHA will require other long-term initiatives if it intends to improve and sustain its service delivery. Hence, this investigation of the Turnaround Programme has assisted me in also confirming some of the service delivery constraints that were already discussed in Chapter 4 of this study and has also helped to confirm the lack of CI related tools and techniques being utilised by DHA for service delivery improvement. The Turnaround Programme also gave rise to several other initiatives that can assist DHA to improve its quality of service delivery.

## **5.2.2 OTHER INITIATIVES THAT IMPACT SERVICE DELIVERY**

DHA is a heavily service-delivery driven department, and in order to ensure that it provides quality services to its clients, several initiatives have been implemented to improve its service delivery. The following initiatives were identified as being prominent in DHA's attempt to become more client focussed, including the:

- Improvement on the “client is always right campaign” by launching the new



name tags which bear a photograph and name of the DHA officials

- Drafting of a Service Delivery Improvement Plan which includes a review of service delivery standards
- Introduction of flexible working hours for DHA officials
- Introduction of internal and external signage for all DHA offices
- Improvement of the rendering of services to Provinces by adding a further 42 state-of-the-art mobile units, bringing the total of mobile units to 109
- Preparation of a devolution plan for the decentralisation of certain functions from DHA Head Office to the provincial offices. This plan is to be implemented over a three year period commencing in 2007
- Reviewing of salary levels of DHA officials through a job evaluation process
- Placement of individuals in all vacant posts in the client service centre was fulfilled with the assistance of interns
- Participation of DHA in 79 of the 98 Multi-purpose Community Centres (MPCCs), which have been renamed ‘Thusong Centres.’ This is in an attempt to make DHA services more accessible to citizens
- Development of a uniform programme for provincial DHA activities. This programme assists managers in provinces and strengthens the capacity of provincial leadership (South Africa (Republic), 2007<sub>1</sub>: 14).

Most of these initiatives have focussed on putting the client and not the administration of DHA at the centre of service delivery. These initiatives are some of the “quick wins” that were identified during the Turnaround Programme; nevertheless while most of these initiatives are very useful, I was able to identify some areas of support and concern regarding the Turnaround Programme from staff at DHA, and these will be highlighted below.

### **5.2.3 SUPPORT FOR THE NEW INITIATIVES**

The Turnaround Programme initiated several surveys and research in its initial phase in order to redefine the vision and mission of DHA. This is perhaps the first time that such surveys and research of this nature and depth have been carried out in DHA. Managers involved in strategic planning for DHA acknowledged that, “no

benchmarking, research and surveys were done in the past and now this has been incorporated in the Turnaround Programme and has provided valuable information for planning and decision making,” (EI 15/05/08). The survey of a sample of almost 10 000 clients and stakeholders was conducted by the Turnaround team (South Africa (Republic), 2007<sub>2</sub>) to determine what their needs and preferences were. This helped DHA to determine the critical areas of its services that have the most impact on the lives of citizens and clients and that can boost public confidence and staff morale. These issues are essential for ensuring that services are more client-focussed.

Several processes and structures have been redesigned, taking the needs of citizens and clients into consideration. Also, new service delivery channels have been identified and developed (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>). Besides the delivery of services from existing offices and mobile units, these new service delivery channels include the use of cell phone technology and online computer-based technology. Customers receive messages on their cell phones to advise them of the status of their applications. For example, I received a message on my cell phone confirming the receipt of my application to renew my passport and, thereafter, to inform me that it was ready for me to collect it.

During the study and subsequent interviews with staff at DHA, I found that there was a lack of substantial feedback and support from staff about the positive impact of the Turnaround Programme and the new initiatives in DHA. This is observable in the statement, “we cannot see the benefits of the Turnaround Programme and it has not made a difference to the situation here,” (EI 15.05.08). As a result of this, I had to rely to some degree on the findings of a survey that was conducted by the Turnaround consultants to determine the possible impact of the new initiatives on DHA operations and service delivery.

A ‘Change Readiness Survey’ was conducted by the consultants of the Turnaround Programme, with the top two hundred managers and leaders of DHA to ascertain their views of the Turnaround Programme (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). The following viewpoints are claimed to be obtained from the management staff of DHA with regards to the positive impact of the Turnaround Programme. These viewpoints were documented in the findings of the survey (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>) and are

discussed under three broader themes: (1) DHA reputation, (2) DHA working environment and (3) DHA service delivery. These themes can also be regarded as area of competition that DHA experiences and these are now discussed.

### **5.2.3.1 DHA reputation**

The following statements are viewpoints of the management of DHA regarding the impact of the Turnaround Programme on the reputation of DHA. They were identified by the Change Readiness Survey (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>):

- “It had the potential to change DHA and the possibility for it to become one of the best departments,”
- This initiative was viewed and being able to “improve the reputation of DHA and to transform and improve ourselves,”
- DHA has the “opportunity to turn a new page,” and “people will have faith in us,”
- “Being part of building a new DHA that we all can be proud of.”

### **5.2.3.2 DHA working environment**

The Change Readiness Survey (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>) also identified some positive aspects that the Turnaround Programme could have on the working environment of DHA:

- “The establishment of a competent work environment,”
- “That the negative organisational culture will hopefully become positive,”
- “I want to be part of the change that the citizens of this country will experience.”

### **5.2.3.3 DHA service delivery**

DHA management staff also identified several possible positive impacts that the new initiatives would have on service delivery. These were documented in the findings of the survey (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>) as follows:

- “The possibility of serving the South African citizens better and efficiently,”

- “Business processes will change and our clients will receive a world class service,”
- “At last we can truly apply the principle of putting people first,”
- “The opportunity to impact on citizens in a more meaningful way,”
- “Clients are starting to smile about DHA services.”

It is evident from these viewpoints of the top two hundred managers of DHA that the new initiatives will be able to have (and in some cases, have already have had) a positive impact on the operating and service delivery environment in DHA. Surprisingly, not many of these viewpoints were strongly evident during my interviews with staff at DHA. While it was obvious that these are the kind of positive impacts that DHA staff wanted, they could not give credit to the Turnaround Programme for achieving these nor did they seem optimistic about changing the ways things are done. This was made evident in the statement, “we have had several ‘Turnaround Projects’ in the past and none have succeeded, what is different with this Turnaround Programme?” (EI 15/05/08). I was able to establish that the staff of DHA had several concerns about the new initiatives and they were more willing to discuss their concerns than the positive aspects of the initiatives (FN 15/05/08). This is possibly due to the fact that most staff are not involved in the new initiatives, or have simply not been informed of them, as already established in Chapter 4. These staff members cannot, therefore, feel the effects of the claimed positive issues found in the Change Readiness Survey.

#### **5.2.4 CONCERNS ABOUT THE NEW INITIATIVES**

The results of the Change Readiness Survey at DHA also revealed certain concerns that the managers of DHA had regarding the Turnaround Programme (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>g</sub>). These concerns were identified in the survey under four different dimensions, which coincide with the themes that I identified as forms of competition that DHA experiences. The themes were reiterated by several staff interviewed during the ethnographic study. The broad themes that the concerns of DHA staff with regards to the new initiatives are: (1) leadership of DHA, (2) communication in DHA, (3)

consultation with staff at DHA and (4) skills transfer. The concerns identified from the Change Readiness Survey (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>) will first be reflected below and, thereafter, my findings from the ethnographic interviews confirming these viewpoints will follow.

#### **5.2.4.1 Leadership of DHA**

A number of concerns were identified with regards to leadership of DHA. The first of these is expressed in the comment, “Leadership of DHA will not be able to sustain the Turnaround Programme once the consultants leave,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). The staff I interviewed felt that, “consultants are doing many operations due to the lack of internal skills and they (consultants) do not consult or work with internal staff at DHA. As a result when the consultants contracts expire and they leave, DHA staff cannot sustain the operations that they have started as no skills transfer has taken place, hence forcing DHA to rely on getting the consultants in again to do the tasks,” (EI 12/05/08). These statements also question the assumption that the governance structures (Figure 5.3) put into place to assure that DHA has maximum control of the Turnaround Programme, are working as they were intended to.

The second concern is expressed in the statement: “Whether or not we are able to sell these ideas (Turnaround Programme) to the lowest ranking employees so we all understand this change and share a common goal,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). My interviews with staff at DHA also echoed this sentiment. One respondent said that there is “no certainty if staff at lower levels are aware of what is expected of them.” Another said that they were, “Not sure if they are aware of the mission, vision of the organisation and what they are working to achieve as this is not filtered to them especially when changes are made to processes and procedures,” (EI 20/05/08). Another participant said that “Lower levels of staff are anxious and do not receive functional training and leadership to make a difference,” (EI 21/05/08). Further comments stated that there were, “No role models are present in the organisation and managers are not competent in their own jobs and cannot lead or support other staff,” (FN 16/05/08). Respondents also indicated that, “most processes at DHA do not work because of a lack of management and leadership in the organisation and there is no sustainability at top and middle level management due to high staff turnovers and this

has led to lack of trust, support and commitment from staff at lower levels,” (EI 21/05/08). Hamlyn (2008: 1) confirms the lack of sustained leadership at DHA by reporting that the current director general of DHA is “the seventh head of department in the past fourteen years.”

Thirdly, concerns were expressed that “Incorrect perceptions are created through the Turnaround Programme,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). I found that staff at DHA believes that the Turnaround Programme is the solution to poor service delivery and all the other problems that DHA is currently experiencing. As a result, staff “wait for the Turnaround Programme to make changes and improvements and do not take any personal responsibility to change the situation,” (EI 24/05/08). It was further noticed that, “Current processes are being hampered as staff wait for the Turnaround Programme to find solutions to problems in each section,” (FN 07/07/08).

#### **5.2.4.2 Communication in DHA**

Chapter 4.4.5 discussed several aspects with regards to communication in DHA that posed a form of competition for the organisation. The following concerns of the managers of DHA were also identified by the Change Readiness Survey:

- “Inadequate communication, not being able to address anxiety and provide clear way forward,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). During the ethnographic interviews with staff, they reported that, “the information is not filtered to lower levels of staff by their supervisors,” (EI 20/05/08). Furthermore, “lower level staff are anxious about their jobs and do not receive functional training and leadership to make a difference in their jobs” (EI 21/05.08)
- “The Turnaround Strategy has not been formally presented to the management of DHA,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). This questions the buy-in of all DHA management staff to the Turnaround Programme and hence the success thereof
- “Poor communication between the consultants and the DHA officials,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). Strategic management staff indicated that “there was not enough time for consultation and communication with staff at lower

levels to inform them of the changes and to get their inputs,” (EI 29/05/08)

- “Clarity of what it all entails (Turnaround Programme) for all levels of staff not yet defined (within the new structure) so staff have to fear the unknown,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). My interview revealed that “staff are not informed about what is going on with the Turnaround Programme and that decisions are made at the top levels. As a result, staff fear job losses and that transformation that will be forced upon them as they have no involvement in the Turnaround Programmes at the moment,” (EI 21/05/08).

#### **5.2.4.3 Consultation with staff at DHA**

Regular consultation is essential with staff at all levels in the organisation in order to keep them informed of what is expected of them, changes that may be taking place and other aspects that may involve their performance. The following areas of concern about consultation with staff at DHA have been identified:

- “There is a need for an extensive consultation and distribution of skills,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). Regular consultation with staff will be able to assist the management of DHA to identify skills that are present in the organisation and to ensure that these skills are utilised in the appropriate areas. The study identified that some staff “are de-motivated and frustrated because they are misplaced and are expected to work in positions that they are not skilled in or areas where they lack experience,” (EI 12/05/08)
- “The consultants must listen to the people on the ground who are faced with the challenges,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). Staff interviewed reported that they believed that, “consultants were more empowered than the permanent DHA staff and since the consultants were appointed by management, they followed the instructions of management and did not consult with that staff that are involved in the operations at the frontline,” (EI 03/06/08). Managers do not usually encounter the challenges that frontline staff encounter and therefore may not be the best people to consult especially if changes are to be made to the processes and procedures that involve the frontline operations
- “The level and depth of consultation does not reach operational staff,” (South



Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). I found that most consultations are based at head office with little first hand knowledge of what actually transpires ‘at the coalface’ of operations. These “consultations rely on the mandate and problem areas as described to them by managers,” (EI 24/06/08)

- “Lack of effective consultation and serious consideration for DHA staff members ideas,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). I found that staff indicated that “adequate input from key staff involved in operations at DHA, was not obtained during the redesign of processes and the restructuring process, hence staff are not certain of how certain operations are going to function in the new structure and not enough clarity was provided in this regard,” (WS 30/05/08). Staff also indicated that, “much of the changes that are taking place with the Turnaround Programme, are as a result of the innovation and ideas of DHA staff and they do not receive any credit for it as it is seen as a turnaround initiative,” (EI 24/06/08).

#### **5.2.4.4 Skills transfer**

Chapter 4.4.4 identified some aspects with regards to skills transfer in DHA that are being hampered due to the interaction patterns and communication channels that are present in the organisation. However, the following concerns were also identified with regards to skills transfer in the Change Readiness Survey and the ethnographic study:

- “There is no skills transfer documentation that is generated by the Turnaround Programme and the turnaround team do not share with DHA officials,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). Interviewees responded that ‘skills transfer was a problem at DHA and no policy or procedure to enforce and support skills transfer was available in DHA. Staff are also not willing to learn new skills on their own accord,’ (EI 20/05/08)
- “We need to have skilled and trained staff to implement the Turnaround Project,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). During my interviews with staff at DHA, I found that staff do not receive training to ‘update their skills as the work environment has changed. Staff are in positions for many years without any re-skilling and, hence, they cannot cope with the new activities and work pressures experienced in the department,’ (FN 12/05/08)



- “Skills and commitment of people to be taken into consideration when appointed,” (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>8</sub>). I found that jobs advertised for senior staff do not stipulate the skills and experience needed for the job. In most cases the minimum requirement is stated and individuals with a three year qualification may apply for very senior posts without possessing the level of experience being asked for (EI 15/07/08).

After identifying the new initiatives that DHA has implemented to improve the current state of service delivery and operations by the department, it became imperative to identify some key intelligence needs that DHA has and these will be discussed below.

### **5.3 KEY INTELLIGENCE NEEDS OF DHA**

The majority of the staff that I interviewed were struggling to identify their intelligence needs on an individual and department level, let alone intelligence needs of the entire DHA as a whole. It became evident that staff had not thought about intelligence needs, and that many of them did not even understand what this meant. With the new initiatives mentioned above in place at DHA, and its attempts to enhance service delivery, I was inclined to think that, at this stage in the Turnaround Programme, it would be rather easy to ascertain the key intelligence needs of DHA. Many of the staff interviewed asked if they “could think about it and then e-mail their key intelligence needs to me,” (EI 18/06/09; EI 20/06/08; EI 23/06/08; EI 24/06/08; EI01/07/08; EI 15/07/08). However, to date I have not received these e-mails despite several follow ups on this information and the fact that DHA management staff had agreed to cooperate in this study. One plausible explanation may be that staff do not fully realise the importance of knowing their key intelligence needs: a knowledge that would ensure that they plan and strategise accordingly.

In two instances where staff had some idea of what their intelligence needs were, they indicated that they were uncertain about how to meet these needs. The first intelligence need that was reported was that of a central repository or document management system containing all DHA-related information. This would enable staff

to access the materials, when required, especially for their tasks and for answering enquiries from the citizens and clients. At present staff indicated that “it takes very long to locate the required information from the respective business units in order to respond to important issues,” (EI 17/06/08).

Time delays in accessing information usually result in poor service delivery and in order to improve this aspect, the need for dashboards, in each business unit, was identified by the management of DHA as an intelligence need. These “dashboards will be able to help senior management in these business units monitor and evaluate the operations under their control and to speedily respond to any problems that may arise,” (EI 28/05/08). The intelligence gleaned from these dashboards “could also be used for decision making and performance evaluation of each business unit,” (EI 11/06/08).

While trying to identify the key intelligence needs of DHA, I was able to identify the various forms of left field competition with which the Department is faced. Sawyer (2002: 83) defined left field competition “as those unexpected, unexplained or unpredictable” issues that causes disruption in the functioning of the department. These forms of competition were not anticipated or clearly noticeable at the outset of the study. However, as the interviews progressed, and my participation in the work environment became more intense, I was able to identify these forms of competition that had an impact on service delivery at DHA and these will now be discussed.

