

DETAILED AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. OVERSIGHT



Discussion extract of the management report of the Auditor-General of South Africa

on the performance audit of the Adult Education
and Training programme at the Department of
Higher Education and Training

1.1 National department concurrent function

The department did not give effect to the concurrent¹ function for the Adult Education and Training (AET) programme conferred on it by schedule 4 of the Constitution. National Treasury's guidance² to departments with concurrent functions includes the following responsibilities:

- Oversight
- Definition of performance information
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Sector reporting

Concurrent functions for AET were not performed because the department lacked clear guidance on the concurrent function for national and provincial education departments (PEDs) as well as capacity and funding. The department established limited capacity for these functions in the AET unit, however, it did not task the unit to perform these functions via its strategic and operational plans. The AET unit has eight staff to perform its functions. Some capacity was used for other priorities such as a regional coordinator for KwaZulu Natal being appointed using the position of deputy director. The assistant director: Curriculum position was vacant since 2009. Curriculum goals were not all achieved and the content for the AET Curriculum have not been completed.

Table 1: AET unit position not utilised towards AET oversight

Position	Status	Person employed	Responsibilities
Deputy Director Curriculum development policies	Position filled by regional coordinator for KZN – B Mthethwa		• oversee the development of curriculum statements in Adult Education and Training; • develop assessment policy, systems, structures and guidelines in Adult Education and Training; • develop strategies for improved learner performance and achievement in formal programmes; • liaise with relevant structures

¹ A concurrent function refers to a function where more than one level of government shares authority over the same functional area but national is tasked to oversee the sector or function (source: Prof Nico Steytler University of the Western Cape)

² Guidance includes the Framework for Managing Programme Performance Information (FMPPI) paragraph 7.3 regarding national departments with a concurrent function, Performance Information Handbook (April 2011) paragraph 1.2 regarding the principal department and oversight, and the Policy Framework for Government-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System par. 3.1 and 4.3 regarding oversight, monitoring and evaluation (2007)

Position	Status	Person employed	Responsibilities
			in the co-ordination and delivery of skills programmes in Adult Education and Training, including the Department of Labour, Setas³, FET⁴ Colleges and Youth structures; • provide support to Provinces on curriculum and assessment implementation. • develop strategies for integrating literacy, ABET and FET programmes within the Adult Education and Training system.
Assistant Director Curriculum	Vacant since 2009	Post just advertised – 25 May 2014	• Curriculum development and policies

Source: The AET unit

The funding for the AET unit at national level did not support the activities needed to fulfil the concurrent mandate. The operational budget that had to provide for networking with other stakeholders and provinces was reduced with 21% after the split of the department in 2009. In addition, budgets were repeatedly cut and certain priorities were reset after the split as the allocation of the split were not always supported by funding to perform these functions. As a result, certain activities, including monitoring and evaluation visits to provinces as well as advocacy for AET during the adult learners'⁵ week, were not done. The activities hampered by a lack of funding are reflected below.

Table 2: Operational budget provisions of AET for 2011-12 to 2014-15

2011-12 R	2012-13 R	2013-14 R	2014-15 R
550 000	203 000	383 000	380 000
Activities not implemented due to a lack of funding			
• Monitoring and evaluation visits to provinces • Advocacy for AET programmes through the Adult Learners' week and international literacy day	• Monitoring and evaluation visits • Advocacy for AET programmes through the Adult Learners' week and international	• Monitoring and evaluation visits • Advocacy for AET programmes through the Adult Learners' week and international	Current year

³ Skills Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)

⁴ Further Education and Training (FET)

⁵ The adult learner week is one of the ways in which the Adult learning network acknowledge and encourage dedicated and caring educators in their efforts to develop each learner and citizen of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa

• Curriculum for the National Senior Certificate for adult (NSC) • Curriculum for the general education and training certificate (GETC)	literacy day • Develop curriculum support programmes	literacy day	
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Source: AET unit

1.2 Monitoring and evaluation

Section 8 of the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996) (NEPA) and Section 25A(d) of the Higher Education and Training Laws Amendment Act, 2010 (Act No. 25 of 2010) (Amendment act), requires all education departments to provide policies and to monitor and evaluate programme performance. The department did not have a monitoring and evaluation policy. This contributed to the AET unit not monitoring and evaluating the AET programme's performance. In addition, the department's Annual Performance Plan (APP) did not include programme performance measures to monitor and support the AET programme in the provinces. As a result, the department was only made aware of challenges in the provinces on an ad hoc basis or via feedback from the Heads of Education Committee (HEDCOM) and Ministers and Members of Executive Council meetings (MINMEC).

As the department did not monitor and evaluate AET operations in the provinces, it could not take action when AET programmes in the provinces did not perform according to prescripts. For example:

- a) Although the department knew that unqualified educators were employed in the various provinces, it did not develop a strategy to deal with the challenge or track the extent. Legislation⁶ required AET educators to have a qualification ranging from REQV⁷ 11 to 16 (a post matriculation qualification).⁸ In addition, qualifying AET educators had to register with the South African Council for Educators⁹ (SACE) before being employed. A person not registered with SACE was prohibited from being employed as an educator.

⁶ NEPA indicated that the minister would determine the national policy for the recognition and evaluation of qualifications of employment in education based on the norms and standards for educators which were gazetted on 22 September 2000 (appendix 1 of the criteria)

⁷ The relative education qualification values (REQV)

⁸ Appendix 1 of the norms and standards for educators, gazetted on 22 September 2000

⁹ Section 21 of the South African Council for Educators Act, 2000 (Act No. 31 of 2000)

There were also no measures to track, monitor, correct and report on the extent and effect of the underqualified educators. The underqualified educators struggled to interpret the curriculum, leading to learners not receiving quality education. The qualifications of AET educators had not received attention for 10 years, which impacted negatively on the quality of teaching at the AET centres. A policy on professional qualifications for adult educators has been developed, although not approved and implemented. This affected the quality of teaching at AET centres negatively.

The following information regarding underqualified AET educators for 2008 to 2011, were collected during the provincial AET audits.

Table 3: Underqualified AET educators employed in selected provinces for 2008 to 2011

Province	2008	2009	2010	2011
Free State	125 (9%)	125 (10%)	Not provided	Not provided
Gauteng	699 (21%)	193 (9%)	215 (10%)	Not provided
KZN	2300 (40%)	2452 (47%)	2382 (40%)	Not provided
Mpumalanga	248 (24%)	276 (22%)	277 (21%)	453 (29%)
Northern Cape	76 (19%)	49 (13%)	13 (4%)	Not provided
North West	205 (15%)	163 (13%)	209 (13%)	203 (12%)

Western Cape data was limited to centres visited – 22% were underqualified and 44% not registered with South African Council for Educators

No information on underqualified educators were available in Limpopo and the Eastern Cape

Source: provincial audit reports

The sector still has underqualified educators and is performing an analysis of PERSAL data to determine the extent of the challenge. However, as Western Cape educators are employed by the centre governing boards (CGBs), they do not reflect on PERSAL. The department did not have a list of underqualified educators and their appointment dates. A strategy to ensure that they are not appointed in the future, or a plan to assist current underqualified educators to comply with the Educators act and register with the SACE, was not in place.

The following examples of underqualified educators were identified from the PERSAL data for December 2013. As the educators were employed by the different provincial departments of Education, the programme's non-compliance was not reported anywhere. The department did not ensure that only educators registered with SACE, were used.

