



SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:

**DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY VETERANS
DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR FY2019/20**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Military Veterans (DMV) derives its mandate from the Military Veterans Act (No 18 of 2011), which requires it to provide national policy and standards for socio-economic support to military veterans and to their dependents, including benefits and entitlements to help realise a dignified, unified, empowered and self-sufficient military veterans' community. The aim of this brief is to provide a summary and analysis of the *Draft DMV 2019/20 Annual Report*. It focuses on the:

- Strategic Overview for the 2019/20 Financial Year with specific reference to Strategic Priorities of Government and Strategic Priorities of the Department.
- Overview and Assessment of Financial Performance with specific reference to the Appropriation statement for the 2019/20 financial year; Financial statements; and Findings of the Auditor General of South Africa. (The latter has not been finalised)
- Overview and Assessment of Programme Performance focusing on the Administration, Socio-Economic Support, and Empowerment and Stakeholder Management Programmes.
- Governance and Human Resources.

1.1 Budgetary Review and Recommendations Report (BRRR)

The scrutiny of the annual reports of departments and entities has as one of its aims, the facilitation of the drafting of the annual Budgetary Review and Recommendations Report (BRRR) of parliamentary committees. A second aim of this analysis is to assist the Portfolio Committee on Defence and Military Veterans (PCODMV) to draft its *preliminary* BRRR given that the finalised Annual Report will be submitted later to Parliament.

For the purposes of drafting the preliminary 2019/20 BRRR, the draft Annual Report of the DMV was utilised in order to comply with the legislative requirement as outlined in the Money Bills Procedures and Related Matters Amendment Act (No 9 of 2009).

2. STRATEGIC OVERVIEW FOR THE 2019/20 FINANCIAL YEAR

2.1. Strategic Priorities of Government

The Table below lists the Department's contributions to both the National Development Plan (NDP) and the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) Outcomes. It is especially the progress versus the annual targets as at 31 March 2020 which should be noted and be compared with that of the previous year's performance.¹

Table 1: DMV's progress towards the Strategic Priorities of Government

Outcome No	MTSF Outcomes	Chapter	NDP	Progress as at 31 March 2019	Progress as at 31 March 2020
1	Improved quality basic education	Chapter 9	Improving Education Training and Innovation.	Actual achievement is the number of approved military veterans and	Actual achievement of 4 449 (2 832 - Basic Education and 1 617 - Tertiary



Outcome No	MTSF Outcomes	Chapter	NDP	Progress as at 31 March 2019	Progress as at 31 March 2020
				dependants for 2018 Academic year (8 086) and 2019 Academic year (3 240) as at 31 March 2019	Education) Military Veterans and their dependants being educationally supported during the 2019/20 financial year.
2	A long and healthy life for all South Africans	Chapter 10	Promoting Health	Because of high demand on Healthcare services, 17 197 military veterans had access which saw a significant rise from the planned target of 17 000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement: 18 390 military veterans authorised to access healthcare services. • This priority saw 148 military veterans being provided with a once-off compensation payment for their welfare. • Provision of 643 military veterans and their dependants with counselling and treatment.
3	Decent employment through inclusive economic growth	Chapter 3	Economy and Employment	Almost 308 military veterans were provided with businesses access to empowerment opportunities	163 military veterans were provided with businesses access to empowerment opportunities.
5	A skilled and capable workforce to support an inclusive growth path	Chapter 9	Improving Education, Training and Innovation	952 military veterans and their dependants were provided with funding for skills development programmes.	900 Military Veterans were provided with approved funding for skills development programme
7	Vibrant, equitable, sustainable rural communities contributing towards food security for all	Chapter 6	An integrated and inclusive economy, human capital, social security, food security and basic services.	To date the department has assisted more than 3 478 military veterans and their dependants with Social Relief of Distress (SRD) to mitigate their suffering	While the AR does not make any reference to how many military veterans has been assisted with SRD's, the Financial statements refer to an amount of