#### **5.4 FORMS OF COMPETITION IDENTIFIED IN DHA**

In Chapter 2 some areas of competition that are generally experienced by service organisations such as DHA were identified. Chapter 4 focussed on specific internal and external forms of competition at DHA. Competition can be divided into three different areas, namely: (1) internal competition, (2) external competition, and (3) left field competition and these are indicated in Table 5.1 below. Sawyer (1999: 53) indicated that the danger of internal competition is that it is largely invisible, unnoticed competition and could have a severe influence on service delivery. Internal

competition is also more prevalent in service organisations and it can take many forms (Sawyer, 2002).

This is the situation I observed to be present at DHA. During my interviews with staff they were surprised when I pointed out the internal forms of competition that exist. In fact, many felt that a service-providing department like DHA did not expect to have any competition at all, as expressed in my focus group discussion: “we are the only department offering such home affairs services and we do not have any competition,” (FG 06/05/08). Similar thoughts were expressed in an ethnographic interview with the CIO, “why competition? We are not trying to make a profit, just providing a mandatory service to the citizens of the country,” (EI 07/07/08).

Chapter 4 has already dealt with the internal and external forms of competition experienced at DHA as reflected in Table 5.1. This table has assisted me to obtain an overall understanding of the various forms of competition that DHA experiences. It could also be useful for the management of DHA as it would provide them with an overall impression of the nature and diversity of the competition that its encounters and perhaps provide more insight into why service delivery is negatively effected. This table will also be able to serve as a useful guide when I identify and suggest appropriate CI tools and techniques (Chapter 6) that can assist to alleviate the competition.

The various forms of left field competition identified in DHA as reflected in Table 5.1 will now be discussed.

**Table 5.1** Areas of competition identified in DHA

**Internal competition in DHA**

Funding and other economic factors  
Physical location as a form of competition  
Personnel  
Expertise and experience  
Influence and prestige  
Red Tape procedures and lack of delegation  
Vision, mission and strategic intent  
Organisational structure  
Culture  
Client interaction  
Rapid staff turnover  
Too much change  
Staff as internal saboteurs  
Status and clashes of ego  
Meetings, workshops, training  
Policies, legislation and regulatory procedures  
Flow of information  
Communication patterns  
AIDS  
Technology  
Political environment of DHA  
Lack of professional ethics  
Fraud and corruption

**External competition in DHA**

Competition from customers:  
Prior relationship and bad experiences  
Alternative means of accessing services  
Reluctance to change  
Lack of education and awareness  
Customer expectations  
Mass media and negative press reports

**Left field competition in DHA**

Sudden change in demands:  
Xenophobia  
Cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe  
Illegal immigrants  
Eskom power outages  
2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup  
Turnaround Programmes  
Third party service providers  
Labour and labour costs  
Scarce skills competition  
Financial fluctuations  
Repositioning the image of DHA  
Identity theft

#### **5.4.1 LEFT FIELD COMPETITION IN DHA**

As already identified in Chapter 5.3 left field competition refers to unexpected, unexplained or unpredictable issues that cause disruption in the functioning of the an organisation (Sawyer, 2002: 83). Issues are defined “as gaps between and organisation’s actions and the expectations of those who can impact its goals, for example, stakeholders” (Fleisher, 1999: 25). In the case of this study, these unexpected, unexplained, and unpredictable issues are regarded as a form of left field competition that can affect service delivery at DHA. The organisation is taken by surprise by these disruptive issues and is usually vulnerable to, and impacted by, these forms of competition. As it is not always possible to determine when and where this form of competition can arise, it is essential for DHA to be alert and aware of the issues that contribute to this form of competition so that they are not caught completely off guard by the sudden changes. Several forms of left field competition were identified during the ethnographic study and these have been arranged and discussed under the broader themes that were identified in literature (Sawyer, 2002) and constantly repeated themselves in the study at DHA.

##### **5.4.1.1 Sudden changes in demand**

In recent times, sudden changes creating an unexpected increase in demand for certain services has left DHA unable to cope with the pressure and not able to maintain its service targets. Several forms of competition as a result of sudden changes in demand were noticeable at DHA.

##### **Xenophobic attacks**

This form of competition was noticed during the recent influx into South Africa of asylum seekers fleeing political persecution and violence. These asylum seekers came from Zimbabwe as a result of the political unrest in that country during the national government elections in March/April 2008. Despite DHA’s efforts to cope with the issuing of official documentation at the border points and the deploying of extra staff at these stations, they were not able to cope with the demand (WS 30/05/08). Staff also reported that the situation was further exacerbated when xenophobic attacks commenced in various parts of the country as a result of “illegal immigrants who

entered South Africa without going through the immigration offices at the border post and hence were not in possession of legal documentation,” (FN 30/05/08).

### **Renewal of permits for asylum seekers**

With the reputation and credibility of DHA already been dented in the eyes of the citizens, clients and even decision makers in the country, the situation was further worsened by the “High Court in Cape Town ruling that the department’s instruction that its offices not renew permits to asylum seekers was unlawful. These permits allow asylum seekers to remain legally in South Africa while waiting for DHA to decide whether to grant them refugee status or not,” (Majavu, 2008: 5). The permits are vital for asylum seekers to get jobs and to access banking services, schools and health facilities and the longer DHA takes to issue these permits to the asylum seekers, the more likely they are to become victims of xenophobia (FN 30/05/08). These issues and the ruling by the courts can lead to lack in confidence in DHA and its services, decision making and procedures adopted.

### **Cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe**

The cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe in November 2008 has also resulted in further large numbers of Zimbabweans migrating into South Africa, this time for medical assistance and DHA had to assist in the border control and provision of documentation to these individuals so that they could seek medical attention. This cross border migration “has grown from 50 migrants a day to 500,” (Rassool, 2008: 1). The local DHA office processes up to 300 asylum applications a day (Rassool, 2008). Without proper documentation, these migrants are not entitled to medical support. Hence special medical facilities had to be erected at the border post to deal with the situation which has been beyond the control of DHA.

### **Illegal immigrants**

The ‘boomerang effect’ of illegal immigrants is also a form of competition that DHA experiences and DHA management indicated that this “not only exhausts departments funds and resources, it is also regarded as a futile effort,” (EI 15/05/08). The *South African Migration Project* (2006) found that, “despite being deported, border jumpers quickly found their way back into South Africa through illegal entry points.” According to the *World Refugee Survey 2008 – South Africa* (2008), an average of 10

000 Zimbabweans per month, and a total of 300 000 in 2008, have been deported by South African authorities. The total numbers of illegal immigrants in the country is not known as most enter illegally and are integrated with other citizens, thereby, making it difficult to identify them.

### **National government elections 2009**

The National Government election in South Africa in 2009 is another form of competition that impacts DHA with sudden changes. DHA has announced that it has 300 000 uncollected identity documents at its offices and it has urged the public to call at their respective offices to pick these documents up so that they are able to register to vote in the national elections (News24.com, 2009). It has also indicated that “those who are without IDs and are eligible to vote and wish to register for the elections may visit Home Affairs Offices to apply for a temporary identity certificate, which can be issued in one day,” (News24.com, 2009). This can lead to unexpected volumes of members of the public at the DHA offices in an attempt to obtain their ID documents even if they have not applied for it and are not among the 300 000 that are ready for collection. The public is likely to use the National Government elections as an excuse to try and obtain ID documents rapidly. Furthermore, political parties are campaigning and appealing to citizens, especially those just coming of voting age, to apply for their identity documents. This can lead to pressure being placed on DHA to produce documents rapidly and in larger volumes than is normally dealt with, thereby leading to more mistakes being made. In order to ensure that DHA can cope with this situation, they will require extensive planning and strategising. CI tools and techniques can assist DHA in this planning and strategising and also in being able to ensure that adequate resources and processes are in place to minimise the effects of the demands placed on its operations and service delivery.

### **Confederations Cup 2009 & 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup**

The Confederations Cup in 2009 and the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup both of which are to be hosted in South Africa can also be seen as a form of competition for DHA. This is because DHA can expect to receive large numbers of foreign visitors at its border posts and airports. Such large-scale arrivals could have a serious impact if proper processes and procedures are not in place, if well skilled and competent staff are not in positions to handle these activities, and if suitable technology is not

available to help speed up the control process. Furthermore, the planning and preparation for an event of such magnitude is time consuming, financially draining and it requires the commitment and dedication of staff to see the process to a successful conclusion. Unfortunately, as already established earlier in this discussion, DHA is battling with these aspects. However, DHA has “announced that it has made provision for visiting soccer fans to be issued with special ‘events visa’ as opposed to the standard visas. This is the first time that such a ‘special events visa’ would be presented anywhere in the world to commemorate such events,” (Makapele, 2008: 1).

DHA operations are such that they are not quick enough to respond to these sorts of unexpected competitive factors and individuals are faced with ‘bureaucratic indifferences, appalling inefficiencies and red tape procedures that are designed to turn any law abiding person into one who questions the point of the law and resorts to bribes in exchange for documentation, hence corruption thrives in this environment,” (Hassan, 2008). DHA staff are also feeling anxious and afraid about the changes that will arise when the new government is elected as the DHA governance and mandate is decided by the government of the day. The major changes taking place in the political landscape of the country such as the splitting of the African National Congress, the formation of a new political opposition, and the resignation of several leaders from the ruling party is also causing uncertainty and apprehension among staff. CI tools and techniques could be useful in these instances to provide DHA with early warnings and to assist them in being proactive in responding to these sudden changes and demands.

The competition exerted by labour and labour costs also contributes to the department’s left field competition

#### **5.4.1.2 Labour and labour costs**

DHA’s left field competition is also noticed from its offshore labour in the form of consultants that are working on the Turnaround Programme. While local consulting companies are also co-opted to assist in the Turnaround Programme, some consultants are sourced from consulting companies abroad (FN 15/07/08). This has implications for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs. Furthermore, these consultants from



abroad (mostly Europe) travel home for holidays and special occasions. For example, consultants went back to Europe in August for the summer holidays (EI 15/07/08). During this time, as it is not holiday time in South Africa, staff were found sitting around with not much work to do as “their supervisors were not available to provide new tasks and support for these tasks,” (EI 15/07/08). This process is the same when it is the South African holidays and staff are away on leave while the consultants are left to continue the operations. This is by no means a situation that benefits sharing, interaction and effective service delivery and can lead to more scarce skills within the organisation.

#### **5.4.1.3 Scarce skills competition**

Labour, especially scarce skills and competencies, represents a competitive factor for DHA especially during the current recession and worldwide economic decline. In South Africa, there is already a crisis in terms of specific skills and competencies such as Information Technology and this situation has become worse with the “Brain Drain” where South Africa has lost its skilled, professional workforce to international organisations. Those that choose to remain in the country prefer to work for private sector organisations because the salary scales are more attractive. Hence, DHA, like other South African public sector employers, is left to employ those who are left over in the job market and in many cases these individuals are not always able to meet the demands of the department thereby leading to a further decline in client/citizen confidence in DHA.

During a focus group discussion with interns working in the IT department, I found that fifty two university and technical college interns are appointed each year by DHA in order to fill in the scarce skills gap (FG 11/07/08). These interns work on a contract basis while completing their studies and they are given leave to pursue their studies and write exams. Interns reported that no incentives are provided to them to try and retain them in DHA and, therefore, most of them leave once their contract expires to find employment in the private sector where the salary and work conditions are more attractive. The 8 interns that I encountered in the IT department were very despondent and indicated that they “did not want to stay in DHA even if permanent positions were offered,” to them (FG 11/07/08). This is because they were not happy with the “work

environment, working conditions and lack of support from management,” (FG 11/07/08).

I also found that skilled staff who have worked in DHA for many years can no longer “tolerate the poor management, work ethics, and lack of success in this department and the suppression of innovation and talent,” (FN 07/05/08; FN 20/05/08). As a result, they are even prepared to take up the same positions even if they are lower level ones in other government departments “just to get away from this unhappy working environment and lack of development and training opportunities,” that are offered to them (EI 07/07/08; FN 07/07/08). As another example of this phenomenon that I observed in my study, one senior member of staff indicated that he “is seriously considering taking early retirement from DHA because he does not feel appreciated, respected or acknowledged for his efforts by management,” (EI 21/05/08). Furthermore, I learned that competent and skilled staff are not always considered for positions despite their having acted in these positions for many years. Instead, political decisions are made with regard to staff appointments and promotions may sideline skilled and competent staff (FN 21/05/08). Based on the several examples of evidence already given, and my assessment of the situation, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that people are promoted based on their affiliation to senior officials and that nepotism seems to be rife in the organisation (FN 21/05/08).

The presence of scarce skills has compelled the management of DHA and its decision makers to consider third party service providers as a possible solution.

#### **5.4.1.4 Third party service providers**

Third party service providers can also be regarded as a form of left field competition that impacts on service delivery by DHA. An example of this is the South African electricity public utility, Eskom. Currently, Eskom is experiencing problems in supplying electricity due to its lack of capacity, and shortage of power to cater for the needs of all South African households and organisations. As a result, “Eskom has introduced ‘load shedding’, planned rolling blackouts based on a rotating schedule,” (Absolute Astronomy, 2008). Operations and activities at DHA have also been affected by the ‘load shedding’ as was evident when I tried to test the response time

for document production and personally applied for an unabridged marriage certificate for a couple who were married in the 1940's. The required information is stored in manual files in the archives of DHA and staff had to first retrieve the information from these files to verify it against the application before the document could be issued. This application was made in September 2008 and as at time of writing (February 2009), the document has not been issued. The reason for this delay has been given as "because there are power supply problems at the archives due to load shedding and therefore the document cannot be traced," (EI 09/02/09). The Public Protector also stated that he "was considering investigating the power cuts because they were having a devastating effect on service delivery by the government," (Williams, 2008: 1). Government and the tax payers have had to step in to assist Eskom with financial aid to remedy the problem. According to the Department of Minerals and Energy (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>9</sub>), "load shedding will remain high until at least 2013 when the new plant and base load electricity generating capacity that is being built comes online."

DHA also has certain agents and third parties that have been granted authority to issue some of its documents. These include third party agents, Marriage officers and priests, and funeral parlour officials. Third party agents are those individuals who will apply for citizens' respective documents for a fee, meaning that the citizens do not have to physically go to DHA offices and wait in long queues. However, "some of these agents are previous employees of DHA and they know the internal system well and also have friends on the inside that can help them to obtain documents fraudulently and much quicker than the usual process will take," (EI 18/06/08). These third party agents are easily swayed into fraudulent activities, especially with the world economic crisis at hand.

#### **5.4.1.5 Financial fluctuations**

The global economic recession has had an impact of many industries and, in most instances, governments are looked at to assist these organisations to avoid total failure and closure. This means that the funds that government usually has to distribute to its various departments, will now have to be spread over many more projects and organisations. This is the situation in South Africa. The tightening of Governmental

spending can mean that DHA will not be able to accomplish some of its projects, especially if they have not already been budgeted for which could, in turn, mean that some of the projects from the Turnaround Programme may not be able to deliver as initially planned. This could have a serious impact of service delivery.

#### **5.4.1.6 Turnaround Programmes**

Several Turnaround Programmes have taken place at DHA, and the one currently taking place is also a form of competition for the organisation. These Turnaround Programmes usually create a sense of uncertainty and leave staff de-motivated and anxious. Furthermore, the true benefits of the previous programmes were only fully noticed at the end when the implementation began. In some cases, the programmes, in the end, did not benefit DHA at all. DHA staff indicated their lack of trust in the current Turnaround Programme by stating that, “there is so much uncertainty at the moment because DHA has had several turnarounds in the past and none have been successful or made a difference to the situation at DHA. How will this Turnaround Programme be different?,” (EI 07/05/08; EI 15/05/08). The current turnaround is the second large turnaround that DHA has undergone since 1994, although during the same period there have also been several small Turnaround Programmes that have not resulted in significant benefits, (EI 09/02/09). Furthermore, the current Turnaround Programme is largely driven by external consultants with, in some instances, little involvement from DHA staff. Staff indicated their concern about how “the turnaround projects and redesigned operations will be sustained once the consultants leave the organisation,” (EI 15/05/08). With little staff involvement and skills transfer, among other important things, repositioning the image of DHA in the eyes of the citizens of the country is a challenge.

#### **5.4.1.7 Repositioning the image of DHA**

A major form of competition for DHA is “to reposition its image to the citizens of South Africa amidst all the negative publicity and media coverage that it has experienced in the past and that still continues at present,” (EI 21/05/08). The recent decision of the British government to impose visa restrictions on South Africans is a clear example of the difficulty that DHA faces in trying to reposition its image both

domestically and abroad. Previously, South Africans could travel and stay in the United Kingdom for up to six months without a visa (Alcock, 2009). As from March 2009, South African citizens will require a visa to travel to the United Kingdom. It has also been reported “that the British Government took the decision out of concern that it is too easy to acquire South African travel documentation illicitly,” and use them to travel in the UK (Alcock, 2009: 1).