Table 4: Examples of AET educators with no tertiary education

Province	Name	Personal Number	Appointment Date	ABET Component
KwaZulu-Natal	NA Mngqabe	17858135	20130101	Kokstad
	NG MathenjV	61406929	20090302	Obonjeni
	RPN Shabalala	62767224	20130101	Pinetown
	OTB Mcunu	63637626	20130430	Umgung
	ST Mdlolo	63914263	20130301	Pinetown
	BG Myeni	64218147	20110119	Obonjeni
	MC Mdaweni	64232671	20130101	Kokstad
	MP Khanyi	64249280	20120110	Ilembe
	Z Dladla	64514331	20120301	Empangeni
	JA Vundisa	64686370	20130101	Kokstad
	SH Msezana	64727807	20130116	Obonjeni
Limpopo	SL Moloto	83566813	20120101	Louville
	VZ Lekhuleni	83794255	20130101	Louville
	S Sono	83863630	20130101	Vukutakhe
Mpumalanga	SPQ Sola	23003723	20090401	Setlakalana Molepo
	DL Esterhuiz	26377519	20120201	21 Batallion
	HA Mnculwa	26382571	20120301	Wedela
	FJ Smith	26383098	20120301	21 Batallion
	LZ Shabalala	26622467	20120101	Josaih Khumalo

Source: PERSAL data for December 2013

b) Only Gauteng and the Western Cape had functional CGBs. Various AET centres in other provinces did not have properly or legally constituted governance structures as required by chapter 3 of the ABET act for the governance and management of public centres with consideration of:

- 8(1) Every public centre must establish a governing body consisting of – a) elected members, b) the centre manager, c) co-opted members, d) any representative of a sponsoring body, e) any representative of an organisation for disabled persons (where applicable) and, f) any expert in the field of adult basic education and training.
- Members must be elected from a) educators at the centres, b) member of staff who are not educators, learners from the centre.
- 6(a) the governing body must co-opt as member of the governing body a) the chairperson b) the principal or designated educator of the public school from which the centre operates.

- 9 The governing body must submit a copy of its constitution to the Head of Department within 90 days of its election.

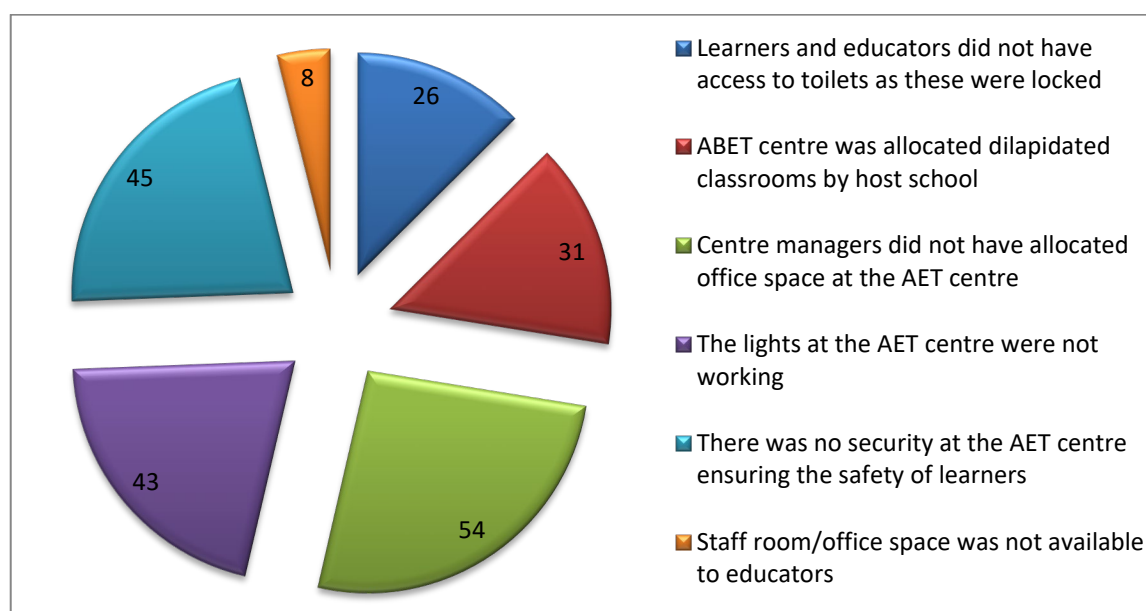
Due to the lack of monitoring, the department did not know how many CGBs were in place, which were struggling and what corrective action to take.

- c) Facility regulations¹⁰ relating to the minimum requirements for a service level agreement between the head of department (HoD) and SGB were issued in 2004 but not always implemented in the provinces. The HoD was responsible for providing facilities for AET operations. Since most AET centres were hosted at primary or secondary schools, the SLA was set to govern the relationship between the representatives of the schools and AET centres. The SGB and principal represented the school's interest while the HoD and AET officials represented the AET programme. Relationships between these representatives were important for the operation of AET centres.

Relations between the SGBs, principals and AET centre officials, were poor at some centres. SLAs were not signed between the SGBs and HoD at many centres in the provinces, which impacted AET operations at schools. The standard SLA stipulated that schools may not limit access to those who have an interest in the public centre. As this was not monitored by the department, access to facilities for AET classes was restricted for learners, educators and other workers at some AET centres. Graphs 1 and 2 apply to challenges relating to facilities, security and resources at the 110 centres visited in the various provinces.

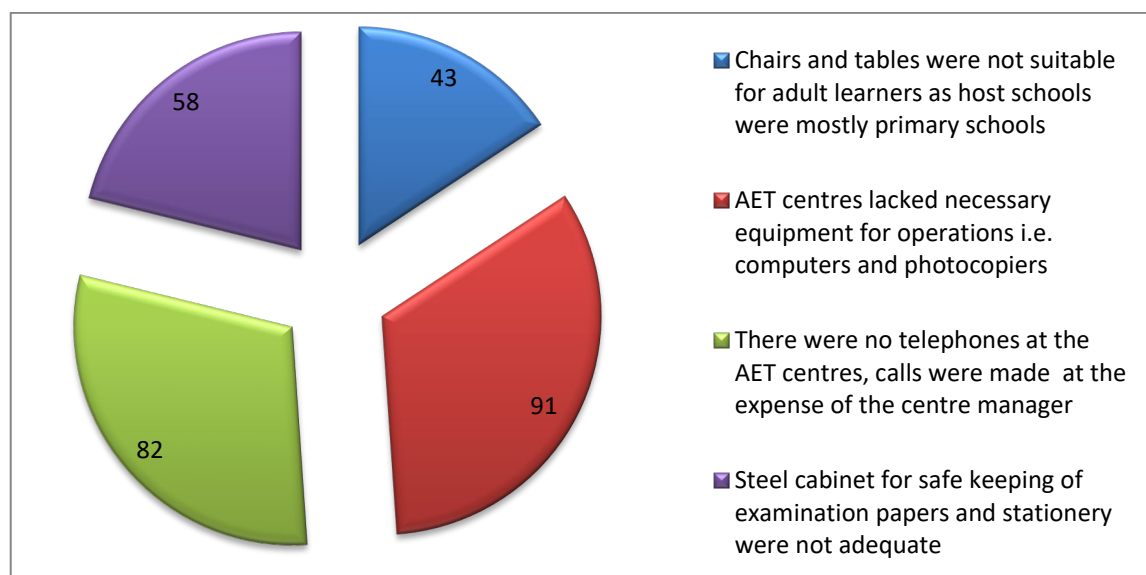
¹⁰ Regulations relating to the minimum requirements for an arrangement between the head of department and school governing boards for the reasonable use of school facilities by a public centre, in terms of section 4(5) of the ABET Act, 2000 (Act No. 52 of 2000) gazetted 9 January 2004

Graph 1: Challenges found at the 110 AET centres visited regarding facilities



Source: Provincial AET management reports

Graph 2: Furniture and equipment challenges at the 110 provincial AET centres visited



Source: Provincial AET management reports

- d) Section 27 of the ABET act provided for the registration of private centres. The HoD was to track whether the private centres maintained standards and ensure they did not discriminate on grounds of race in their admission policy and complied with the grounds for registration. This was not done.