An official warning was sent to the South African government six months ago to request the tightening up of the issuing of travel documentation, including control of passports (Politicsweb, 2009). However, the situation was not rectified and South Africa is seen as a “haven for international terrorists and criminals,” who obtain travel documents and then easily travel to other countries (Alcock, 2009: 1). South African citizens are, once again, upset with DHA for not heeding and responding to the early warning from the United Kingdom, and this damages the image of DHA even further.

The situation is further exacerbated by another form of competition that is affecting DHA, namely, identity theft.

#### **5.4.1.8 Identity theft**

Identity theft is a growing form of competition that DHA faces. Foreign immigrants steal ID's of South African citizens and then use these to register fraudulent marriages so that they can apply for South African citizenship. The situation used for the registration of marriages is also not very secure, because “both spouses do not have to be present at the DHA offices when a marriage is being registered. All they need is a letter from the respective marriage officer, in some cases a priest, who are commissioners of oaths,” (EI 18/06/08).

This form of identity theft has been going on for a long time and in most cases “people only discover that they are ‘Married’ to someone they do not know, is when they start receiving massive bills in the post or when they want to register their own marriage,” (Iafrica.com, 2009). DHA has even gone as far as providing a facility on its website where citizens can ‘check their marriage status’ ([www.dha.gov.co.za](http://www.dha.gov.co.za)).

“Getting your ‘identity back’ can take weeks of personal time and can also cost thousands of rand in legal fees,” (Iafrica. com, 2009).

The most recent form of identity theft to emerge at DHA deals with “the walking dead”. This is where fraudsters steal ID numbers and personal information of individuals to register then as dead in order to benefit from insurance policies (Joseph, 2009: 2).

In some instances the ‘deceased’ are guilty of colluding with doctors, police officers, as well as friends and family in order to con DHA and insurance companies. Corrupt DHA officials can possibly also be involved in these activities and DHA has admitted that, “it was a bit difficult to say how often this sort of fraud was occurring, but confirmed that it was a national phenomenon which has probably come to light because [in preparation for the National Government elections] people have been involved in voter registration across the country,” (Joseph, 2009: 2).

DHA has provided a hotline for citizens to call to check if they are listed as living or dead as there is fear that people will show up at voting stations on elections day and then be turned away because they have been listed as ‘deceased’. The rectification of this situation is, once again, time consuming, inconvenient and frustrating for both the individuals as well as DHA. Affidavits have to be obtained from the police or a magistrate’s court stating that the individual is still alive. Thereafter, several forms have to be filled in at DHA including a birth registration form before the situation can be handed to police for investigation. It can take up to two weeks or longer to remedy the situation (Joseph, 2009: 2). It will also cost DHA additional time and resources to rectify the situation, thereby slowing down service delivery and other important activities in which the DHA staff would have been involved.

Identity theft has become prevalent in the current economic environment where people who are cash-strapped and heavily in debt are resorting to this as solution. Therefore, it becomes essential to examine the tools and techniques and strategies that DHA uses in its operations to ensure that it is equipped to deal with unpredicted situations as discussed.

## **5.5 CI TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES ALREADY BEING USED AT DHA WITHOUT REALISING IT**

As already discussed above, DHA encounters several forms of competition that pose increasing challenges on the organisation. According to Fleisher & Bensoussan (2007: 1), successfully positioning the enterprise, properly deciding on the correct allocation of resources, and deciding what an acceptable level of performance might be in such a competitive environment are key tasks of senior decision makers. However, while there is no guarantee that CI tools and techniques can offer decision makers a solution to deal with organisational problems objectively and to the best of their abilities, they can, nonetheless, offer valuable insights and a sound framework. This is on the basis of which the right choices can be made to benefit the organisation, the managers and other employees and stakeholders (Have, Have & Stephens, 2003). In Chapter 4.4.8, I have already identified some of the problems that DHA encounters as a result of the lack of proper strategic management tools and techniques used during strategic planning. I did however, find that some tools and techniques that DHA did use, in rare instances, could be regarded as CI tools and strategies and because the staff at DHA do not believe that they are under threat from any form of competition (EI 06/05/08; EI 07/05/08), they do not realise that some CI applications may already be used in their organisation. One such CI application is the DHA Service Delivery Model (figure 5.2).

### **5.5.1 SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL**

The Department of Home Affairs Service Delivery Model, shown in Figure 5.2 (above), has assisted DHA to be more client-centred and has enabled the Department to fulfil its mandate effectively. This was found in the pilot of Phase One of the Turnaround Programme, where productivity gains of more than 300% were made as well as a visible improvement in staff morale (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 30). Customer needs drive the DHA Service Delivery Model and the reduction of service delivery times is central to the operating model of the department. According to the model, reduction of service delivery times will be supported by Information Technology improvements (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 61). In order to achieve



its service delivery mandate, DHA also has to identify the many stakeholders that have an interest in the outcomes of the department.

## 5.5.2 STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

The key stakeholders that DHA have identified have been illustrated in Table 5.2, below. It also reflects the specific reasons why each category of stakeholder has an interest in DHA and what their expectation are from the services offered.

However, it would have been more beneficial to DHA if they took this stakeholder identification further to include an analysis of its stakeholders. This would have provided information about the impact of the stakeholders on the department, the level of importance of the stakeholders, the challenges and risks that they present and what strategies and actions DHA should take to best deal with the stakeholder challenges and opportunities (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2003).

**Table 5.2** DHA Key Stakeholder identification (South Africa (Republic), 2008<sub>2</sub>: 18).

Stakeholder	Relationship	Expectation
The South African people	They are investors because they fund the DHA through their taxes	Return on investment through the provisioning of reliable enabling documentation, accessible services and a customer focused orientation
Parliament	Allocates resources invested by the taxpayers and provides the regulatory framework in which the DHA must operate	Maximum benefit for the allocation of those resources and conformance to standards
The Minister and Deputy Minister of DHA	Provide policy direction and strategic leadership and the legislative environment in which the DHA should operate	Effective, efficient and economic service delivery in accordance with mandates
Cabinet Ministers and other state departments	Interact, co-operate and form partnerships entailing joint decision-making, consultation, co-ordination, implementation and advice	Effective and efficient execution of functions
Director-General	As accounting officer responsible for managing the environment which creates the products and services for the customers	Performance commitments met
Suppliers	Provide inputs and raw resources to the DHA	Effective and efficient execution of functions
Alliances	Form partnerships to improve service delivery	Effective and efficient execution of functions
DHA staff members	Responsible for creating products and services to meet customer requirements	Sufficient allocated resources and a decent working environment
Foreign visitors	Foreigners visiting the country on a temporary basis including tourists, business fraternity, etc.	Effective and efficient admission and departure as well as processing of applications.
International community	Bi-lateral and multi-lateral interaction, consultation and co-operation with regard to common interest and forming of relationships.	Mutually beneficial international relationships.



Another CI related tool that has been used in the past by DHA is the SWOT analysis.

### **5.5.3 SWOT ANALYSIS**

According to Fleisher & Bensoussan (2003: 92), a SWOT analysis is used to assess the fit between an organisation's strategies, its internal capabilities (i.e. its strengths and weaknesses), and its external possibilities (i.e. its opportunities and threats). However, as already discussed in Chapter 4.4.8, the last SWOT analysis was carried out in 2006 (EI 15/05/08). Hence, the value of a SWOT analysis which lies mainly in the fact that it constitutes a self-assessment for management (Have, Have & Stevens, 2003:188), has not been able to provide much benefit for DHA. Instead DHA decided to use other tools to measure its performance and to assist in strategic planning.

### **5.5.4 PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND DASHBOARDS**

Digital dashboards show the aggregate meaning of large amounts of different data types and information formats from various sources, and they give executives, managers, analysts, and the public a more accurate picture of important data, more quickly (Farcot & Kades, 2004: 57). These authors also state that dashboards allow one to measure and track progress, highlight problem areas that require immediate intervention, and provide a single point of access for all responsible parties. In order to track and measure the performance of each business unit, DHA decided to create and use digital dashboards. This can help management to "track-and-trace the operations," (EI 28/05/08).

The DHA dashboards are designed to display the level of completion of various tasks and contain the ability to drill down to further details of each activity. This can make it easy for management to manage deadlines and targets, monitor and report on progress and assist in the allocation of resources to each activity. The key performance indicators used for these dashboards are based on the elements of the balanced scorecard that essentially use performance measures to track and adjust business strategy (Have, Have & Stevens, 2003: 12). The elements of the balanced

scorecard against which DHA would measure performance are identified as (1) the learning and growth perspective, (2) the client perspective, (3) the internal/operational perspective, and (4) the financial perspective.

Fleisher & Mahaffy (1997: 127) state that while any department can be measured across the balanced scorecard perspectives, it is suggested that organisations add their own unique perspectives to their scorecards.” In the case of DHA, such unique perspectives may include human resources, community liaison and communication, and leadership and management, as these are areas where performance management was identified in Chapter 4 as being poor or lacking. DHA should also note that a major drawback to the implementation of a balanced scorecard approach has been identified by Fleisher & Mahaffy (1997: 122) as “a scarcity of time and money to get it properly up and running,” and this could impact the success of its dashboards.

DHA’s dashboards are “more performance dashboards instead of a balanced dashboard depicting the return on investment,” (EI 11/06/08). These dashboards were created after a Business Intelligence system “was started by consultants and after several meetings, workshops and financial investments into the project, it was abandoned,” (EI 15/05/08). This reveals that DHA has acknowledged the importance of having an intelligence capability in place to assist in its operations and strategic planning.

## **5.6 SUMMARY**

This chapter served as the second chapter of the reporting and analysis of the findings of the ethnographic study in DHA. The focus of this section was on competitive intelligence for Public Service delivery. Before I could determine whether CI tools and techniques could be used in DHA to improve service delivery, I had to first ascertain what activities and processes are in place presently. Hence, this chapter commences with a discussion of the new interventions that were initiated to improve service delivery in DHA. Of notable importance were the support from DHA staff for these new initiatives and the concerns that they had with these initiatives. This led to the identification of the key intelligence needs of DHA.

Surprisingly, not many DHA staff had thought about these intelligence needs until I brought it to their attention during the course of my ethnographic study. Furthermore, most staff did not believe that DHA was faced with any form of competition. I was able to identify the various areas of competition that DHA was faced with and while the previous Chapter discussed the internal and external forms of competition, this Chapter focussed on the left field competition that DHA faces.

The Chapter concluded with the identification of CI tools and techniques that are already being used in DHA without them realising that they are CI related. This identification of CI tools, techniques, and models assists me in then identifying appropriate CI tools, techniques and strategies that DHA can use to benefit its operations and, thereby, improve service delivery. These will be discussed in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 6

### CI TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY AT DHA

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

In order for DHA to gain or maintain a sustainable advantage over the various forms of competition that have been identified in the previous chapter, it needs to adapt (or at best) change its course and be able to predict, identify and seize the opportunities that it has to enhance service delivery to the citizens of the country. Sustainability of competitive advantage has been defined by Fleisher & Bensoussan (2003: 2) as “the organisation’s ability to maintain the economic value generated by the distinctive competencies of an organisation, from either imitation or substitution by competitors.” A sustainable advantage in the case of DHA refers to its ability to be proactive and take the necessary actions to alleviate the impact of the competition that it faces, therefore enhancing its service delivery. It is also important for DHA to consider the extent and scope of its competition because few organisations would countenance the diversity of competitive forces they face (Sawyer, 2002: 7).

This diversity of competition is most prominent in the Service Sector organisations such as DHA, and the competition can be ‘anything and everything’ that will turn the customer away from an organisation’s services (Sawyer, 2002: 7). Sawyer further states that in order to fully understand the competition facing the service sector, it is important to be willing to spend time in identifying just where all the competitors are. This process has been completed and it leads to the point where one has to now try and identify appropriate tools and techniques that DHA can use to react appropriately to its competition and hence improve service delivery.

The applicability of the CI related tools and techniques that were identified specifically for service sector organisations by Clarke (2001: 222) and discussed in Chapter 1.7 will be considered in this chapter. Since the situation and operations at DHA have become more evident from the above investigations, the applicability of

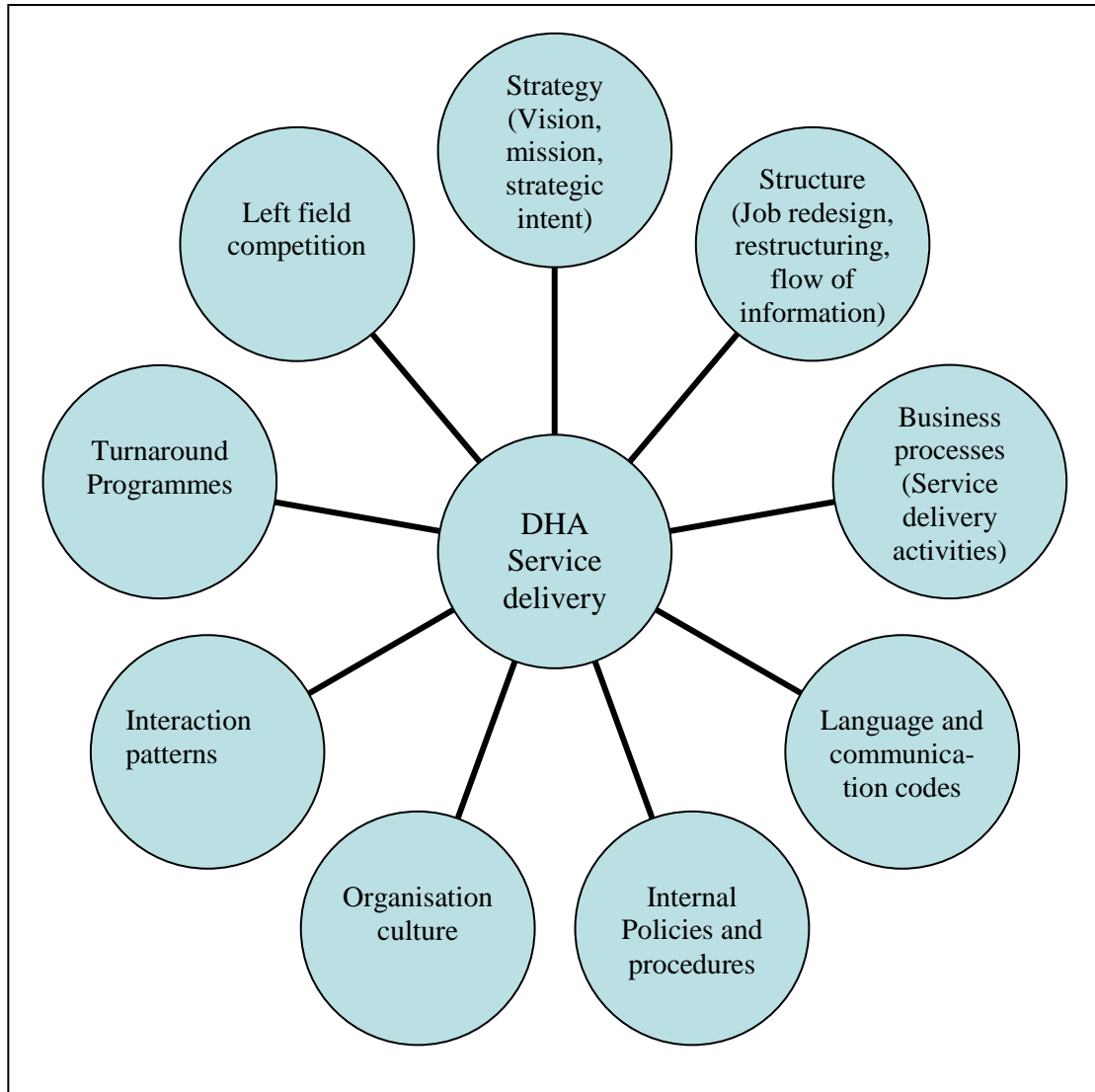
these tools and techniques to improve service delivery is increasingly noticeable to the researcher. However, due to the unique nature of the operations and processes at DHA, it was found that other tools not already identified by Clarke (2001: 230-236) are also potentially beneficial if not necessary for DHA. Hence, this chapter will discuss the CI tools and techniques that are specifically selected to address the diverse forms of competition that DHA faces. Furthermore, since it seems as if no single tool will be able to address the situation, a combination of tools will be discussed.

The tools will be depicted in a CI framework that has been designed in such a way that DHA can use it to gather and analyse information for decision making. However, before the framework could be designed it was necessary to create a CI value chain for DHA. The CI value chain separates the activities of the organisation in the value chain into detailed discrete activities. When these activities are broken into a sufficient level of detail, the performance of the organisation can be determined (Have & Have, 2003: 194). Therefore, the CI value chain could also serve as a guide for selecting the tools for the framework. Service quality is of importance to a service organisation and, therefore, a service quality competitive analysis model for DHA will be discussed. While these tools and techniques can be valuable for DHA, managers and decision makers will need to be convinced of their benefits and value to the decision making process. Hence, assessing the adequacy of the suggested tools and techniques for DHA will be necessary and the criteria that were used to identify and select the tools and techniques specifically to deal with the competitive forces impacting DHA will be discussed. This chapter commences with an overview of the competitive realities at DHA.

## **6.2 COMPETITIVE REALITIES AT DHA**

According to Wignaraja (2003: 5), organisations and governments in developing countries attempting to adjust to the increasing global competition, have unprecedented demands placed on their capacities. Furthermore, it is understood that old organisational structures, behavioural patterns, communication channels and public policies are frequently ill-adapted to cope with the challenges brought about by global competition. This was evident in Chapters 4 and 5, and Figure 6.1 (below)

depicts an overview of the competitive realities at DHA in terms of its service delivery. These are also indicated within the broader themes which determined the empirical study at DHA. These themes can also be regarded as the forms of competition that DHA experiences.



**Figure 6.1** Competitive realities at DHA

Table 6.1 provides a summary of the competitive realities at DHA and it also indicates some of the phenomenon uncovered in each of these forms of competition.

**Table 6.1** Summary of competitive realities at DHA

<b>Competition</b>	<b>Phenomenon identified at DHA</b>
Strategy (Vision, mission, strategic intent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No common vision embraced by all staff</li> <li>• No Clear understanding of vision and mission statements</li> <li>• Broad mission statement</li> <li>• No commitment &amp; personal effort from workforce to achieve strategic intent</li> </ul>
Structure (Job redesign, restructuring, flow of information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bureaucratic hierarchical structure</li> <li>• Structures increases number of reporting levels</li> <li>• Span of control deviates between departments</li> <li>• Fragmented flow of information</li> </ul>
Business processes (Service delivery activities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civic services – core activity for DHA</li> <li>• Immigration services</li> <li>• Support services</li> </ul>
Language and communication codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doubtful communication channels</li> <li>• Poor interpersonal communication of managers</li> <li>• Job related information not communicated to staff</li> <li>• Classification of documents not suitable for sharing and use by all staff</li> <li>• Grapevine ignored as communication tool</li> </ul>
Internal Policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some policies outdated and no longer relevant</li> <li>• Lack of policies for many areas</li> <li>• Limited input from individuals in policy formulation</li> </ul>
Organisation culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak and unhealthy organisational culture</li> <li>• Lack of sustained organisation culture</li> <li>• No dominant corporate culture visible</li> <li>• “Hoarding culture” – no sharing and trust among staff</li> </ul>
Interaction patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socialising between departments non existent</li> <li>• Silo functioning of departments – no interaction</li> <li>• Lack of skills transfer due to poor interaction</li> <li>• Lateral interaction between managers</li> </ul>
Turnaround Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too many turnaround programmes</li> <li>• No benefits from previous turnaround programmes</li> <li>• New initiatives identified by turnaround programme</li> <li>• “Quick wins” identified and attended to</li> </ul>
Left field competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sudden changes in demand from DHA</li> <li>• Labour costs for use of consultants</li> <li>• Scarce skills competition</li> <li>• Competition from third party service providers</li> <li>• World economic and financial fluctuations</li> <li>• Identity theft</li> <li>• Repositioning the image of DHA</li> </ul>

In Chapter 2, the value and importance of implementing CI in the Public Service sector, such as DHA, was covered and various forms of competition that the Public Service sector experiences were also identified. However, the empirical study found

that several other forms of competition also impacted the activities and operations of DHA and the more traditional competition, as identified by Sawyer (2002) and Greenberg (1982: 83), are not the only forms of competition present. These findings would come as a surprise to the management of DHA who originally believed that they did not really have any competition to worry about (EI, 07/07/08; FN, 06/08/08).

By their very nature, service organisations are regarded as dynamic, they have different life-cycles and the portfolio of their service offerings constantly changes, as has been noticed at DHA. With these dynamics, it becomes essential for managers of service organisations to look and think beyond their current environment in order to arrive at decisions and actions that can respond effectively to the various conditions (Botten & McManus, 1999: xvii).

Greenberg (1982: 86) suggests that, “once an organisation has considered the various areas in which it competes for resources and users and identifies its competitors, it must decide on its strategy.” Furthermore, when resources are limited and scarce in the environment, usually the organisation with the most effective competitive strategies survives. This makes the identification of the most appropriate tools and techniques essential, so that it can afford the DHA a competitive advantage.

DHA cannot become comfortable with its procedures and operations, as the left field competition that it faces (See Chapters 4 and 5) will continue to bedevil its service delivery. The current global financial and economic crisis, along with the political and health situations in South Africa’s neighbouring countries, will significantly alter the competitive landscape of DHA. Former South African citizens will return to South Africa from abroad due to job losses, and more immigrants can be expected to request documentation from DHA as they flee the situations in the neighbouring countries. Thus, it becomes essential for DHA to have some blueprint or strategy that can assist them in collecting intelligence and analysing it so that it can be used in decision making and strategic planning in order to improve service delivery. While CI cannot be regarded as the only solution in this regard, it can be a very valuable tool that can help organisations of all types to better understand their current competitive environments and respond to the challenges in these environments (Horne & Parks, 2004: 36). This is best achieved by using CI tools and techniques.



### 6.3 CI TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR DHA

Determining the relevant CI needs of the organisation is essential so that, out of the myriad of tools and techniques available, the most appropriate tools and techniques can be selected, (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2003; Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2007; Prescott & Miller, 2001). Specific tools and techniques are chosen depending upon various factors such as CI needs, time constraints, financial constraints, staffing limitations, data availability, and relative priorities of data, (McGonagle & Vella, 1993).

According to McLellan (2004: 4) strategies used for gathering and assessing intelligence can be divided into two themes:

- Capturing information that is sufficiently complex and broad in scope
- Simplifying the information into meaningful patterns that can support decision-making and so, enhance competitiveness.

CI is regarded as a tool for decision makers, and in order to support the decision-making process, CI tools and techniques are used to transform the complex data and information into simplified, meaningful intelligence. This usually involves analysis of the data, where analysis tools and techniques are used. As already established in the ethnographic study, DHA possesses a large quantity of documents, reports and project material that hold very valuable information, but they lack the ability to analyse the information and use it to make informed decisions. Hence, the tools and techniques that are chosen for DHA can be regarded as CI analysis tools.

Having realised that analysis is a problem in most organisations and for CI professionals, Fleisher & Bensoussan (2003 & 2007) wrote two books where numerous formal tools and techniques were made available to help decision makers to place the collected data within a useful context for strategic decision making. Furthermore, Sandman (2000: 69), cautioned that while models and techniques are useful for analysis and decision making, “any model is simply a framework on which to hang a bunch of facts, some estimates, a few educated guesses, and a hunch or two.” Furthermore, he stated that “choosing the ‘right’ model is not sufficient if you do not gather the right facts and estimates, hence, models are good tools for doing

good analysis but they are not substitutes for diligence, skilled data collection and an open and inquiring mind,” (Sandman, 2000: 69). These aspects have been taken into consideration when selecting the tools and techniques for DHA and since the researcher noticed that DHA, like the majority of service organisations, has not studied or leveraged its value chain as a means for seeking strategic improvement, it was decided to create a CI value chain that could assist them in decision making.

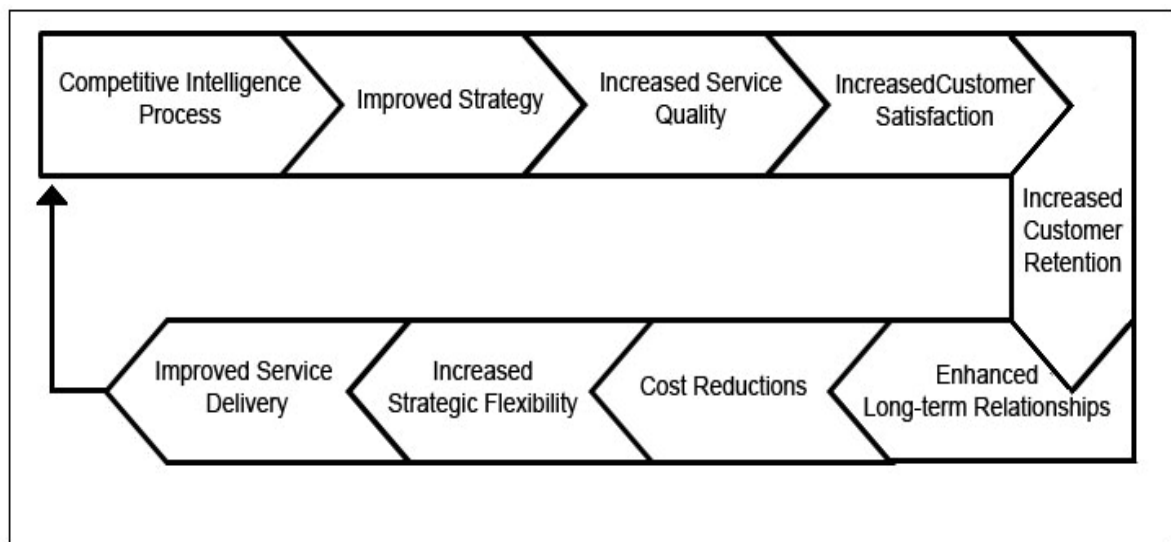
### **6.3.1 CI VALUE CHAIN FOR DHA**

A value chain identifies a series of activities that must be undertaken to transform inputs into a product or service delivered to customers (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2007: 129). A company’s value chain reflects its unique history, strategy, implementation approaches and the economic behaviours of the activities themselves (Porter, 1985). Value chains can also provide important CI data that is required for decision making.

DHA is constantly adapting to its changing environment as a result of the many Turnaround Programmes that it has experienced, and it can become easy for them to lose focus of their desired target of providing effective and efficient services to the citizens of South Africa. Without a proper value chain, an organisation like DHA cannot understand where it is generating or losing value along its series of processes and activities. In fact, where these processes and activities should, ideally, provide value to its clients, the state DHA’s service delivery has deteriorated, as established in Chapter 4.4.9. Figure 6.2 depicts a value chain for DHA that includes the CI process.

Since DHA does not have a system in place that alerts management as to what is happening within and outside of the organisation that may impact the operations of the organisation (See Chapter 4.4.8), the value chain begins with the CI process, where information is collected and analysed in order to generate intelligence that is timely and accurate. According to Clarke (2001: 230), this process should assist management in making more informed decisions, thus facilitating improved strategy development.

The **CI process** (bold type indicates a link in the value chain) would be able to assist the management of DHA to make informed decisions based on factual evidence. This will result in an **improved strategy** as the planning will be more focussed on its target. In turn, this will provide the opportunity for DHA to **increase the quality of the services** that it offers to its customers. An improvement in the quality of service will **increase customer satisfaction** and customers will no longer be reluctant to use the services of DHA as was established in the empirical study. Therefore, DHA will be able to experience **increased customer retention** where customers do not rely on corrupt and fraudulent means of obtain services. Customers may be more inclined to become compliant with regulations and processes in place.



**Figure 6.2** CI value chain for DHA (Adapted from Clarke, 2001: 231)

According to Clarke (2001: 230), any service organisation that successfully encourages repeated use of the service, has the potential to **enhance long-term relationships with the customers** and this has benefits for the organisation as it **reduces costs**. With increased customer satisfaction, DHA will be able to improve its relationship with its customers and this can help them to improve its reputation and image as well as reduce costs of having to repeatedly investigate and monitor corruption. Furthermore, once customers' perception, needs and support is established

as a result of the improved relationships with customers, DHA will be able to implement more effective and efficient use of its resources and thereby reduce costs.

With reduced costs in its operations (e.g. by doing the right thing the first time) and support from its customers, the employees at DHA would have more time to focus on the customers and would spend less time redoing work and correcting mistakes. Thus, DHA will be able to **increase its strategic flexibility** and this will, ultimately, lead to **improved service delivery** which is the objective of the organisation.

The value chain will also assist DHA to keep an eye on its most important targets and to make sure that the necessary actions are taken to achieve its desired results. The gathering and analysing of information in the CI process in the value chain requires a comprehensive framework.

### **6.3.2 CI FRAMEWORK FOR GATHERING AND ANALYSING INFORMATION AT DHA**

The CI value chain for DHA along with the findings of the empirical study (Chapters 4 & 5) has been able to guide the choice of CI tools and techniques that can benefit DHA. While several tools and techniques are available for managers to use, it is important to note that no single tool or technique is able to address the complex situations at DHA. Furthermore, some tools and techniques can be used in several situations for a more integrated and linked view of issues. Hence a combination of tool and techniques has been decided upon for DHA.

It has been suggested by Clarke (2001: 231) that many of the service organisations that would benefit from analysing their competitors or competition, are small businesses with limited resources and they are not likely to have the personnel to focus on in-depth competitive intelligence. While DHA is not a small organisation, it does have very few senior-level staff and very limited resources available, as identified in Chapter 4.4.9.8. The organisation does not have staff that possess the understanding, skills and competencies to conduct CI, as was noticed through the ethnographic study (WS 30/06/08; WS 02/09/08; EI 08/0/07). This was taken into

consideration when selecting the tools and techniques for DHA. Therefore, the tools and techniques selected are relatively easy to apply in DHA and many of them do not necessarily require dedicated personnel.

The CI Framework for gathering and analysing information at DHA is reflected in Figure 6.3 and it represents a formal and systematic means for informing managers about critical issues that DHA faces or is likely to experience in the future.