The department did not monitor the registration of private centres by PEDs. Therefore, the department was not able to provide assurance on compliance to requirements or take corrective action where needed. In addition, the provinces did not report on the registration of private centres to the AET unit. The Multi Year Plan¹¹ reflected that private centres constituted more than 40% of adult learning centres when the programme started in 1996. Limited data was collected by the EMIS unit but assurance that data from all private centres was collected, could not be provided.

Recommendations

- a) The department should during the implementation of the new structure promulgated in the Further Education and Training Colleges Amendment Act, 2013 ensure that it:
 - revisits the structure it created to give effect to the functions of oversight and sector reporting
 - recruits the capacity required to fulfil these functions
 - define processes to enable oversight, to monitor and evaluate the AET sector's performance and service delivery, and to implement these
 - motivate for funding to support its oversight functions.
- b) The department should implement a monitoring and evaluation policy and create a suitable structure to implement monitoring and evaluation processes. The policy should provide for procedures that would clearly explain the following:
 - The objectives of monitoring and evaluating the performance information management and the performance of AET centres
 - The processes for the collection, processing and storing of performance information reported by the AET centres
 - The processes to monitor and evaluate the performance information reported by the AET centres
 - The roles and responsibilities of staff involved in monitoring and evaluating the operation and performance of centres
- c) AET operational practices on a national and provincial level should be evaluated for compliance to prescripts. Steps should be taken throughout to ensure compliance. Internal audit should assist in ensuring adherence to basic requirements of prescripts

¹¹ The department's Multi Year Plan was issued in 1997. All the stakeholders and role players agreed on the national objectives and outcomes for the total potential learning audience within the structures and systems that were required to address the needs of these adult learners.

including NEPA, Amendment act, ABET act and regulations. (also consider section 3 paragraph (c) on non-compliance to legislation, policies and regulations) Specific strategies and plans should be undertaken to address non-compliance and create assurance regarding compliance with all legislation.

- d) The department should ensure that under-qualified AET educators are not employed. The process for recruitment should include a verification check that the educators to be employed, do have the required minimum qualifications and are registered with SACE. A strategy should be developed and implemented to assist under-qualified AET educators already employed by PEDs with an opportunity to obtain the minimum qualification required.
- e) The department should ensure all centres are accommodated in suitable facility. Information regarding the centres facility and resources (equipment and teaching material) should be collected and monitored and intervention taken where facilities and resources are not up to standard.
- f) The department should identify all private centres that is operating in the country. The department should make sure that the requirements of section 27 of the ABET act are always met. EMIS surveys should be distributed to all private centres to ensure reporting on the sector is complete.

2. SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Support and guidance to provinces was limited and did not always address the issues that affected the provinces. Continuous support to ensure that programme goals were met was not given to provinces due to the limited capacity of the AET unit. The following activities in the provinces were affected by the lack of guidance and support of the AET unit.

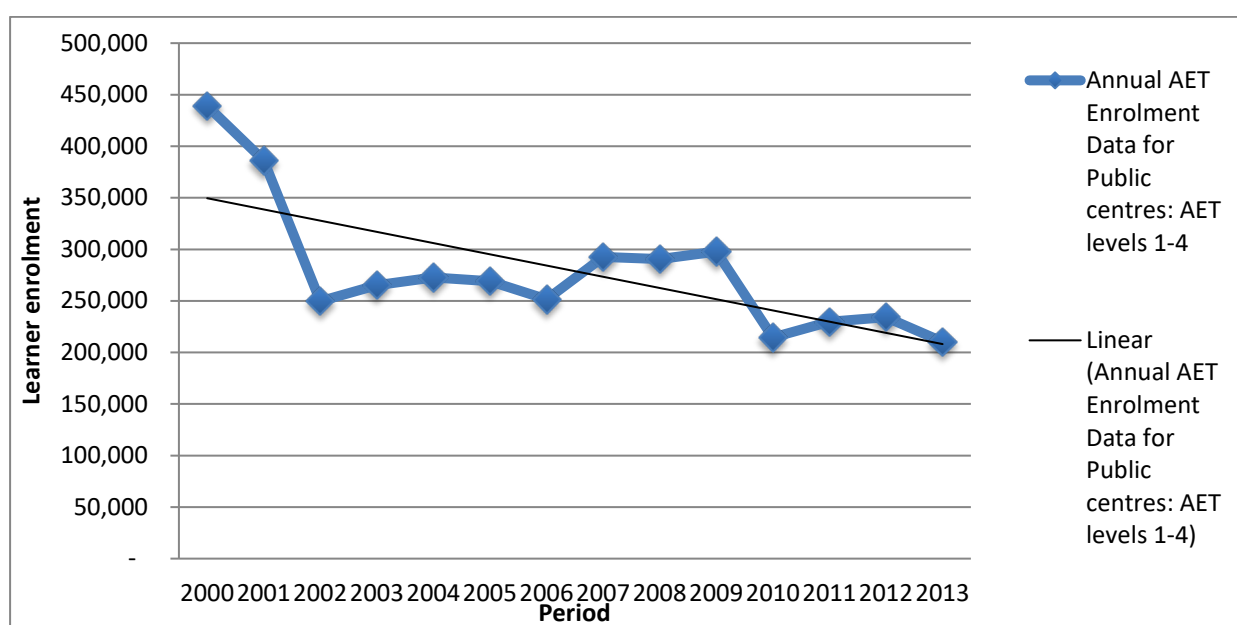
2.1 AET awareness campaigns

The department did not conduct formal AET awareness campaigns from 2009 to 2013. This was because the department did not have a marketing strategy to ensure that adults were made aware of the AET programme. In addition, the previous Department of Education did not establish the National Advisory Board for Adult Basic Education and Training (NABABET)

required in terms of the regulations.¹² The advisory board's tasks included raising awareness of the AET programme. The lack of strategy also led to the department not compiling marketing guidelines.

As a result, provincial departments' marketing efforts were limited and not co-ordinated. The annual enrolment of level 1 to 4 AET learners declined from 439 185 in 2000 to 210 327 in 2013 (52%). Considering the current enrolment rate, the eradication of illiteracy would take decades to achieve and is not supported by the department's plans¹³. The regression in AET learner enrolment is reflected below.

Graph 3: Annual AET learner enrolment level 1 to 4, 2000 to 2013



Source: Stats at a Glance report 2000 to 2009 and EMIS data 2010 to 2013

Note: enrolment numbers reflected in the Stats at a Glance include grade 10-12 learners, AET level 1-4 enrolment could not be provided separate for 2000-2009

In the absence of a marketing strategy, awareness campaigns were not budgeted for. The goods and service budget of the AET unit reduced significantly after the split of the Department of Education, from R2,9 million in July 2009 to R530 000 (82%) in July 2010 and was further reduced to R153 000 (71%) in July 2011. After the split, budget allocations were reshuffled in line with new priorities of the department which lead to repeated budget cuts.

¹² Regulations to provide for the establishment, composition and functioning of the National Advisory Board Adult Basic Education and Training (NABABET), gazetted 15 August 2001, no 22571

¹³ Strategic and operational plan and APP

2.2 Communications and relations with Kha Ri Gude

In 2006, the previous Minister of Education, required feedback on the progress made in relation to the Dakar¹⁴ goal of reducing illiteracy by 50% in 2015. The results warranted an additional intervention: the Kha Ri Gude mass literacy campaign (KRG) was a five-year project initiated to expedite achieving the Dakar goals. However, after the Department of Education split in 2009, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) was tasked with implementing KRG and the department with AET.