Three levels have been chosen for the framework and each level focuses on an important form of analysis that can be beneficial for decision making mainly at the different levels in an organisation. These levels can be identified as:

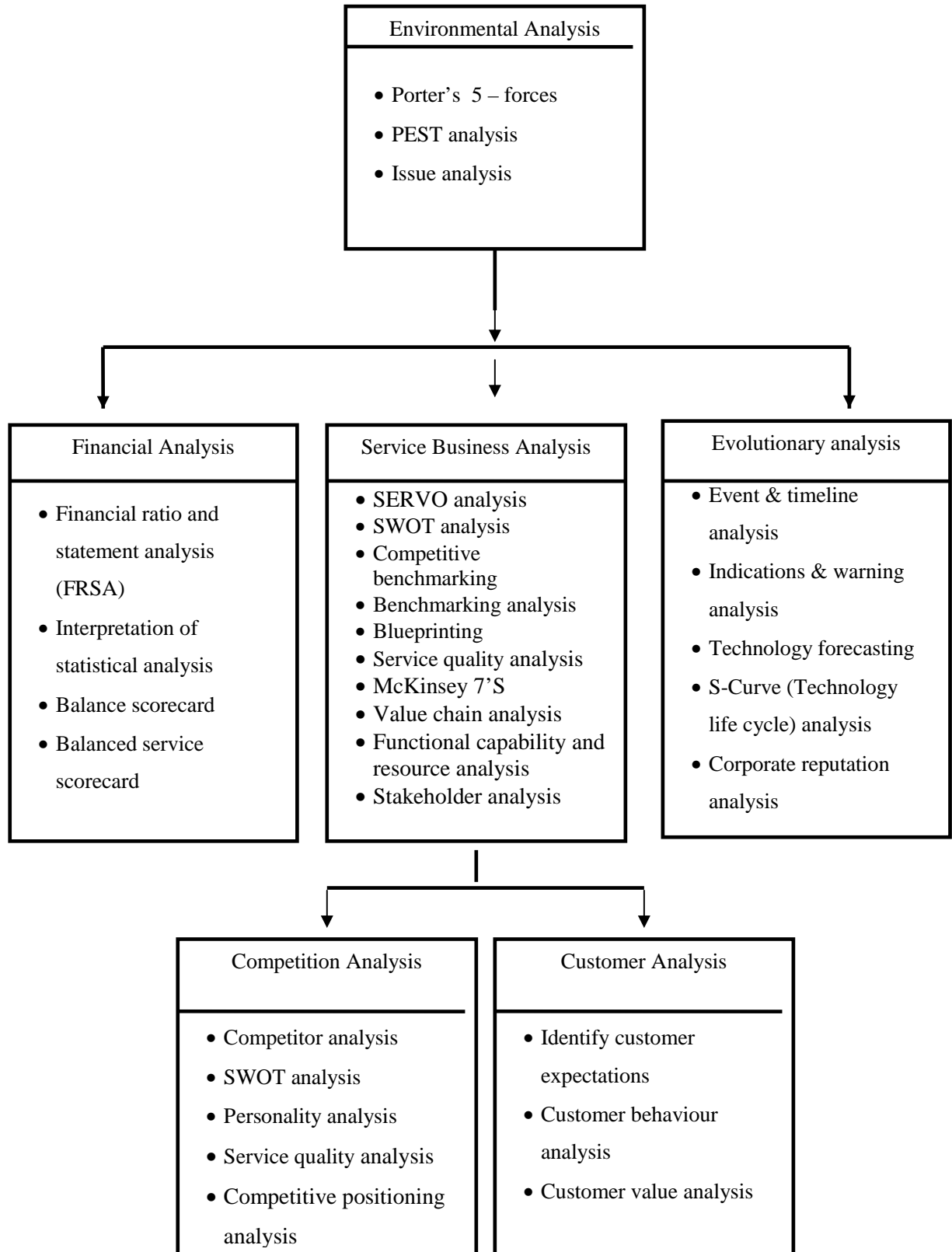
- Strategic level - The first level represents analysis of information that can assist DHA at the strategic decision making level. This level also provides a framework within which other levels (tactical & operational levels) of intelligence collection and analysis take place and it assists the organisation to identify important trends and patterns that emerge in its environment as well as the threats and opportunities available to the organisation (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2007: 27). In the framework, Figure 6.3, this level is represented as the environmental analysis
- Tactical level - Level two represents analysis of information that can assist mainly in tactical decision making at the organisation and it also supports the strategic level as well. According to Fleisher & Bensoussan (2007: 27) a symbiotic relationship exists between the strategic and tactical levels of intelligence analysis. This level is represented by the service business analysis, evolutionary analysis and financial analysis in Figure 6.3
- Operational level – The third level of the framework represents the operational level of information analysis and it focuses on the actual delivery of services to the customers at DHA. The tools used here are mainly to identify customers' needs, behaviour, analysis and the forms of competition that affect the provision of services to the customer. This level is, therefore, represented as the customer analysis and competition analysis in Figure 6.3.

While several tools and techniques are available for organisations to use at each of the levels, it should be noted that these tools and techniques were not originally designed with service sector organisations in mind, as already discussed in Chapter 2.6. However, some of these tools and techniques can still be adapted and used successfully to address the problems that DHA experiences and these have been selected from the array of tools and represented in the framework. After identifying the various forms of competition at DHA in Chapters 4 and 5, care was taken to identify only those tools and techniques that would be able to assist DHA to outsmart these forms of competition in order to enhance its service delivery.

The tools for the framework have been divided into several elements in order to inform managers of their focus in each category, and to make it easy for the model to be used in any other service sector. Furthermore, the elements of the framework are sequential in nature, commencing with a broad **environmental analysis** of the environment in which DHA operates. The focus then moves to **service business analysis** where DHA is analysed in relation to its operating environment.

At this level, two elements of serious concern to DHA have been identified separately and they should be analysed concurrently with the service business to benefit the organisations' overall operations. These elements are the **financial analysis** and **evolutionary analysis**.

The financial analysis is non-existent, and the financial situation is in a dire state at DHA, as identified in Chapter 4.4.9.2. The evolutionary analysis focuses mainly on the left field competition identified in Chapter 5. The separation of these two elements from the rest of the service business analysis serves to highlight the level of importance and priority of these analyses for DHA. In the context of a Public Service organisation, financial analysis requires a keen accounting of the resources used, investments made, and to look at the efficiency and effectiveness by which financial resources are being utilised. Unlike a Private Sector organisation which has the benefit of GAAP (generally accepted accounting principles), financial ratio and statement analysis (FRSA) in a Public Sector service context is more akin to the work done by management accountants which looks to make internal and time-based comparisons of financial resource efficiency and effectiveness.



**Figure 6.3** CI Framework for gathering and analysing information at DHA (Adapted from Clarke, 2001: 232).

Once DHA has a better understanding of its position and operations in its industry, i.e. public service sector, it is essential for it to analyse both its **competition** and its **customers** before it can develop and implement strategic decisions for the organisation. Once again the competition and customers are the most crucial elements of any service organisation and DHA exists to provide a service to customers. The fact that the organisation has dedicated so little attention to these elements warrants them being part of the framework as it is believed that if these elements are not sufficiently addressed at the decision making stage, service delivery will not be improved (Fogli, 2006; Parasuraman, Zethaml & Berry, 1994).

The first element to be investigated here is the environmental analysis.

### **6.3.2.1 Environmental analysis**

DHA has to understand the environment, or market, in which it operates if it intends to position itself for success within that same environment. Several groups and organisations in the external environment in which DHA works, will have to be monitored, either directly or indirectly, for changes in their needs, perceptions, and preferences. Furthermore, trends and changes in regulatory and political authorities need to be monitored and analysed as these influence the operations of DHA. Any form of competition from its funding authorities and its customers should also be monitored and analysed.

Milliken (1987: 135) indicated that there are different types of uncertainty about the environment that organisations experience when they try to make sense of, and respond to conditions in the external environment. This uncertainty about the environment can be as a result of the individual's lack of understanding of how the components of the environment might be changing or the interrelationships that exist between these components in the environment. This uncertainty about the environment could lead to poor strategic planning and resource allocation. Hence environmental analysis is essential to provide this form of understanding for decision makers in an organisation.

As stated by Clarke (2001: 232), the competitive analysis should be able to identify which resources are scarce and what untapped opportunities exist, as this is where



sustainable competitive advantages can be created. Hence the tools identified to assist DHA for these purposes are **PEST analysis, Porter's 5-forces model, and Issue analysis**. The PEST analysis focuses on the political, economic, social and technological climate of DHA. Porter's 5-forces model can be used together with the PEST analysis for a more comprehensive understanding of the environment and the relationships and dynamics that exist in its market environment. While it may be argued that Porter's 5-forces model was designed mainly to assist the profit-seeking industries where the delivery of products to its customers is important, the researcher believes that this model can also assist service sector organisations such as DHA. DHA functions within the broader environment: suppliers of specific products, resources, and services come from this environment and they are usually the same suppliers to the profit-making industries. The end-product of DHA may be intangible (services) but the delivery of these services is reliant on several other aspects in order for it to be effective and efficient. Hence, using Porter's 5-forces analysis will provide DHA with a better understanding of its industry environment.

Issue analysis can assist DHA to become more aware of the changes in its environment and to be proactive, participating in policy developments that impact on its operations. The lack of sound policies and procedures that have been identified in Chapter 4.4.7 can be addressed by this analysis.

In addition, these tools and techniques can assist DHA to understand its environment better and, in so doing, align its strategic objective and planning with that of its industry environment. Once a thorough understanding of the environment in which DHA operates is established, it will have to analyse its own service business environment.

### **6.3.2.2 Service business analysis**

According to Sandman (2000: 78), it is not possible for an organisation to understand its competitors unless it understands its own organisation and its service business first. Furthermore, this form of analysis will focus on the organisation's internal environment and identify those forces that operate inside the organisation with specific implications for managing organisational performance (Fleisher &

Bensoussan, 2003: 275). The organisation will also be in a position to ascertain its degree of fit between the service organisation and its competitive environment by making use of tools such as the **SERVO analysis**. Beyond this, DHA needs to examine its internal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and this can be identified by a **SWOT analysis**. However, this cannot be done in isolation and will therefore require input through **benchmarking** with other service organisations within the government, private sector and even with other organisations that offer the same or similar services, although it may be in very different environments. Such an organisation would be the Home Office in the UK, whose operations and mandate is the same as that of DHA. **Competitive benchmarking** helps to analyse the performance of DHA against the best-in-class and they will be able to set targets to exceed the performance of the competition and to pay attention to the skills and competencies that will be required to do this.

While benchmarking is an outward focus, **blueprinting** has more of an inward focus that can assist DHA to communicate the details of its services from beginning to end (Clarke, 2001: 234). This can be useful for DHA managers and staff as it will help to identify service gaps that can be detrimental to the operations of the organisation's performance. It is further essential to analyse the quality of services offered and the **service quality analysis** is useful for service-providing organisations such as DHA. This analysis will provide useful information to decide whether DHA is providing the quality of service that meets with the expectations of its customers.

Having already identified the changes that DHA is undergoing as a result of the Turnaround Programme (Chapter 5.2.1) and the forms of competition experienced (Chapter 4), the **McKinsey 7 S analysis** has been included in the framework to facilitate the process of strategy implementation within this context. Furthermore, the fact that strategic planning at DHA is based on 'gut feel' (Chapter 4.4.8), this model will assist DHA in creating a tight strategic fit between strategy, organisational structure and other organisational competition that DHA faces as, identified in Chapter 4. The McKinsey 7 S model will allow DHA to realise the interrelationships that are necessary between structure, strategy, systems, style, staff, skills and shared values within DHA, and assist in the design and restructure of the organisation. It will also assist in determining how the organisational design of DHA will impact service

delivery and if the systems and processes in place will be able to support the strategic needs of the organisation.

The **value chain analysis** can also assist DHA in its organisational design as it can provide valuable insight about which activities add the greatest value to the organisation and need to be controlled and protected. It also assists to identify which activities add no value and need to be discontinued. There will also be activities that add little value, and these will require some consideration whether they should be made more efficient, be outsourced, or stopped completely (Sandman, 2000: 93). Value chain analysis can identify core competencies that are required by DHA to accomplish its desired results.

Once these core competencies have been identified, **functional capability and resource analysis** can be used by management of DHA to analyse its internal tangible and intangible assets, along with its core capabilities, to determine if these assets are valuable resources that are capable of giving the organisation a competitive advantage. This resource-based view to sustained competitive advantage is also confirmed by Barney (1991: 99). He states that organisations resources have the potential to generate competitive advantage for the organisation. Organisations and managers should therefore obtain a better understanding of how resources can impact the long term success of the organisation and this should be taken into consideration during the strategic planning initiatives of the organisation.

Wagner (2002: 77) states that, “because of the nature of public organisations, it is important to consider the opinions of all key stakeholders, or ‘publics’, when evaluating the distinctiveness of resources.” In addition, public organisations with strong cultures can easily lose sight of public opinion and rely too heavily on internal, often biased, opinions. Therefore, **stakeholder analysis** is an important tool for DHA. It can provide insight into those stakeholders who are valuable to DHA and assist management to allocate resources appropriately to manage its stakeholders. It can also be used to motivate for additional funds to service the needs of these stakeholders.

### 6.3.2.3 Financial analysis

As a result of the financial challenges identified in Chapter 4.4.9.2, specific tools for addressing the situation have been included in the framework. The first financial analysis tool is the **financial ratio and statement analysis (FRSA)** which provides managers with an understanding of the organisation's competitive performance. Ratios are used to assess the current performance, examine business trends, evaluate business strategies and monitor progress (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2003: 400). These authors further indicated that FRSA is an extremely helpful information overload tool as it can transform large quantities of disjointed financial data into manageable and meaningful outputs and it connects the several pieces of financial data into one integrated analysis. DHA will find this tool useful as it does not have a system that integrates all its financial data.

Another financial tool that can be useful is the **interpretation of statistical analysis** which enables a simple description of complex situations and can provide predictive insights (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2007: 417). This tool provides systematic and objective methods for examining financial and other forms of research data and for obtaining valuable information from an organisation's operations and activities. This is vital for DHA which has a very political environment where each manager tries to get the largest share of the resources based on his political affiliation rather than actual performance. Decision making can also be supplemented by objective statistical data which can also be used to motivate for additional funding and resources.

While these financial analysis tools can be very beneficial for DHA, it should be noted that these tools will require the skills and competencies of financial accountants and managers. Since DHA does not, currently, have these skills and competencies available internally, it will have to seek the services of outside financial consultants and management accounts, until staff with these competencies and skills are acquired.

The **balanced scorecard** uses performance measures to track and adjust business strategy. Together with the financial perspective, the balanced scorecard forces managers to incorporate the customer perspective, operations and the organisation's

innovation and learning ability (Have, Have & Stevens, 2003: 12). It makes it possible to ascertain financial consequences of non-financial measures that can impact the long term financial success of the organisation. With the lack of skilled and competent staff to conduct financial analysis at DHA, this tool will be valuable as it does not require extensive financial knowledge to be implemented, although it does produce data that can be used for financial assessment. Furthermore, the balanced scorecard encourages the establishment of tangible objectives, and measures that are linked to the mission, vision and strategy of the organisation. The problems relating to the vision, mission and strategy of DHA, as identified in Chapter 4.4.1, can be addressed with this tool.

A modification to the balanced scorecard is a **balanced service scorecard** which "helps to identify opportunities to increase value realisation and predicting the expected performance in the future with some confidence" (Tyagi & Gupta, 2008). The service scorecard can also assist DHA in its organisational structuring as it makes the organisational structure more visible and acceptable to all employees in the organisation. Top level leadership is responsible for the implementation of service scorecards and this leadership is critical for the organisation to achieve its objectives as it inspires employees to excel and improve their performance. This tool will therefore, be useful to DHA to encourage strong leadership and improved performance of its staff especially at the senior management levels (see Chapter 5.4.1.3).

This leads to another service level analysis that was identified as valuable for DHA: evolutionary analysis.

#### **6.3.2.4 Evolutionary analysis**

As a result of the fundamental changes, redesign, restructuring and turbulence that DHA has gone through with its previous Turnaround Programmes and the present Turnaround Programme that is currently taking place, evolutionary analysis tools were deemed necessary to assist management to react appropriately and to make difficult decisions that arise amidst these situations. These tools will also prepare DHA to react to the left field competition that it encounters.

The first evolutionary tool suggested is therefore the **Event and timeline analysis** which is a group of related techniques that display events sequentially in a visual manner. When conducted systematically, it can uncover important trends about the organisation's competitive environment and serve as an early warning function (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2007: 343). These authors suggest that this tool is best used when an organisation is dealing with a large number of discrete events that transpire over a long period of time or are otherwise obscured. DHA has to prepare for, and make decisions about, several events as discussed in Chapter 5.2.1. (Such as the National Government Elections 2009, Confederations Cup 2009, 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup, launch of new ID card with memory chip, new system to produce passports, and the commencement of the project outcomes of over fifty projects that are part of its Turnaround Programme).

Another tool that can serve as an early warning sign for decision makers is the **Indications and warning analysis**. This tool can assist in reducing the element of surprise, uncertainty and risk, and alerts managers well in advance of a situation arising, thereby allowing them to take the necessary action to counteract the impact of the situation. This tool can assist DHA to address the sudden changes in demand that were identified in Chapter 5.4.1.1. This tool will also afford DHA the opportunity to become proactive in its decision making and enhance its innovative capacity.

The culture of innovation and frequent changes in technology has challenged DHA to keep up with these developments in all its operations and activities. Furthermore, it is noticed that DHA is trying to incorporate technology into its strategic planning activities with the design of electronic performance dashboards (see 5.8.4). The lack of internal IT capacity in DHA (see 5.4.1.3) has also meant that the existing technology is not being used optimally and has not been upgraded to meet the changes in its operations. Hence the **technology forecasting** and **S-Curve (Technology life cycle) analysis** has been included in the framework as these tools can provide information about the changes and development in technology. It will also assist DHA to recognise the limits of its existing technology and make decisions about what new technologies to acquire that may assist in transforming and enhancing its processes, operations, resource allocation and budgeting, communication and flow of information within the organisation. This tool can assist in creating a positive image

and positioning DHA in a more favourable manner. While these tools are created by organisations to deal with their specific requirements, DHA can, however, still utilise these tools if they have been created by other organisations who are dealing with similar technological contexts. This can be done either by purchasing, outsourcing or borrowing and adapting the model to suit its own specific needs.