KRG is meant to supplement AET efforts. Its objective is to educate unschooled adults up to AET level 1.¹⁵ KRG learners should then progress to AET level 2 and continue to achieve functional literacy. Implementing the campaign therefore necessitated synergy between KRG and the AET programme.

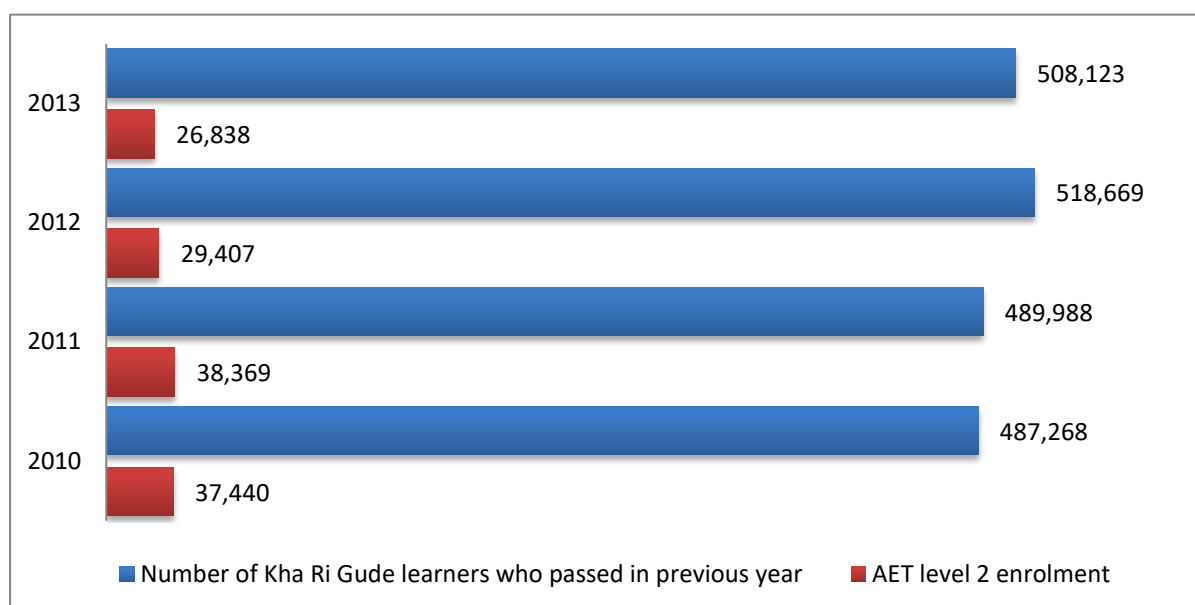
The communication gap between the AET and KRG programmes led to KRG learners not progressing to AET level 2. This was made worse by AET and KRG officials not meeting to establish a strategy that ensures the progression of learners from KRG to AET. As a result, KRG learner enrolment increased by 38% between 2008 and 2013 while AET learner enrolment did not show an increase over the same period.

Site visits to AET centres in the provinces confirmed this trend. AET officials were instructed to engage only with the DBE's chief executive officer of KRG to obtain KRG learner data. However, this data was not forthcoming. AET officials were therefore unable to contact KRG learners to create awareness about the AET programme and learner progression to AET. As the department did not have an awareness strategy, it did not ascertain learner enrolment and progression from KRG to AET. In addition, identification details per learner were not captured on EMIS, which meant that KRG and AET data could not be analysed to determine the exact learner progression numbers. Most KRG learners who successfully completed their course did not enrol with the AET programme. The graph below compares the 2009 to 2012 learner numbers for successfully completed KRG learners to the AET learner enrolment for 2010 to 2013.

¹⁴ DAKAR goal – reduce illiteracy with 50% by 2015

¹⁵ AET level 1 is equal to grade 3

Graph 4: KRG learners passed as to AET learner enrolment for the next year



Source - Kha Ri Gude passes: Report on databases received from the Department of Basic Education received on 03 March 2014.

Source - AET enrolments: Annual surveys 2010 to 2012 and Snap survey 2013.

From 2008 to 2012, 2 004 045 KRG learners successfully completed the programme. However, provincial AET enrolment of level 2 learners in the various provinces did not reflect a significant increase.

2.3 Curriculum and assessments

Curriculum is core to the execution of the AET programme. However, there was no oversight of the curriculum and limited guidance for the period from 2008 to 2014. The department set the development of a curriculum as a strategic goal since 2011-12, underlining its importance. While this new curriculum supporting GETCA¹⁶ will replace the GETC¹⁷, making it easier to have a standardised curriculum content that will be supported by textbooks and workbooks, it is overdue. This was hampered by the lack of a dedicated deputy director for curriculum and AET centres continued to struggle in the absence of curriculum with text books to guide them.

- a) The Umalusi¹⁸ sub-framework¹⁹ required all qualifications to be supported by a curriculum. However, the department have not compiled the curriculum content for

¹⁶ General Education and Training Certificate for Adults (GETCA)

¹⁷ General Education and Training Certificate (GETC)

¹⁸ Umalusi is the Council for quality assurance in General and Further Education and Training

¹⁹ The sub-framework was compiled to give effect to chapter 5 of the National Qualification Framework act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008)

AET. Capacity provided for in the AET unit was not utilised. The vacancy of the deputy director: AET curriculum development, was used to appoint a regional coordinator, leaving the AET without the capacity to develop the new curriculum. The position for the assistant director: Curriculum was vacant since 2009. The process to develop the curriculum content commenced in 2014 by contracting university experts . The funding for the curriculum development is R8,7 million and include:

- Curriculum development
- Policy development
- Materials development
- Educator training
- Design and printing of materials
- Advocacy materials.

In addition, the 2013 White Paper²⁰ provides for the extension of the AET qualification up to NQF 4 to assist learners that need to achieve a matriculation qualification. This curriculum has also not been developed.

- b) The unit standards-based framework lacked guidance on textbooks and materials. The curriculum framework for AET was intended for the development and contextualising learning programme and materials. As a result no prescribed materials or prescribed catalogue were developed. The lack of materials and catalogue meant that PEDs had to procure learning teacher support material (LTSM) using their own assessment and screening processes. During the provincial audits, it was found that centres struggled to match the outcomes to textbooks and various educators and learners struggled to interpret the outcomes and unit standards. Furthermore, centres did not have relevant textbooks. Others did not have enough textbooks for each adult learner and learners were not allowed to take the books home. This affected the quality of the education received.

2.4 Management Information and data

Management information on AET learner enrolment and educators is necessary to make informed decisions. The department captured their defined data from the AET centres in

²⁰ The 2013 White Paper

provinces on EMIS. Data collected by means of two surveys during the year was not released until the following February. As a result:

- a) Management information on AET such as learner enrolment and educators per centre and were released too late to be useful for operations and planning for either the current or the following year. As EMIS information was only available in the following year, the current year's educator to learner ratio of 1: 20 (initial required in the MYIP) is not tracked or corrected by the department to ensure the efficiency of the AET programme. The department did not take steps to ensure that provinces adhered to the guidance on educator to learner ratios.

The table below reflect the educator to learner ratio averages per province per year for the 2008 to 2011 years. Low learner enrolment affected the ratio negatively to the national ratio suggested that resulted using more educators than justified by learner enrolment. This continued over the period reflected increasing the educator cost for the programme

Table 5: Educator to learner ratio average per year 2008 to 2011

Province	2008	2009	2010	2011
Eastern Cape	1:15	1:13	1:11	1:11
Free State	1:7	1:8	1:8	1:12
Gauteng	1:8	1:12	1:14	1:12
KwaZulu-Natal	1:9	1:10	1:8	1:9
Limpopo	1:17	1:15	1:14	1:16
Mpumalanga	1:16	1:21	1:18	1:17
Northern Cape	1:14	1:15	1:14	1:16
North West (calculated – report)	1:18	1:18	1:11	1:10

As educators are employed by the SGB in the Western Cape, their information was not readily available

Source: Learner enrolment and educator numbers were obtained from the EMIS annual survey data

- b) Neither PEDs nor the national department verified the data to ensure accuracy. The department's EMIS unit did not have the capacity for verification, and although the AET unit had a deputy director responsible for monitoring, data verification did not form part of his duties. As a result, there were differences between the EMIS data and data provided by AET for some provinces. Management could therefore not make decisions on accurate and timely information to ensure the efficiency of the programme.

Table 6: Differences in EMIS and AET data on learner enrolment numbers for selected provinces

Province	Year	Learner number from AET	Learner numbers from EMIS	Difference
Gauteng	2008	67 634	80 496	12 862
	2010	72 799	59 722	13 077
	2011	81 281	74 534	6 747
KwaZulu-Natal	2008	53 846	22 130	31 176
	2009	53 001	25 346	27 655
	2010	48 420	29 197	19 223

Source: the AET information was obtained from the annual reports and EMIS annual surveys

An examination of some of the 2007 survey forms from the Thabo Mofutsanyana district in the Free State province found that while the survey data was captured onto EMIS accurately, the forms were not completed accurately. As the survey forms were not verified when they were collected by the district officials, the EMIS data differed from the register's data at the centre. The district had a deviation of 44% between the EMIS and AET data for that year.

- c) Reports of provincial audits also reflected that the following crucial management information was not available for management decision-making. It had not been defined for collection, incorporated into the surveys used to collect data from the PALCs or collected by other means:
- Details of the amount of Kha Ri Gude learners who had completed Kha Ri Gude and enrolled in AET
 - The pass rate for learning areas taught by unqualified²¹ educators versus qualified educators
 - Details of learners who progressed to further education and training colleges
 - Pass rates for AET levels 1 to 3
 - Dropout rates for AET levels 1 to 3
 - Staff turnover at centres and reasons for resigning
 - Absenteeism rates for learners
 - Absenteeism rates for teachers
 - Age of AET learners

²¹ Unqualified educators refer to educators without a post matriculation qualification.

- Illiteracy statistics per district
- Skills programmes and learning areas per centre
- Learners in AET centres that are from mainstream education
- Learner academic record
- Which levels 1 to 4 learners have or are repeating learning areas
- The number of attempts per learner per subject.

The EMIS data collection tools and survey forms were reviewed annually by the national EMIS unit to ensure that they remain relevant and responsive. However, some of information listed above which is necessary for management to make informed decisions or to identify areas where interventions are required, were not defined or collected.

a) Measurement of AET

The department did not establish adequate and appropriate measurement indicators and instruments for the AET programme. The measurement of AET programme performance was therefore adversely affected. The measurement indicators and instruments had shortcomings in the following areas:

- inadequate efficiency indicators to measure programme performance
 - inappropriate measurement instruments to provide reliable performance information.
- a) Indicators measuring the reach (access) and performance (efficiency) of the AET programme were included in various accountability documents in the education sector. However, departmental performance indicators focusing on programme efficiency were limited to AET pass rates and certification as per the APP. Formal indicators measuring and reporting programme efficiency were not evident for AET learner drop-out rates and adult illiteracy rates.
- b) A department discussion document compiled by the AET unit in May 2011 identified a continuing challenge relating to the number of AET candidates who register but do not sit for the examinations.²² The report indicated that 66,3% of the candidates who enrolled for the GETC-ABET level 4 exams in November 2010 eventually wrote the exams. Based on the information in the report this amounted to a student drop-out rate of close to 34%.

²² Par.4.3, Report to the Acting Director General on Adult Education and Training, May 2014

The persistence of the high drop-out rate for GETC-ABET level 4 candidates in both public and private AET centres were also evident for 2011 and 2012. The drop-out rate is derived from annual statistics published the department and is illustrated in table 7.

Table 7: AET level 4, overview of pass and dropout rate for 2010 to 2012

Year	Enrolment numbers	Number wrote	Number passed	Pass rate (%)	Calculated dropout rate (%)
2010	143 530	75 832	17 888	24%	47%
2011	96 452	62 044	17 001	27%	36%
2012	90 384	49 856	18 663	37%	45%

Source: Statistics on Post School Education and Training in SA (2011 – page 28) (2012 – page 40)

- (ii) A departmental indicator document²³ contained an indicator for adult illiteracy rates of the population aged 15 years and older. However the indicator was not formally assessed, monitored and publicly reported to measure the state of adult illiteracy and the consequent successes of the AET programme. The department indicated that the indicator was only employed for internal purposes.

The indicator does also not clearly define the level of illiteracy it is seeking to measure, the following definition evident of this *“those who cannot both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on their every-day life”*. Relating this AET levels would cause differences in interpretation of the actual level of adult illiteracy and the success of the AET program. The general household survey, published annually by Statistics S.A., provides a clear benchmark when measuring illiteracy of the population aged 15 years and older, being grade 7 (AET level 3). However, the publication only refer to illiteracy of this group in absolute numbers as indicated in table 8, which say little about the achievement of national goals in this regard.

Table 8: Illiteracy of population aged 15 years and older in South Africa

Indicator	2011 (thousands)	2012 (thousands)
Total population aged 15 years and older with level of education lower than grade 7	5 835	5 611

²³ Compendium of indicators to monitor the performance of the Post-School Education and Training system, dated 24 April 2014

Total population aged 15 years and older	34 996	36 815
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Source: General Household Survey 2011 and 2012 – Statistics South Africa

b) The department was unable to establish appropriate measurement instruments that provided reliable information relating to both programme access and programme efficiency. This is because the indicators and systems to provide reliable information have not been adequately developed by the department. The lack of appropriately developed measurement instruments for the AET programme caused the sector to report unreliable AET programme information relating to access and efficiency. The following instances refer.

- i. A sector AET programme performance measure (PPM) relating to the pass rate in the basic ABET/NQF level 1 programme (referred to as PPM603) was included in the Annual Performance Plans (APP) of the PEDs to report on for the 2010-11 financial year. However the indicator was withdrawn by the Department of Basic Education before the end of the financial year because the indicator could not be reported on due to lack data or poor data quality for this indicator.

The data quality issues in the performance measures has not been resolved subsequent to 2010 and has caused the removal of ABET graduation targets from PED performance objectives in the following APPs.

- ii. The department continued to report on ABET programme access and efficient indicators in its APP. The two measures were included in the 2012-13 APP, and subsequently reported in the 2012-13 Annual Report, as follows:

Table 9: Strategic objective regarding AET learner enrolment for 2012-13

Strategic objective no:	Performance Indicator/measure	Performance Target	Actual Reported Performance
4.4.1.1	Number of learners enrolled in AET Level 1-4	255 000	250 738
	Certification rates in the VET Qualification	GETC: 30% NC(V) L2: 44% NC(V) L3: 45% NC(V) L4: 47% N1-N3: 23% N4-N6: 40%	GETC: 37% NC(V) L2: 43% NC(V) L3: 43% NC(V) L4: 41% N1-N3: 24% N4-N6: 25%

Source: 2012-13 APP

However, the financial audit of these performance objectives concluded that the above reported information are unreliable as the information could not be verified.