**Corporate reputation analysis** will be another useful tool for DHA as it will be able to identify the organisation's image among its key stakeholders and enable managers to improve its relations with its stakeholders in the future (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2007: 275). Having knowledge of its reputation and image is also important for DHA as this can have an impact on its funding, support from its customers and employees, and also to assist DHA to reposition its already tainted image as identified in Chapter 5.4.1.7. Another means for DHA to also determine exactly what its reputation and image is would be to conduct an analysis of its customers. Use of this tool also allows DHA to compare itself against other Public Service agencies, some of whom will compete with it for talented staff, for resources from the political centre, and/or for time in the positive media spotlight.

#### **6.3.2.5 Customer Analysis**

DHA has an important goal of ensuring that it delivers quality services to its customers. Hence, it needs to understand and **identify customer expectations** of the services that it offers, in order to make sure that it delivers according to these expectations. Furthermore, **customer behaviour analysis** would assist DHA to create a profile of its customers' behaviour and then strategise to meet and exceed the desires and expectation of its customers. These tools are necessary for DHA especially since it is experiencing problems in this regard as discussed in Chapter 4 (4.4.9.4 and 4.4.9.5). Using these tools will ensure that DHA responds to the needs of its customers and that its services are provided impartially, equitably and without bias.

Conducting a **customer value analysis** will compliment the two tools already identified. Customer value analysis comprises of several tools and techniques that can assist DHA to better understand its customers, competitors and markets (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2003: 180). Understanding customer expectations can also be important



for competitor analysis as the provider that can best meet the expectations of the customer, will win their support.

### 6.3.2.6 Competition analysis

In order to survive in the competitive environment within which DHA is situated, **competitor analysis** is an important tool that provides a comprehensive picture of the strengths and weaknesses of current and potential competitors (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2003: 144). It helps to create a profile of the competitor and this is useful for DHA to adopt more confident, aggressive and proactive measures to outsmart the competitor and to also help managers to identify the kinds of resources, skills and competencies that it needs to remain competitive.

A tool that is closely related to competitor analysis and that reduces the threats posed by the competition is the **SWOT analysis**. This is suggested for DHA as it can assist in developing a profile of the competitors. This tool can be used, together with the competitor analysis, to obtain an enhanced profile of the competitor.

**Personality analysis** is a tool that provides a more qualitative type of information that may help to explain how a competitor perceives itself and how it may react in a particular situation (Cook & Cook, 2000: 129). It also provides an understanding of the competitor's corporate culture, values and past strategies. This is important for developing strategies that will counteract the reaction of the competitor before it can impact the organisation and it will be able to address the problems relating to strategic planning as discussed in Chapter 4.4.8. This can also be focussed internally on DHA itself to get a better understanding of how decisions makers and the decision making groups within the organisation react to certain types of contexts or situations.

**Service quality analysis** is another competitor analysis tool useful for DHA to analyse its competitors' and its own service quality. Having an idea of the competitors' service quality can assist DHA to implement certain measures and activities that can ensure that they exceed the quality of the competitor and thereby remain the organisation of choice for the customers. This is necessary for DHA especially, to ensure that its customers do not defect to fraudsters and other third party



service providers as discussed in Chapter 5.4.1.4. It can also contribute toward its competitive positioning in the environment.

According to Fleisher & Bensoussan (2007: 103), **competitive positioning analysis** enables an organisation to make strategic plans in relation to its current competitive position, whilst also providing information about the organisations' competitors. This tool requires research and exploration in specific areas to obtain accurate information on the organisation's competitive positioning and this process enhances the research capability of the organisation. The information is used for strategic planning and management of the organisation and this will benefit DHA since it will provide useful information about the reputation and image of the organisation. Organisations with a better competitive position in the environment are likely to attract more valuable stakeholders, partners, employees and alliances, which can assist the organisation to successfully achieve its goals. DHA needs to attract more valuable stakeholders, partners, employees and alliances as it does experience a serious problem in terms of scarcity skills and senior management capabilities. Perhaps a positive competitive positioning will assist DHA to attract and retain professional skills that are lacking, as identified in Chapter 5.4.1.3.

This CI Framework for gathering and analysing information will fill the gap that exists at DHA in terms of its strategic planning tools and techniques, as discussed in Chapter 4.4.8. It will assist the organisation to move away from strategic planning that is merely a paper exercise based on monthly reports and 'gut feel,' to a more evidence based, factual process of strategic planning that involves thorough analysis and is based on a structured, systematic and reliable processes. It will enable DHA to identify and respond to the competitive forces that bedevil its operations and hamper service delivery. Table 6.2 provides a brief summary of the CI objectives of each tool and technique suggested in the CI Framework for DHA, and this table is intended to be a quick guide to the managers and decision makers.

**Table 6.2** CI objectives of each tool and technique suggested in the CI Framework for DHA.

CI Tool	CI Objectives
<p><b>Environmental analysis</b> Porter's 5-Forces</p> <p>PEST analysis</p> <p>Issue analysis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies strengths and competitive rivalry facing the Service sector</li> <li>• Determine the five fundamental competitive forces that impact the service sector</li> <li>• Identifies the political, economic, social and technological issues affecting the service sector</li> <li>• Enables the anticipation of changes in the external environment in order for organisations to become proactive and participate in public policy development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Service business analysis</b> SERVO analysis</p> <p>SWOT analysis</p> <p>Competitive benchmarking Benchmarking analysis</p> <p>Blueprinting</p> <p>Service quality analysis</p> <p>McKinsey 7'S</p> <p>Value chain analysis</p> <p>Functional capability and resource analysis</p> <p>Stakeholder analysis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyses of DHA's management preferences, resources, strategies, capabilities and how these elements fit with the environment</li> <li>• Identifies DHA's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats</li> <li>• Identifies similar organisational processes in other industries and improve standards and processes to that of the best in the business</li> <li>• Develops a process blueprint to identify every aspect of DHA's operations</li> <li>• Analyses the quality of service provided by DHA to its customers</li> <li>• Facilitates the process of strategy implementation within the context of organisational change that DHA is currently undergoing</li> <li>• Identifies activities that add the greatest value to DHA and need to be controlled and protected</li> <li>• Identifies core competencies that are required by DHA to accomplish its desired results</li> <li>• Analyses DHA's internal tangible and intangible assets and core capabilities to determine if these assets are valuable resources that are capable of giving the organisation a competitive advantage</li> <li>• Provides insight into those stakeholders that are valuable to DHA and assist management to allocate resources appropriately to manage its stakeholders</li> </ul>
<p><b>Financial analysis</b> Financial ratio and statement analysis (FRSA)</p> <p>Interpretation of statistical</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis tool which provides managers with an understanding of the organisation's competitive performance by means of ratios</li> <li>• Systematic and objective methods for examining financial data and</li> </ul>



analysis	for obtaining valuable information from an organisation's operations and activities
Balance scorecard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses performance measures to track and adjust business strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Evolutionary analysis</b> Event & timeline analysis  Indications & warning analysis  Technology forecasting S-Curve (Technology life cycle) analysis  Corporate reputation analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group of related techniques that display events sequentially in a visual manner to uncover important trends about the organisation's competitive environment and serves as an early warning function</li> <li>• Analyses the elements of surprise, uncertainty and risk and alerts managers well in advance of a situation transpiring thereby allowing them to take the necessary actions to counteract the impact of the situation</li> <li>• Analyses the changes and development in technology and assists DHA to recognise the limits of its existing technology and make decisions about what new technologies to acquire</li> <li>• Identifies the organisation's image among its key stakeholders and enable managers to improve its relations with its stakeholders in the future</li> </ul>
<b>Customer analysis</b> Identify customer expectations  Customer behaviour analysis  Customer value analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies customer expectations of the services that it offers in order to make sure that it delivers according to these expectations.</li> <li>• Identifies and creates a profile of DHA's customers' behaviour and then strategise to meet and exceed the desires and expectation of its customers</li> <li>• Analysis comprises of several tools and techniques that can assist DHA to better understand its customer's, competitors and markets</li> </ul>
<b>Competition analysis</b> Competitor analysis  SWOT analysis  Personality analysis  Service quality analysis  Competitive positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyses and provides a comprehensive picture of the strengths and weaknesses of current and potential competitors</li> <li>• Analyses and develops a profile of the competitor and can be used together with the competitor analysis to obtain an enhanced profile of the competitor.</li> <li>• Provides qualitative information that may help to explain how a competitor perceives itself and how it may react in a particular situation</li> <li>• Analyses its competitors' and its own service quality</li> <li>• Enables an organisation to make strategic plans in relation to its current competitive position and it also provides information about the organisations' competitors</li> </ul>

### 6.3.3 SERVICE QUALITY COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS MODEL FOR DHA

The customers that DHA serves are the most valuable stakeholders that can influence its operations since they are the sole reason for the existence of DHA. Hence, the quality of the services that are offered to these customers and their satisfaction with regard to those services, are of vital importance. This has been alluded to in the value statement of DHA, as identified in Chapter 4.4.6. It clearly recognises the value of the customers and enhances the fact that services should be of the highest possible quality. However, Chapter 4.4.9 identified several ways in which DHA's quality of service is of a very low standard. The empirical study also found that no model or framework that highlighted the importance of the customer and service quality was available at DHA and, hence, it has been decided to provide a **service quality competitive analysis model** for DHA that could assist the Department to continuously analyse the customers' expectations and level of service offered to them.

Service quality is an important form of competition for DHA and poor quality of service has resulted in lack of confidence in the services offered, fraudulent behaviour of customers and employees, and a poor image of the department, both internally and externally. Therefore, an adaptation of the service quality competitive analysis model (Figure 6.4) that was created by Clarke (2001: 235) for the service industries has been found to be applicable for DHA. As a result, it has been suggested that it be used in DHA to assist them in asking the correct questions to analyse their performance in terms of their service delivery mandate.

The model has been based on the dimensions of service as identified by Parasuraman, Zethaml & Berry (1994). These dimensions are: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness. It has also been suggested that service quality should be measured on two levels in an organisation, namely, desired service and adequate service. Desired service level is what a customer believes "can be" and "should be" provided and adequate service level is the minimum level of service that customers are willing to accept (Parasuraman, Zethaml & Berry, 1994: 202).

**Core service  
quality**

- What are customer expectations?
- What promises have been made to the customers?
- Can the promised service be performed accurately and dependable?

**Process service  
quality**

- What are customer expectations?
- Do employees provide prompt services?
- Are employees courteous and knowledgeable?
- Do the abilities of employees inspire trust and confidence?
- Do customers needs come before employee needs?
- Are customers given individual attention?

**Tangibles**

- What are customer expectations?
- Do the service tangibles match the image management is trying to project?

**Figure 6.4** Service quality competitive analysis model (Clarke, 2001: 235).

Therefore, the service quality competitive analysis model (Figure 6.4) reflects the kind of analysis that needs to be conducted in order to establish the quality of services that are offered at these two levels in the organisation and it is applicable for DHA since it will enable them to identify the service gaps that exists.

#### **6.3.4 ASSESSING THE ADEQUACY OF THE TOOLS AND TECHNIQUE SUGGESTED FOR USE AT DHA**

In order to make decisions based on the intelligence gained from using the CI tools and techniques, the management team needs to be sure that the intelligence is accurate and provides an unbiased and authoritative account of reality as far as possible. They also need to feel comfortable with the tools and techniques chosen for each situation and have confidence in that it will provide the intelligence that is needed for the desired outcomes of DHA. Furthermore, management has to know that the intelligence obtained from using these tools and techniques can and will be used to add value to the organisation.

There may be some situations where more than one tool or technique may have to be used, or a combination of several tools and techniques, in order to obtain the desired result. The selection of these tools will depend on the managers' skills and analysis competencies. At DHA, there is already a shortage of skilled and competent senior management staff. Therefore, some guidance and assurance about the tools and techniques is essential as this will assist even the most doubtful and unskilled manager to make a decision about the selection of tools and techniques that are adequate for use in a specific situation or to obtain specific intelligence.

The CI tools and techniques all have certain strengths and weaknesses and it is essential for the managers to be aware of these aspects before using the tools and techniques. This will help them to determine the quality of the intelligence that is obtained. It will also assist them to choose the right combination of tools and techniques to use, so that useful intelligence is gained as opposed to using all the tools and techniques that have more limitations than benefit and may not adequately address the needs of the user.

In order to assess the adequacy of CI analysis tools and techniques, Fleisher & Bensoussan (2007: 80) developed a unique concept for analysis known as the FAROUT approach. This approach can be used as a guide for the manager to determine which tools and techniques are appropriate for a specific situation. The FAROUT approach is "based on the premise that for analytical output to be insightful,

intelligent, and valuable to business decision makers, it needs to meet a number of common characteristics,” (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2007: 80). A profile of the strengths and weakness of each tool and technique is also provided that can assist the manager to make an informed choice out of the myriad of tools and techniques that are available.

The output of every tool and technique will have to be assessed according to the six elements of the FAROUT approach as reflected in Table 6.3. A five-point scale is also used to rate the tools and techniques. An assessment of analysis techniques using the FAROUT scheme is indicated in Table 6.3 by using this means of selecting and using the tools and techniques, the managers can be assured that the quality of the output will be high and they will be in a position to make decisions with confidence.

In the light of this, the assessment scheme and the profile of the strengths and weaknesses of each tool and technique were carefully examined. This was to ensure that the tools and techniques reflected on the CI Framework for gathering and analysing information at DHA (Figure 6.3) are indeed useful for addressing the specific situations that DHA needs to address through their use. In certain cases where the tool has had a low rating, another tool of a higher rating and with greater strengths was selected in order to complement the first, weaker tool. Therefore, suggestions of a selection of tools can be noticed for each element on the framework (Figure 6.3).

**Table 6.3** FAROUT elements and assessment scheme (Fleisher & Bensoussan, 2007: 83)

<b>Element</b>	<b>Five-point rating scale</b>
<b>Future orientation</b>	1= model’s output is not future-oriented. It may be too anchored in the past or present 5= the model is highly future-focussed
<b>Accuracy</b>	1= the level of accuracy for outputs using this model is low 5= the requirements of the model leads to the generation of highly accurate outputs
<b>Resource-efficiency</b>	1= the model requires a large volume of data, financial, and human resources, and is low in efficacy



	5= the techniques is highly efficient in its use of resources and in deriving desired outputs from new inputs
<b>Objectivity</b>	1= the specific tool provides a low level of objectivity due to the presence of biases and mind-sets in its application 5= that the potential for bias can be minimised
<b>Usefulness</b>	1= application of a tool delivers less useful output and requires additional work by or on behalf of a decision maker 5= the tool provides a high level of valued output without requiring additional effort by the decision maker
<b>Timeliness</b>	1= the tool requires a great deal of time to complete well 5= the tool takes little time to successfully complete

It is also important to note that it is not feasible for an organisation to make use of all these tools and techniques simultaneously to address its needs. Some of these tools and techniques are usually used by organisations prior to strategic planning, on an ongoing basis or as-needed for specific aspects or projects at hand. Some tools are required to be used for decision-making and when major decisions need to be taken they can prove to be very useful. However, in the case of DHA, where it was identified in the ethnographic study (Chapter 4) that not many tools and techniques were used to assist in strategic planning, restructuring, decision making and new projects, it is suggested the organisation make every effort to use all these tools and techniques over the next planning phase. The planning phases usually come a year ahead of the announcement of its strategic plans and objectives. These tools and techniques should be used to try to rectify the current problems and challenges that DHA experiences in terms of its service delivery.

The use of some of these tools and techniques will have to be outsourced by DHA due to the lack of skills and competencies internally. However, the quality of its decision making and, ultimately service delivery can probably be greatly enhanced with these tools and techniques and it may warrant outsourcing. Once the organisation has been able to rectify the problems that it experiences from all the forms of competition and it is able to sustain its service delivery operations, it will not be necessary to use all these tools and techniques for every planning phase, instead, the tools and techniques



can then be used on an ongoing basis or as-needed for decision making and strategic planning.

#### **6.4 SUMMARY**

This chapter focussed on CI tools and techniques that have been identified as suitable to use in DHA for improving service delivery. Since the empirical study not only identified several forms of competition that impacted service delivery at DHA but also that very few strategic management and CI tools were used for strategic planning and decision making, it was decided to identify CI related tools that could assist DHA in addressing its competition and to enhance decision making. The discussion commenced with an overview of the competitive realities that exist at DHA and this provided a basis for identifying and suggesting several tools and techniques that were depicted in a CI framework for gathering and analysing information in DHA. However, in the absence of a value chain for DHA, it was necessary to create a CI value chain for DHA which could also guide the selection of appropriate tools and techniques to be included in the framework.