This was due to the department not performing verification or validation processes relating to information received from FET colleges to ensure that credible information is reported. Furthermore, the departments' compilation of indicators did not include an indicator on AET graduation rates and also contained an incomplete indicator for measuring learner enrolment in AET centres.

The non-availability of adequate and reliable efficiency indicators to measure programme performance cast doubt whether the department has sufficient enrolment targets set for the AET programme. The AET level 1-4 enrolment targets is set to increase with approximately 9% per annum as strategically determined by the department since 2010, illustrated in table 10.

Table 10: Annual increase in ABET learner enrolment targets

Year	Target AET learner enrolment according to APP	% increase to next year
2013-14	278 000	9
2012-13	255 000	9
2011-12	233 000	9
2010-11	214 384	baseline

Source: the department's Annual Reports

At a rate of 9% increase in ABET level 1-4 enrolment annually (implying successful completion), it is expected that illiteracy will only be eradicated by 2037 based on GHS figures provided in table 8. This does not meet the target date of 2030.

Recommendations

- a) The department should develop and implement an awareness and marketing strategy to ensure the illiterate population of South Africa is made aware of the adult education programme. Funding should be budgeted for formal awareness campaigns.
- b) Communication channels between the KRG and AET programmes should be strengthened to ensure that KRG learners feed into the AET programme. and are enrolled at AET centres.

- c) Complete and accurate statistics should be recorded at AET centres to ensure the department track which individuals had previously completed the KRG programme.
- d) The department should ensure the KRG database is obtained from DBE timely to enable AET to specifically target individual learners per area for the AET programme.
- e) The AET curriculum content should be developed and. A catalogue with the relevant textbooks should be compiled and released to the provinces to guide educators at centres with their selection of relevant textbooks.
- f) The department should ensure appropriate, complete and timely management information is defined, collected and used for management decisions during the year to improve the efficiency of the programme.
- g) The department must develop additional, formal efficiency indicators to accurately access, report, monitor and consequently implement remedial actions for the following:
 - AET student drop-out rates,
 - Adult illiteracy rates
- h) The department must ensure that AET indicators, for both access and efficiency, need to be adequately and appropriately defined in terms of purpose, calculation method, data required and data source in order to provide reliable information. The systems that are used to populate such indicators must be well established.
- i) The department must use the outcome of AET efficiency indicators to re-access the adequacy of AET access targets to eradicate illiteracy in terms of national goals, and consequently adjust strategic and annual performance plans in this regard.

3. Legislative framework

The department did not develop an AET policy framework to organise and identify gaps in their policies. This would have assisted with planning and developing policy tools to aid provincial operations over the long term.

- a) The lack of oversight also led to the department being unable to compile and implement appropriate policies, frameworks and guidelines to address provincial challenges. For example:

Conditions of service for AET educators had not been standardised. As a result, conditions of service differed among provinces. According to legislation,²⁴ the minister should determine the salaries and other conditions of service of educators. An attempt was made in 2006 to standardise conditions via the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) collective agreement, but was never approved. A proposal was made to a HEDCOM²⁵ meeting on 25 November 2011 but they did not have the mandate to approve the proposal. The submission was made to the CEM²⁶ meeting on 22 January 2013 and although they supported the proposal, funds were not available to implement the proposal. As a result of perceived poor conditions of service, educators have moved to mainstream education while others started working in other provinces where better conditions of service were available. Some of the inconsistencies among provinces include:

- Educator remuneration exceeded the PAM tariffs in the NC while in the WC educators were not always paid full PAM tariffs
- The 37% in over lieu of fringe benefits were not included in the conditions of employment in all provinces
- Educators were not employed by the PED in the Western Cape but by the SGBs
- Educators were employed on fixed term contracts in some provinces but Gauteng educators were employed permanently
- Conditions of employment did not include leave benefits and specifically maternity leave.

²⁴ Chapter 2, section 4(1) of the Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act No. 76 of 1998) and Higher Education and Training Laws Amendment Act, 2010 (Act No. 25 of 2010)

²⁵ HEDCOM - Heads of Education Departments Committee

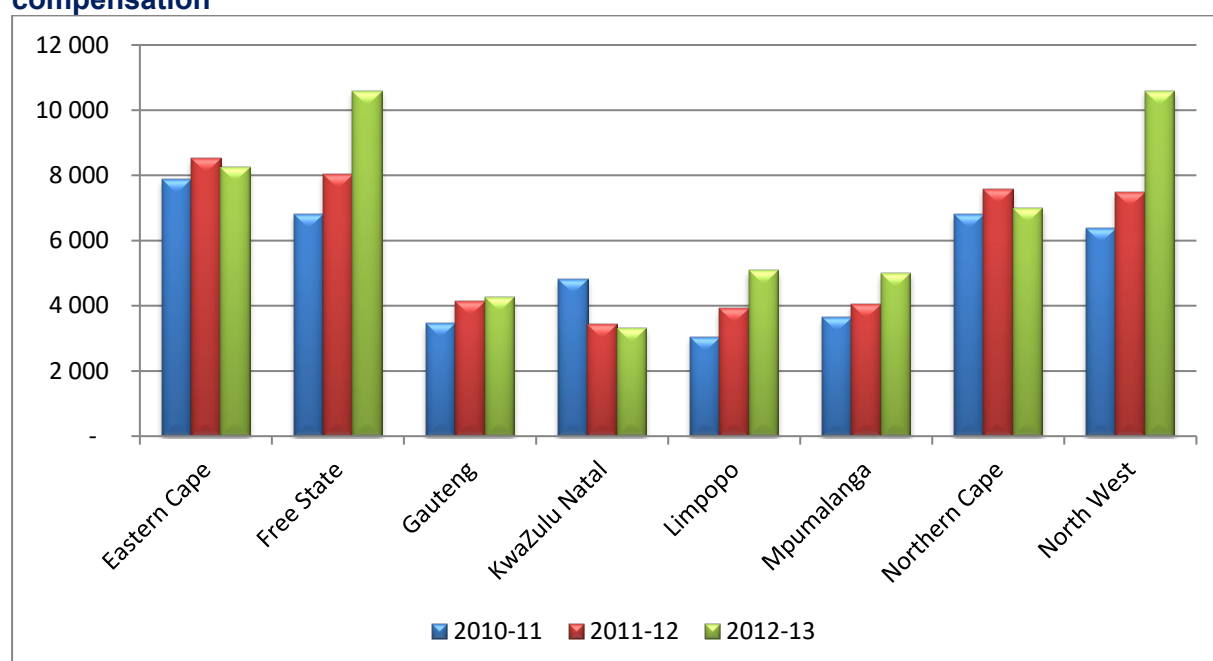
²⁶ CEM – Committee of Education Ministers

- i. There was no national policy or standards to guide the number of hours, timetables and payment of hours worked. A weakness of the unit standards-based framework was that it did not provide guidance on the number of hours needed per learning area. The inconsistency in the number of hours worked per week directly impacted on the remuneration of educators and quality of teaching at the centres. While centres in some provinces only worked three hours four times a week (12 hours) others worked 19 hours a week. In addition, the number of hours teaching also differed from centre to centre and in different provinces. In some provinces educators were not remunerated for all hours worked. For example, in Mpumalanga only half the hours worked were paid. The allocation of learning areas per educators differed in the absence of standard timetables to guide centre managers. In the Free State, contracts provided for 12 hours teaching (contact time), 5 hours training and 2 hours for administration a week. Even so, it was not applied consistently by all centres and not monitored to ensure consistency.
- b) The department developed legislation, policies and regulations for the management of AET. Additional guidance was not always provided on the requirements after it was gazetted. As a result, PEDs did not have a clear understanding of the requirements contained in the legislation, policies and regulations. Findings from the provincial audits on AET reflected that the national guidance was not enough to ensure efficient operations and consistency between provinces. For example:
 - i. The norms and standards for funding public centres were developed and gazetted on 14 December 2007 but were not implemented because provincial AET centres did not meet the criteria for managing funding at the centres. The ABET act obliges the minister to fund public adult education and training on a fair, equitable and transparent basis. Section 21(3) requires the minister to provide sufficient information to public centres annually regarding the funding of the centres to enable them to prepare their budgets and business plans (strategic and operation plans). Section 22 further obliges the minister to develop norms and standards specifically for the funding of public adult learning centres. The norms indicated that funding would be based per learner and funding allocations would be based on personnel and non-personnel costs, which included curriculum offering, facility cost, learning support materials and learning and teaching aids. Although this can be seen as fair and equitable, it contradicted that current practice of funding educator positions where learners are not enrolled at centres.

In addition, the department did not benchmark the cost per learner to determine whether the programme was operating efficiently. This led to inconsistencies in funding between provinces.

This is reflected in the difference in average per learner costs between the KwaZulu-Natal (R3 431) and the Eastern Cape (in excess of R8 500) for 2011-12 where the educator remuneration was included in the calculation of the average cost per learner. A contributing factor to high average cost per learner, were where provinces were overstaffed in relation to the learner enrolment. While some provinces like Mpumalanga came close to the educator to learner ratio prescribed, other like the Free State were overstaffed with ratio nearly half of what was required. The inconsistency in the average cost per learner is reflected below.

Graph 5: Average cost per AET learner per year per province including educator compensation



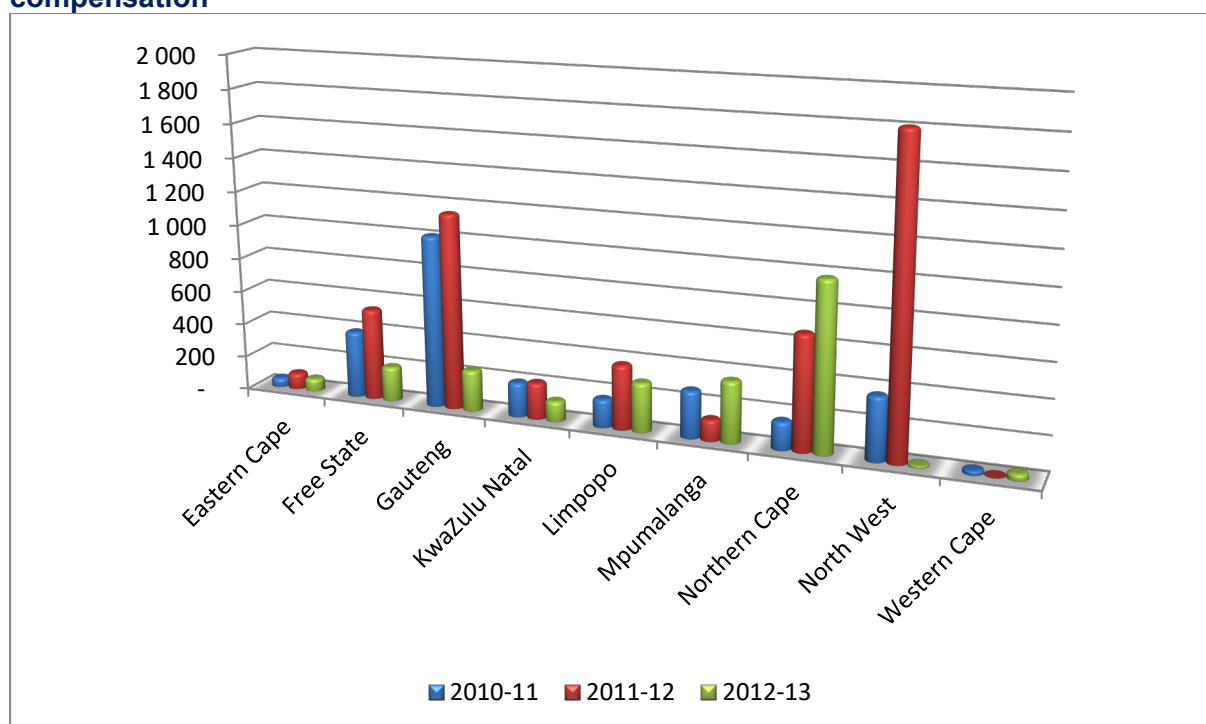
Note: the calculation was made on total expenditure per programme divided by the number of learners and include educator remuneration

Source: Provincial annual reports

If educator remuneration is taken out of the equation, the comparison between provinces revealed the inconsistency in funding per learner. The difference in average costs per learner between the Western Cape (R5) and the Gauteng (R1 152) for the 2011-12 financial year, where the educator remuneration was excluded in the calculation of the average cost per learner, show the inconsistency in the funding per learner. Learners would have to be

provided with textbooks, LTSM and stationary from the limited budget, inadequate in consideration of the eight learning areas presented at centres. As a minimum cost per learner were not set from the department, the inconsistency continued.

Graph 6: Average cost per AET learner per year per province excluding educator compensation



Source: Provincial annual reports

- c) Some approved legislation and policies were not complied with. This had a negative impact on AET operations which is discussed in other sections of this report. Measures were not in place to ensure adherence to legislation, policies and guidelines. See the table below for details.

Table 10: Legislation not complied with and their reference in this report

Legislation	Reference or remark
National Education Policy Act (NEPA)	Par 1.2
Higher education and Training Laws Amendment Act	Par 1.2
National Qualification Framework (NQF)	Par 1.3
South African Council for Educators Act, 2000 (Act No. 31 of 2000)	Par 1.2 (a)
Adult Basic Education and Training Act (ABET)	Par 1.2 (b), 1.2 (d) 3 (b) i, 3 (d)
Regulations for minimum requirements for an agreement	Par 1.2 I

between the HoD and SGBs	
NABABET	Par 2.1

- d) The AET act did not provide for detailed instructions for monitoring and oversight. This resulted in provinces being unclear about their roles and responsibilities and not reporting on all aspects of their performance. Where the department could not obtain information on performance, it could not track the effectiveness of the programme.

Refer to Annexure B on page 44 for a list of policies, their implementation status and an analysis of their relevance to the AET programme.

Recommendations

- a) The department should finalise a policy and prescripts for conditions of service of AET educators to ensure consistency between provinces. The department should also develop and implement a policy to ensure other requirements relating to the qualifications and registration of educators with SACE, are adhered to.
- b) The department should set norms for timetables that ensure that educators' time is allocated consistently at the AET centres, for example, teaching time, training time and time for administration. Information regarding the allocation of learning areas per educator should be collected and monitored for consistency.
- c) The department should ensure that norms and standards for funding are in place with the implementation of the new structure promulgated in the Further Education and Training Colleges Amendment Act, to 2013 ensure that funding is distributed consistently per learner
- d) The department should ensure adequate funding is allocated to the provision of textbooks and LTSM used at centres for teaching to enhance the quality of the AET programme

AUDIT METHODOLOGY

Background

The primary objective of performance auditing is to confirm independently that management measures do exist and are effective and, where applicable, to provide management, Parliament and other legislative bodies with information on shortcomings in management measures and also examples of the effects of such shortcomings by means of a structured reporting process. The responsibility for instituting these management measures rests with management.