The CI Framework for gathering and analysing information at DHA is reflected in Figure 6.3 and it represents a formal and systematic means for informing managers about critical issues that DHA faces or is likely to experience in the future. The tools for the framework have been divided into several elements in order to inform managers of their focus in each category and to make it easy for the model to be used in any other service sector. These elements are: environmental analysis, service business analysis, financial analysis, evolutionary analysis, customer analysis and competition analysis. This Framework will fill in the gap that exists at DHA in terms of its strategic planning tools and techniques.

A service quality competitive analysis model for DHA that could assist in the continuous analysis of the customers' expectations and level of service offered to them was also suggested. The criteria used for assessing the adequacy and relevance of the tools and techniques suggested for used at DHA by using the FAROUT



approach was also discussed. The following chapter will focus on the recommendations and concluding remarks of the study.

## CHAPTER 7

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will serve to draw conclusions from the study undertaken and also make recommendations for DHA that can assist in improving their service delivery. In order to do this, it is necessary to first provide an overview of the aims and objectives of the study. Furthermore, the achievement of these aims as identified at the start of the research will be assessed, to establish whether this study was able to adequately achieve the aims via the chosen methodology. A brief summary of the outcomes of the study will then be provided. Some activities that have already been instituted as a result of this study will also be discussed and this will lead to the identification of future research in the area as well as some limitations of the study.

#### 7.2 OVERVIEW OF STUDY

The unique nature of the services offered by Public Services (intangibility, heterogeneity and perishability), make it very difficult to apply CI strategies and tools to this sector. As a result, very little has been written about CI in Public Service departments. Since Public Service departments are not perceived to have any competition and there is no measure of profit and losses incurred by these departments, it is a challenge to stimulate service excellence.

However, Public Service departments do compete, and the competitor is usually another service department. They also compete for scarce resources and, according to the literature, competition in Public Service organisations can be identified as competing for funding, competing for personnel, competing for users, and competing for influence and prestige.

Since Public Service organisations function within the broader macro environment, it has been suggested that they also needed to perform similar types of strategic planning activities as their private sector and profit-making counterparts. This includes environmental analyses, resource analyses, goal formulation, strategy formulation and organisational or systems design. For the organisations to accomplish these activities they require a vast amount of internal and external data, and this data has to be analysed in terms of its objectiveness and quality. This task is best carried out by the CI function (Wagner, 2003) and by individuals with CI experience, skills, knowledge, and abilities.

The focus of this study was, therefore, to make recommendations to improve the quality of the services delivered by Public Service departments in South Africa through the implementation of CI tools and techniques in these departments. It was felt that if these departments functioned in a similar manner to the way in which the private sector or profit-making industries operated, it would help them to improve and sustain the quality of the services that they provide. It would also have a more positive impact on the economy of the country and the quality of the lives of the citizens.

With the absence of a study of this nature in the Public Service departments, it was envisaged that the results will be beneficial in developing a CI Framework that could be used for decision making, strategic planning and ultimately enhance service delivery in the Public Service departments. This feeling was re-enforced by the discovery that there is very little written about CI in Public Service or non-profit organizations in any manner. While the Department of Home Affairs was selected as the Public Services department where the empirical study was conducted, the results of the study might be of benefit to all other service sector organizations.

### **7.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The objective of the study was to ascertain how competitive intelligence tools and techniques could be implemented in Public Service departments in South Africa in order to enhance the delivery of service.

Therefore, the aims of the study were to:

- Assess the current state of Public Service delivery in South Africa
- Identify gaps in the Public Services current strategy for service delivery
- Identify from literature how CI tools and techniques could contribute to the functioning of the service sector
- Identify the forms of competition that impact service delivery in Public Service departments
- Identify initiatives to improve service delivery
- Design a new CI Framework for gathering and analysing information that can be used in all Public Service departments in South Africa to enhance decision making and service delivery.

## **7.4 CRITICAL FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

In accordance with the above-mentioned aims and objectives, and in order to successfully analyse and understand the complexity of the intangible attributes of the study, namely service delivery, an ethnographic research method was selected. This method was complemented by an extensive literature study and document analysis on the subject. The findings of the study in terms of the aims set above are briefly discussed.

### **7.4.1 CURRENT STATE OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN SOUTH AFRICA.**

As discussed in Chapter 4, it became evident from the study that Public Service sector, and in particular DHA, was experiencing several problems in terms of achieving its service delivery mandate. The study also showed that there was a general lack of structured and formal frameworks, policies and strategies in place to assist in conducting DHA operations. The themes addressed in assessing the current state of Public Service delivery could also be regarded as the various forms of internal competition that the organisation experienced, albeit unbeknown to them. These

themes included the organisational structuring, vision, mission, strategic intent, flow of information in the organisation, the interaction patterns, language and communication codes used in DHA, organisational culture, internal policies and practices and strategic planning tools and techniques used in the organisation for decision making.

The organisation was viewed to have many unskilled and de-motivated staff who were expected to provide a service to the citizens and stakeholders. The current state of service delivery in South Africa also revealed disturbing findings with regard to corruption, fraud, nepotism, and extreme despair in staff who had to work under these conditions. The DHA could be seen as an organisation that was in a state of almost complete disrepair and was basically kept running through large investments in outside consultants who are involved in most of its core functions.

#### **7.4.2 GAPS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICES CURRENT STRATEGIES FOR SERVICE DELIVERY**

As discussed in Chapter 4.4.8, DHA does not use reliable techniques and methods when conducting its strategic planning. Most of the strategic planning tools and techniques, such as environmental analyses to determine its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) are not conducted. The study found that the last SWOT analysis was conducted in 2006 and that it is not a regular activity at DHA. Furthermore, staff lacks the competencies, skills and experience to assist in strategic planning. This leaves such work in the hands of consultants who, because they are not a continuing part of the organisational context and culture, do not always understand the internal operation of DHA. While attempts have been made to get input from senior staff at workshops to assist in strategic planning, the entire strategic planning process and strategic plan for DHA is still largely a consolidation exercise of putting together pieces of information received from each business unit. Hence the strategic plan is based on “gut feel” and is not evidence-based with sufficient findings from research and statistics. Therefore, the existing strategic plan for DHA does not address the future desires of the organisation and can be regarded as a plan to address the immediate issues of the organisation only.

### **7.4.3 INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY**

DHA is a heavily service-delivery driven department, and in order to ensure that it provides quality services to its clients, several new initiatives have been implemented to improve its service delivery. Chapter 5.2 outlined some of these initiatives. It was evident from the study that the new initiatives would be able to have, and in some cases have already had, a positive impact on the operating and service delivery environment in DHA. Nevertheless, several concerns were also identified. These concerns related mainly to the manner in which these initiatives were implemented. The implementation did not include all the staff at the various levels; hence the lack of buy-in from staff could lead to these initiatives failing.

### **7.4.4 CI TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE FUNCTIONING OF THE SERVICE SECTOR.**

While it is difficult to motivate and justify the implementation of CI activities in the Public Service sector mainly because of the lack of an easily quantifiable outcomes measure, it was found that the Public Services have several stakeholders who are involved in the operations of the departments and these stakeholders can view the outcomes measure from varying perspectives. This can be regarded as an ideal motivation and opportunity for CI to be implemented so that it adds value to the Public Services functioning. CI activities, in this case, can ensure that appropriate, accurate and actionable intelligence is made available for the organisation to meet its challenges. Chapter 2 outlined the benefits of CI for Public Service organisations and focussed on several tools and techniques that could be used. Traditional management tools and techniques that have been used in business organisations for many years were identified that could, with slight modifications, innovative thinking and creativity, be used for CI in service-oriented, public sector organisations. Most of these tools and techniques were not used in DHA.

#### **7.4.5 COMPETITION THAT IMPACT SERVICE DELIVERY IN PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENTS.**

Several forms of competition that had an impact on the organisation's ability to make decisions and to offer effective and efficient services to its stakeholders were encountered at DHA and discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. These forms of competition can be divided into three different areas, namely: internal competition in DHA, external competition and left field competition, and these were indicated in Table 5.1. Many members of staff at DHA did not expect to have any competition at all as it was expressed in the focus group discussion: "we are the only department offering such home affairs services and we do not have any competition," (FG 06/05/08) and in an ethnographic interview with the CIO, "why competition? We are not trying to make a profit, just providing a mandatory service to the citizens of the country," (EI 07/07/08).

Most of the competition that DHA experiences is internal to the organisation and goes unnoticed by the decision makers. The study also identified several forms of left field competition which impacted service delivery. This also led to DHA being reactive to situations and problems instead of being proactive. The information about these forms of competition was not readily available to managers and decision makers therefore appropriate actions could not be taken to counteract the impact of the competition on service delivery.

#### **7.4.6 CI FRAMEWORK FOR GATHERING AND ANALYZING INFORMATION**

From the empirical investigations it became evident that DHA needed to apply a variety of CI tools and techniques to improve service delivery. Furthermore, no single tool would have been able to address the situation at DHA, therefore, a combination of tools was necessary. These tools were depicted in a CI framework (Figure 6.3) that DHA could be used to gather and analyse information for decision making. The CI Framework for gathering and analysing information at DHA was designed by the researcher and it represents a formal and systematic means for informing managers



about critical issues that DHA faces or is likely to experience in the future. After identifying the various forms of competition at DHA in Chapters 4 and 5, care was taken to identify only those tools and techniques that would be able to assist DHA to outsmart these forms of competition in order to enhance its service delivery.

Three levels have been chosen for the framework and each level focuses on an important form of analysis that can be beneficial for decision making mainly at the different levels in an organisation. The framework contributes to the knowledge base of CI since such a CI framework for Public Service organisations has not been identified. The New CI framework can also be beneficial to other Public Service departments in South Africa. However, before the framework could be designed it was necessary to create a CI value chain for DHA that could also serve as a guide for selecting the tools for the framework.

Since service quality is of importance to a service organisation, a service quality competitive analysis model for DHA was suggested. While these tools and techniques can be valuable for DHA, managers and decision makers will need to be convinced of their benefits and value to the decision making process. Hence, assessing the adequacy of the suggested tools and techniques for DHA was essential, and the FAROUT approach, that was used to specifically identify and select the tools and techniques to deal with the competitive forces having an impact on DHA, was discussed.

## **7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The primary objective of the study was to ascertain how competitive intelligence tools and techniques could be implemented in Public Service departments in South Africa in order to enhance the delivery of service. Based on the findings of the study from the literature review and the empirical research conducted in order to achieve this objective, twenty recommendations have been suggested for DHA. While several other actions can also be recommended, the researcher identified these twenty recommendations as the most prominent and important ones that need immediate attention in order for DHA to improve its service delivery. These recommendations

are not listed in any specific order of priority as several recommendations can be attended to simultaneously. The recommendations are however, intended to address the various forms of competition that were identified during the study.

### **7.5.1 RECOMMENDATION 1**

*DHA should be administered like any profit-making, private sector organisation with a CEO at the head of the organisation. Management principles and strategies should be similar to that of a private sector organisation.*

This is important if DHA intends to achieve its mandate of providing a high quality service to its stakeholders. The study found that DHA is a very political organisation, run by politicians who often lack the necessary skills and competencies to manage the organisation. Hence, most decisions that are made are of a more political nature instead of focused on strategic service delivery intent. This is one of the several plausible, prominent explanations as to why proper strategic planning and management strategies are not strictly adhered to.

### **7.5.2 RECOMMENDATION 2**

*It is recommended that DHA direct most of its operations, strategic planning and decision making at its customers, rather than focus on its operation and processes.*

DHA diverts a lot of its attention into redesigning its processes and activities without much input from its customers and stakeholders. The customer is regarded as being almost “by the way,” and for a service organisation that is already tainted with poor service delivery, DHA cannot afford to neglect its customers. They are the primary reason for the organisation’s existence.

### **7.5.3 RECOMMENDATION 3**

*It is recommended that DHA use the CI value chain that has been created in Chapter 6.3.1 to keep a focus on its most important objectives: providing efficient and effective services to the citizens of South Africa and its stakeholders.*

Without a clear focus on its desired target, it is easy for DHA to lose its focus and direct its attention and actions to other activities that may not be as important. The CI value chain can assist managers to make informed decisions about the actions and resources that are needed to enhance service delivery. It can also assist managers to select appropriate tools to acquire information and intelligence that is needed in making decisions that are feasible. While most of the decisions made seem essential, not all these decisions are realised as a result of the complexities that exist in DHA. This is evident from the observations and analysis shared in Chapters 4 and 5.

#### **7.5.4 RECOMMENDATION 4**

*DHA should make the CI framework for gathering and analysing information (Figure 6.3) its essential tool for decision-making and strategic planning, and enforce its use by managers and decision makers.*

The study found that the absence of specific tools and frameworks that are enforced at DHA, has given managers the freedom to “do as they please” or make decisions on an ad hoc basis, when it becomes important. Decisions are usually based on individual perceptions and assumptions rather than factual evidence. Resources are allocated to departments and activities / projects without any guarantee of benefit from these allocations or any measure of performance. Therefore, managers are not held accountable for inadequate or poorly performing service delivery. The tools from the framework will be able to provide managers with the strengths and weaknesses of certain decisions, and they will be informed of what to expect from each project or activity decided upon.

#### **7.5.5 RECOMMENDATION 5**

*It is recommended that DHA acknowledge that several forms of competition have an impact on its service delivery, and not just accept these as normal day-to-day problems that cannot be addressed. This acknowledgement should include policies and procedures being adopted by DHA to deal with its competition and also regular monitoring and evaluation of these policies and procedures to ensure that they are being adhered to.*

The study found that the management of DHA did not believe that they had any competition that had an impact on service delivery, as discussed in Chapter 5.4. Hence, they did not previously consider or acknowledge the use of any tool and techniques that could alert managers of what may be happening within or outside the organisation that could have an impact on the operations.

#### **7.5.6 RECOMMENDATION 6**

*It is recommended that DHA forms partnerships and alliances with several professional, academic and private sector bodies that could assist them to overcome their lack of skills and competencies.*

It is essential for DHA to realise that it cannot achieve everything that it set out to achieve without the assistance of suitably identified parties. These include academic institutions that possess the skills and competencies and subject matter experts that can assist DHA in supporting decision making in areas where they lack the knowledge and skills. It is especially important for this form of assistance to be found in the Information Technology area, which this study found is in a serious state of disarray at DHA.

#### **7.5.7 RECOMMENDATION 7**

*It is recommended that DHA form a Private Public Partnership (PPP) with academic institutions to assist in developing the human resource capacity of the organisation to meet the specific needs of the organisation.*

South African academic institutions already possess the skills, competencies and curricula to train and develop the senior management and other staff at DHA to be able to perform better in the jobs. DHA does not have the capacity to conduct its own staff training and development. However, they do have the financial resources to pay for these services. Hence, this form of partnership will be beneficial for DHA and ensure that the training is job-specific and tailored to the unique needs of DHA whilst also being designed to address the specific problem areas that have been identified. Perhaps DHA's lack of capacity to develop its staff on its own, as discussed in

Chapter 4.4.9.8, is why the performance of senior management staff was found to be so poor, with 70% of them failing their competency-based test.

#### **7.5.8 RECOMMENDATION 8**

*It is recommended that DHA benchmark its performance and activities, processes and policies against other government departments and service organisations, if it intends to provide quality service to its customers.*

Benchmarking is useful to assist DHA to improve the quality of the services that it offers, and also to identify the resources, skills and capacity that it needs to do this. It is a way to reposition its image and position in the environment. The study found that DHA's activities and performance were regarded by the Democratic Alliance (opposition party) and the Research Survey as the worst of all the government departments. Poor service delivery has led to the organisation obtaining a poor reputation and image among its stakeholders and government alike.

#### **7.5.9 RECOMMENDATION 9**

*It is recommended that DHA try to make more use of its internal staff to focus on its core activities instead of outsourcing these to consultants who do not understand the internal operations of the organisation.*

The use of consultants has meant that internal staff are not developed and motivated to perform their duties. It was found that most core functions were in the hands of consultants and that staff are unaware of the activities going on around them. Furthermore, little skills transfer occurs between consultants and staff, meaning that once the consultants leave the organisation, staff cannot cope with the functions, thereby leading to poor service delivery. Consultants are also not always familiar with the internal work environment and they do not always have the customer's best interest in mind when executing certain activities.

#### **7.5.10 RECOMMENDATION 10**

*It is recommended that DHA devise service-oriented policies and procedures. Staff should be made aware of these and they should then have to abide by these policies and procedures. This will also help to protect DHA from misuse of its facilities and information.*

Policies are important for DHA to protect itself from the various types of fraudulent activities, corruption and misuse of its resources (such as telephones, email and information). This was very evident in this study, and in most instances, appropriate actions were not taken against staff perpetrating these activities. This has an impact on the services offered and the reputation that the organisation earns from its stakeholders. Policies and procedures will also protect DHA from the various forms of competition that it encounters and would make the department become more responsive and confident in its operations.

#### **7.5.11 RECOMMENDATION 11**

*It is recommended that DHA learn from the mistakes of others in its environment, along with its past mistakes and experiences and not ‘reinvent the wheel’ each time it is confronted with certain problems.*

Service organisations do not always have the luxury of time and unlimited resources to repeat activities. DHA needs to keep records of its projects and experiences so that they are in a better position to respond to similar situation should they arise again, rather than treating each case as if it were something new and unknown. Also, effective implementation of the framework in Figure 6.3 will assist DHA to gather information about similar experiences of others in its environment which help the Department to be prepared should it be faced with the same scenario.

#### **7.5.12 RECOMMENDATION 12**

*It is recommended that DHA make use of the intranet for improving the flow and communication of information within the organisation. The intranet can also be used to house the performance dashboards that are being developed for each manager.*

In the absence of a Management Information System (MIS) at DHA, the intranet can be developed to serve as an immediate information communication and dissemination channel. As identified Chapter 4.4.2.2, the flow of information is complicated by the lack of an adequate communication channel. The intranet can also be the place where the performance dashboards, discussed in Chapter 5.5.4, can be placed for all managers to have access to them.

#### **7.5.13 RECOMMENDATION 13**

*It is recommended that DHA adopt a formal HR training and development policy for its entire staff, especially those involved in front line operations, and not just for its senior managers.*

As identified in Chapters 4.4.9.8 and 5.4.1.3, DHA experiences several problems in terms of its human resources capacity, competencies, career development and on-the-job training. A formal policy to address these issues is, therefore, essential as DHA is dependent on its human resources for its survival.

#### **7.5.14 RECOMMENDATION 14**

*It is recommended that DHA ensures that it has structured agendas for its meetings and workshops and to follow these agendas strictly.*

Chapter 4.4.4 identified that staff spend up to 60% of their time in meetings and workshops and, therefore, have very little time left for supervision and mentoring of staff. Structured and formal agendas will ensure that meetings and workshops focus only on what is stipulated on the agendas and other non-agenda issues can be

addressed via email communication. This would result in reducing the time spent by senior staff in meetings and workshops.

#### **7.5.15 RECOMMENDATION 15**

*It is recommended that DHA gets involved in more liaisons with its communities in order to identify the needs, behaviour and expectations of its customers and to communicate the proper operations and processes of DHA to its customers.*

As identified in Chapter 4.4.4, DHA is not communicating with its communities and customers and this is perhaps why the Department is not fully aware of the needs and expectations of its customers. Insufficient user education, along with a lack of awareness of the services and procedures available for DHA customers, has been observed and this is a possible reason for the customers opting to obtain services via fraudulent means.

#### **7.5.16 RECOMMENDATION 16**

*It is recommended that DHA revises and updates all its existing policies and practices and adopt new policies where applicable to ensure that they are in keeping with the changes in demands for services and that they are able to respond to the changes in its internal and external environments.*

The study identified that the policies and practices that DHA has in place, do have an impact on the delivery of services. Some of its policies are outdated and no longer relevant in the current political and economic climate (see Chapter 4.4.7). The study also found that DHA does not have several important policies and procedures to guide its operations and to protect the organisation from misuse of information. These have been identified in Chapter 4.4.7.

#### **7.5.17 RECOMMENDATION 17**

*DHA should conduct a skills audit and an information audit. The skills audit will assist it to identify what competencies and skills are available internally and to ensure*



*that staff are correctly placed in position. The information audit will help DHA to know exactly what information is available in the organisation as well as where, what format it is in and how it can be accessed.*

As identified in the study, several staff were incorrectly placed in positions in which they were not skilled and competent. DHA has a tendency to outsource many of its operations and services without first ascertaining if these required skills and competencies are available internally. Furthermore, information is available in all departments and offices, however, nobody really knows what information is available and who possesses that information. This results in poor service delivery especially when the information is required for job related activities. The lack of a central repository for the storage of information is also a challenge for DHA as it takes a long time to locate information for work activities and decision making.

#### **7.5.18 RECOMMENDATION 18**

*It is recommended that DHA fill all vacant and acting positions immediately with appropriately skilled and competent individuals so as to ensure the continuity of work and service delivery.*

The study identified that several acting positions and vacant positions existed in DHA (See Chapter 4). The vacant positions are not filled quickly enough for there to be continuity in the tasks causing backlogs and delays in service delivery. Those individuals, who are acting in positions, do not take their responsibilities seriously as they are not sure how long they will be in that specific position (in some cases they are in a position for only a short while). The recruitment and selection of staff also needs to be improved as discussed in Chapter 4.4.9.8.

#### **7.5.19 RECOMMENDATION 19**

*DHA needs to upgrade its IT and communications infrastructure as the existing infrastructure is outdated and lacks the capacity to cope with all the communication and IT related activities at DHA.*

The study found that the IT system was not able to handle all the activities at DHA, as discussed in Chapter 4. The staff intranet is outdated and staff do not bother to use it because the information is often no longer relevant. The IT system lacks the capacity to incorporate all the services and activities that DHA performs. Above that, there are several systems in operation and these systems are not compatible with each other.

#### **7.5.20 RECOMMENDATION 20**

*It is recommended that DHA shorten the timelines for the delivery of services and products such as IDs and passports. This will force staff to exert themselves to their full potential and rewards and incentives should be provided to staff for this.*

The study found that staff at DHA do not demonstrate a sense of urgency in the activities that they perform and they make little, if any, attempt to speed the delivery of service to the customer. The shortening of the timelines for the delivery of service will force staff to exert themselves and to use their full potential to improve service delivery. This process will be enhanced if appropriate rewards and incentives are provided for staff performance.

#### **7.6 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY**

The objective of the study was to ascertain how competitive intelligence tools and techniques could be implemented in Public Service departments in South Africa to enhance the delivery of service. The study took the form of a case study in a specific Public Service department, namely Department of Home Affairs. From the recommendations listed above (Chapter 7.5) coming out of the case study at DHA, the following conceptual ideas can also be recommended in order for the findings to be applicable in all Public Service departments in South Africa.

### **7.6.1 HUMAN RESOURCE TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION**

The problems experienced with regards to human resources training, development and education at DHA are not an isolated situation that this organisation experiences alone. Other Public Service departments are probably also experiencing similar challenges and competition, as has been identified in this study, hence it is recommended that the training, development and education of staff at all levels in the organisation become a priority for Public Service organisations if they intend to improve service delivery.

### **7.6.2 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND LIAISON**

Several aspects of communication and liaison in DHA with internal staff and departments, as well as with its customers, were identified in Chapter 4 of the study. These aspects could also be present in other Public Service departments. Effective communication within the organization and with the external stakeholders is essential for Public Service departments to ensure that they are meeting the needs and expectations of their customers. Therefore, it is recommended that effective communication channels are implemented in Public Service departments. Furthermore, community liaison and networking should be incorporated into the organisations' operations and procedures.

### **7.6.3 EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP**

Most Public Service departments are also prone to similar management and leadership challenges as identified in DHA, since they all fall within the same political, structural and regulatory framework. However, for Public Service departments to improve service delivery, effective management and leadership is required. Managers and leaders must be skilled and competent in their activities and they must become involved in strategic planning, decision-making and policy formulation and execution.

#### **7.6.4 INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

For effective strategic planning and decision-making to take place in organisations, information and knowledge is required. Proper analysis of information and the provision of intelligence to managers and decision makers can improve the quality of strategic planning and decision-making and this, in turn, can enhance service delivery. Similar to the situation identified at DHA, other Public Service departments could possibly experience challenges in the way they manage their information and knowledge. Hence, it is recommended that all Public Service departments ensure that information and knowledge management practices are implemented within their organisations. This recommendation is consistent with the knowledge-based theory of the firm which considers knowledge as the most significant resource of an organisation and this knowledge is usually embedded and carried through multiple entities including organisational culture and identity, policies, routines, documents, systems and employees (Grant, 2002). The organisations' ability to integrate the knowledge held by individuals and to share this with others that may require it is also important if it intends to survive in the competitive environment.

#### **7.6.5 ENHANCED CUSTOMER FOCUS**

The study found that, as a result of a severe lack of skills and competencies within DHA, several operations and functions are performed by external consultants who are not public servants, and who, therefore, do not possess the service delivery and customer focus attitude and motivation. Beyond this, because the Department lacks formal structures, tools and techniques for analysing information, effective implementation of policies and procedures and poor management and leadership, they easily lose focus of their customers who are the primary reason for the existence of Public Service departments. Hence, it becomes absolutely critical that Public Service departments enhance their customer focus. This can be done by adopting tools and techniques that have a focus on the customer as indicated in the framework in Figure 6.3 and by taking the customer into consideration during its strategic planning, decision making, project planning, HR training and development, and resource allocation.

#### **7.6.6 IMPROVED TRANSPARENCY OF ACTIVITIES AND PROCESSES**

Transparency in Public Service organisations is essential as it enables the public and staff to participate from an informed perspective in the policy-making and implementation thereof. It also makes the stakeholders more aware and understanding of the activities and challenges that the Department experiences. The study identified several reasons why DHA grapples with transparency in Chapter 4.4.9.7. Hence, it is recommended that all Public Service departments improve transparency of its activities and processes and this will probably assist these organisations to improve their service delivery.

#### **7.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The researcher was pleased with the direction and outcome of the study as a whole, and the findings were also found to be useful and could probably benefit DHA as well as other service departments. However, some limitations were experienced during the study that could not have been foreseen at the start. These limitations are discussed in this section.

Firstly, although permission to conduct the study at DHA was granted without any problems, the legal clearance took a much longer time to finalise than was expected and this meant that the researcher had to wait for a while before the interviews and discussions could commence. For future research in an environment of this nature, legal implications and clearance need to be taken into consideration during the planning stage in order to avoid delays.

The delay was not assisted by the second limitation which came about since this was the first research being conducted by a researcher from an academic institution into DHA. As a result, the staff at DHA were very sceptical and cautious about what they shared with the researcher at first, and it took longer than initially anticipated by the researcher for staff to realise that the researcher was not intending to “spy” on their performance. The researcher had to explain to staff that the study was intended to assist in improving the situation at DHA and that all information that they shared

during the research process, would ultimately be used to benefit their own work environment and possibly themselves.

Thirdly, the management of DHA informed senior staff via email communication about the research and its possible benefits to DHA. The nature of the study and the procedure that was to be followed was also explained, and staff were requested to participate and cooperate with the researcher. However, the researcher discovered that several senior staff were unaware of the study when they were contacted for interviews, and in each case lots of time had to be spent re-explaining these aspects before actually continuing with the study.

Beyond this, the fourth limitation was that the researcher had not anticipated how difficult it was going to be to secure appointments with senior staff. In some instances it took two months before an interview could be secured because senior staff were reported to be either in meetings, or in workshops, or on leave. These lengthy periods of absence from their office had not been initially anticipated and, therefore, the study duration had to be extended to four months instead of the original three. The researcher also identified this in Chapter 4.4.5 as a problem or forms of internally generated competition that DHA experiences.

The fifth limitation came about because several important tasks and core functions were performed by consultants at DHA, and these consultants had a different view of the issues at DHA. Since they were not part of the internal culture and context; correspondingly, the researcher could not rely primarily on their views. Hence, other internal staff (although not senior staff) who had many years of experience in the departments had to be identified to get a more accurate finding of the realities at DHA.

Following this, the sixth limitation relates to the researcher not anticipating the level of disorganisation, lack of formal structures and procedures and a lack of a sense of urgency to accomplish tasks that existed at DHA. Having been accustomed to a very structured and organised work environment, it took the researcher a while to adjust to this work environment. As a result the research process was again slightly delayed.

The seventh limitation revolved around the use of a recording device. The researcher intended to use a recording device to record interviews and discussions. Once the study commenced, it was realised that recording was not going to provide the most accurate information because staff were afraid of being victimised for what they said and they would not candidly share their experiences and views once the recording device was visible. Hence, the researcher had to make hand-written notes of all the interviews, discussions, and also field notes on the observations. This process and the subsequent coding and analysis were time consuming.

The final limitation is linked to the interview process. As soon as the staff at DHA realised that the study was going to benefit them, they would provide the researcher with lots of information, even aspects that were not relevant to the study in an attempt to have their problems and concerns heard. They saw the researcher as a silver bullet that could help to solve all their problems and concerns. This led to the researcher experiencing information overload in some instances and sifting through the information for the desired information was a challenge.

## **7.8 ACTIVITIES ALREADY IMPLEMENTED AT DHA AS A RESULT OF THIS STUDY**

During the course of the empirical study, several activities were acknowledged and implemented by DHA. These activities are indicated below as:

- Workshop facilitated by the researcher for the senior management team at DHA to provide them with a better understanding of what information, knowledge, competitive intelligence and business intelligence was since it was found that not all the managers shared a similar level of awareness and understanding with regards to these concepts. After this workshop, senior staff indicated that they had a better understanding of these concepts than before and that they realised the importance of recruiting skilled individuals to work in the knowledge management and business intelligence divisions.
- Management of DHA are revisiting the new organisational structure that was designed after they realised that they had incorrectly positioned the

information and knowledge division and the business intelligence (new) specialists. They now realise how important it is to position them so that they can benefit strategic planning and decision making in the organisation

- Realisation that IT alone is not the solution to the information needs at DHA and, therefore, management are looking at training and equipping staff to capture and store vital information that can be made available when needed. The Department is also looking at investing in a system where all its information can be captured and stored on one central system instead of several smaller stand-alone systems.
- Senior management have acknowledged the value that can be gained from its intranet to store, communicate and access information especially in the absence of a central information repository. The researcher has demonstrated how the intranet could be used optimally and also how the BI dashboards can be placed on the intranet, thereby making them more accessible to all staff. The researcher will be assisting DHA staff in the design of their intranet to ensure that it contributes to improved service delivery.
- DHA has been mandated by government to migrate as many of its IT operations as possible to Open Source Software. Having identified the lack of staff in the IT department at DHA to conduct a feasibility study in this regard, the researcher placed twenty of her final year Information Science students in this department at DHA for a period of two weeks to assist in the feasibility study. These students are skilled in information technology and various software operations. The result was a comprehensive report of the strengths and challenges of migrating a host of DHA's operations to Open Source Software. This report was presented to the Head of the IT department to assist DHA in its decision making regarding the migration to Open Source Software.

## **7.9 FUTURE RESEARCH**

The study identified several areas that are important to investigate in the future. The findings and the development of the CI framework for gathering and analysing



information for service delivery has led to the following areas that need further investigation:

- The testing of the CI Framework that has been reflected in Figure 6.3 in DHA. It will be interesting to investigate what the situation will be with regard to service delivery, after these tools and techniques are implemented. This can be studied through a longitudinal evaluative research method where pre and post-testing can be done
- To investigate whether the CI value chain has assisted managers and decision-makers to focus their attention and activities onto the customers instead of the processes in the organisation, and to determine how this has contributed to the improvement of service delivery. Additionally, different links of the chain can be studied to determine how the larger organisational context is affected and affects each of the chain elements
- To investigate the opinions and customers' perceptions of the service after these tools are implemented in DHA, to determine if service delivery has improved and to determine if the CI tools are useful for DHA.
- To obtain and assess the opinions of the employees after these tools are implemented in DHA. Employees will be able to recognise the benefits of these tools in their specific work areas and operations.
- To ascertain whether the image of DHA has improved since the use of CI related tools and techniques.
- To assess the generalisability of the findings and recommendations to other Public Service agencies.

## **7.10 SUMMARY**

This chapter has focussed on providing a summary of the study that was undertaken and to highlight the important findings of the study in terms of the aims and objectives that were set. The researcher was able to achieve these aims and objectives and the chapter discussed several recommendations for DHA to assist it in improving service delivery. Certain activities have already been instituted at DHA as a result of this study and this indicates the usefulness and contribution that this study has made. Also,

this study makes room for further investigations in this area that will provide valuable insight into the topic. It is evident that CI can contribute towards the enhancement of decision making and service delivery not only in DHA but also in all other service organisations in South Africa.

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