The auditor-general's function is not to question policy. It is, however, his responsibility to audit the effect of policy and the management measures that lead to policy decisions.

Audit criteria

The audit was done in accordance with the following audit criteria:

- The department should have a policy and guideline in place supported by a framework of operational objectives and targets.
- The various AET role players should implement the policies and guidelines in line with the objectives, guidelines and policies in a consistent manner.
- To achieve the AET goals, the department should communicate policies, guidelines and any relevant updates and information to the role players in a timely manner, and ensure that it is understandable and consistent.
- The department's policies and guidelines should provide for the distribution of funding in line with the objectives of the AET programme, and there should be sufficient and reliable information available to support this basis.
- The department should create awareness of the AET programme and the importance of literacy in all urban and rural areas, and there should be proper

channels between AET institutions and Kha Ri Gude programmes to facilitate further education and poverty alleviation.

- The department should have a sufficient number of facilities and sufficient course material to deliver the expected outcome of the AET programme to the growing target groups as planned.
- The department should make arrangements for the recruitment, training, reward and retention of qualified educators to ensure that course programmes would be delivered at an acceptable standard.
- The department's budget should support the strategic objectives of the AET programme with regard to the quality of educators and other learner resources.
- AET personnel, centre managers and the educators should have access to the information system and should be trained in gathering and importing educator, learner and centre performance information into the system.
- The progress of AET learners and the implementation of the policy and guidelines in AET centres should be monitored through the information systems and should be evaluated continuously to identify absenteeism, non-performance and areas of concern. Corrective actions should be implemented to address the problem areas identified.

Researchable questions

The following were the researchable questions forming the basis of our national and provincial audits:

- Do the policies and guidelines for the distribution of funding in line with the objectives of the AET programme, and is sufficient and reliable information available to support this basis?
- Do the budgets support the strategic objectives of the AET programme with regard to the quality of educators and other learner resources?

- Are policies and guidelines in place that clearly explain the objectives of AET, how to achieve the objectives and what are the roles and responsibilities of the various role players?
- Were the policies and guidelines communicate to the role players in a timely manner that is understandable and that will ensure a consistent approach in the achievement of the AET goals?
- Is awareness created in urban and rural areas about the AET programme and the importance of literacy? Do proper communication channels exist between AET institutions and Kha Ri Gude programmes to facilitate further education and support poverty alleviation?
- Do the AET personnel, centre managers and the educators have access to the information systems and are they trained on how to gather and import educator, learner and centre performance information into the systems?
- Are arrangements adequate for the recruitment, training, reward and retention of qualified educators to ensure that course programmes can be delivered to acceptable standards?
- Are there enough facilities and is the course material sufficient to deliver the expected outcomes of the AET programme to the expanding target groups as planned?
- Are information systems in place to monitor and evaluate the progress of the Adult Basic Education and Training learners as well as the implementation of the policy and guidelines to ensure that absenteeism, non-performance and other areas of concern are identified? Is corrective actions implemented to address these concerns?

Audit teams conducted the transversal performance audit in all nine provinces and at the national Department of Higher Education and Training (department).

Approach

Performance audits are conducted in accordance with the *Performance Audit Manual, 2008* that contains the policies, standards and guidelines for the planning, execution, reporting and

follow-up of performance audits in the public sector. In view of the complexity of the environment to be audited, each performance audit focuses on a delimited segment of the activities of a particular institution. Preference is therefore given to the more important aspects.

When the initial arrangements were made for the audit, the management of the department was informed in detail of the objectives and the *modus operandi* that would be followed during the audit, and arrangements were made for the establishment of a steering committee. The main purpose of a steering committee, which consists of the audit team and senior staff members of the entity being audited, is to secure and maintain cooperation between all parties involved. During the meetings of the steering committee, efforts are made to reach consensus on matters such as researchable questions, findings and conclusions, and the representatives of the auditee are afforded the opportunity to submit timely inputs so that the final report would not contain any unelaborated issues. This approach should also lead to corrective steps being instituted expeditiously where weaknesses have been noticed.

It is, however, in no way the intention or practice of the steering committee to provide the institution with a veto right in respect of the nature and scope of the performance audit or the reporting thereon. A steering committee is a consultative consensus-seeking forum, but the relevant statutory powers remain vested in the auditor-general.

Consensus on the factual correctness of the findings referred to in the Detailed Audit Findings and Recommendations of the report was reached during a meeting held with the management of the department on xx September 2014.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Annexure B

Table 11: Legislative frameworks

Year	Description	Classification	Approved	Approved by	Implemented	Comments	Reference
1996	National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No.27 of 1996)	Act	Yes	Minister	Yes	Was applicable to the former department of Education but not repealed yet.	Par 1.2
1997	Policy document on Adult Basic Education and Training	Policy	Yes	HEDCOM	Yes	Outdated after the split of the former department of Education	
1997	Multiyear implementation plan	National vision	Yes	HEDCOM	Yes	Outdated applicable to the former department of Education	Par 1.2d)
2000	Adult Basic Education and Training act, 2000 (Act No 52 of 2000)	Act	Yes	Minister	Yes	Not complete – monitoring and reporting	Par 1.2b), 1,2d), 3b)i, 3d)
2001	Regulations for the establishment, composition and functioning of the national advisory board for Adult Education and Training	Regulations	Yes	Minister	No	Board was never established. A submission was made but never signed by the Minister	Par 2.1
2002	Draft guidelines for the registration of private providers	Guidelines	Yes	HEDCOM	Yes	Relates to Section 27 of the AET Act	Par 1.2d)
2002	National policy on the conduct of AET level 4 examinations	Regulations	Yes	Minister	Yes	Implemented and monitored	No findings
2003	Registration of private centres	Guidelines			Partly implemented	No information reported to DEPARTMENT	Par 1.2d)

2004	Regulations relating to the minimum requirements of an arrangement between the HOD and SGBs	Regulations	Yes	Minister	Partly implemented	Not all implemented	1.2c)
2007	National norms and standards for funding AET centres	Norms and standards	Yes	Minister	No	Indefinitely postponed as provinces did not comply with requirements	3.1a)
2010	Higher education and Training Laws Amendment Act	Act	Yes	Minister	Partly implemented	No capacity for monitoring at DEPARTMENT	1.2
2013	FET colleges amendment act, 2013 (Act No. 1 of 2013)	Act	Yes	Minister	No	President should say when to implement	No findings
2013	Regulations on the assessment process and procedures for AET NQF level 1	Regulations	Yes	Minister	Partly implemented	Regulations gazetted in 2013	No findings

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronyms and abbreviations	
AET	Adult Education and Training
ABET act	Adult Basic Education and Training act, 2000 (Act No. 52 of 2000)
AGSA	Auditor-General of South Africa
Amendment act	Higher Education and Training Laws Amendment act, 2010 (Act No. 25 of 2010)
APP	Annual Performance Plan
CEM	Corporate Executive Meeting
CGB	Centre Governing Board
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FMPPI	Framework for Managing of Programme Performance Information
GWM	Policy Framework for the Government Wide Monitoring and Evaluation System
HEDCOM	Heads of Education Committee
HoD	Head of Department
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
KRG	Kha Ri Gude
LTSM	Learner Teacher Support Material
MYIP	Multi Year Implementation Plan
NABABET	National Advisory Board on Adult Basic Education and Training
NEPA	National Education Policy Act
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PED	Provincial Education Departments
PPM	Programme Performance Measures
QPR	Quarterly Performance Report
REQV	Relative Education Qualification Value
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SGB	School Governing Body
SLA	Service Level Agreement