Outcome No	MTSF Outcomes	Chapter	NDP	Progress as at 31 March 2019	Progress as at 31 March 2020
					R1 262 000 that has been transferred (p. 192).
8	Sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life	Chapter 8	Transforming human settlement.	417 (WC: 102; EC: 54; GP: 207; NW: 33; LP: 21) houses against target of 1 000. Reasons under achievement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unavailability of service sites in KZN; • Delays with the procurement of contractors at the Provincial Department of Human Settlement (PDHS). • Lack of project management skills at PDHS; • Unavailability of Military Veterans who meet the qualifying criteria. • Lack of coordination between DMV & NDHS 	477 military veterans provided with newly built houses during the 2019/20 financial year. Furthermore 28 houses of military veterans in distress on bond were rescued.
12	An efficient, effective and development-oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship	Chapter 13 and 14	Building a capable and developmental state.	- All the statutory planning, monitoring and evaluation documents were developed and submitted to external stakeholders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An invoice tracking system has been introduced to strengthen the payment of invoices within stipulated timeframes. • Consultation with NT & SITA underway to implement LOGIS. 	DMV entered into 4 agreements between private sector companies and state of organs. An invoice tracking system was introduced however; capacity or volume of transactions causes delays.



Outcome No	MTSF Outcomes	Chapter	NDP	Progress as at 31 March 2019	Progress as at 31 March 2020
14	Nation building and social cohesion	Chapter 15	Transforming society and uniting the country: Promoting social cohesion across society and righting the wrongs of the past	-325 families were provided with burial support. - 41 tombstones were erected to the graves of deceased military veterans	97% of approved burial claims paid within 30 days of receipt in support of bereaved families of Military Veterans.

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The table indicates the contributions of the Department to the NDP and the MTSF, and these should be welcomed as the DMV contributes to the socio-economic development of our citizens and especially the military veterans and their dependents.
- The Committee can request an explanation for the drop in business access to empowerment opportunities from 308 to 163 over the last two years. The Department should also be requested to provide examples of such “business access” and indicate how well these businesses are currently doing.
- It is concerning that while the Department deliver Social Relief of Distress (SRD) benefits to military veterans, this is done without an annual target. This against the background that 2 832 military veterans were assisted in the previous financial year and for the year under review, R1 262 000 has been utilised towards this initiative. No mention is however made of the number of recipients for the FY2019/20.
- How far is the process to migrate certain aspects of the Social Relief of Distress benefit from the Department of Social Development to the DMV?
- The above also relates to consistency in reporting as in the previous year the number of military veterans assisted were reported, while for the period under review an amount is listed. The Committee should impress on the Department the importance of consistent reporting for comparison purposes as well as to enhance clarity on the Department's performance.
- The Department has exceeded its target of 300 houses by 177, but this should be viewed against the background that the target for previous years was 1 000 per year. There is an urgency regarding this benefit, as many veterans are aged and indigent, and that this benefit should be rolled out at an increasing rate.
- While bond assistance to 28 military veterans in bond distress is welcomed, it should be noted that this is not one of the specified benefits and the Committee may enquire as to the requirements and verification process for such bond rescues.
- The Department is doing well with the educational support to military veterans and their dependents as 4 449 were supported in the financial year under review. The Committee can however pose questions around the success rate of the number of students who have registered versus the number of students who actually passed or graduated. Also, what happens if a student who failed a course applies for funding for another course or applies for a bursary the following year? Are records being kept on these issues and, if not, is there a policy to regulate these issues?



- The Department missed its target on the payment of invoices within 30 days and is presenting the same reason as the previous year, namely “An invoice tracking system was introduced however; capacity or volume of transactions causes delays.” The Committee can ask why this continues to be the case as well as the progress that has been made since the start of the new financial year.
- The DMV facilitated access to health care for 18 390 military veterans, and this is appreciated as many military veterans are aged and require more regular medical attention.
- The Committee can question whether the skills development interventions (952 in FY2018/19 and 900 in FY 2019/20) are successful, given that the purpose should be to make military veterans less reliant on the Department or be skilled enough not to rely on the Department.

2.2 Strategic Outcome-Oriented Goals and Objectives

The Department’s Annual Performance Plan and Strategic Plan include strategic outcome-oriented goals that are the drivers of change towards the achievement of the desirable affairs of military veterans. In order to execute its mandate, the Department has identified three strategic outcome-oriented goals that define its direct service delivery responsibilities. These goals and objectives are as follows:²

Table 2: Strategic Outcome-Oriented Goals and Objectives

PROGRAMME	STRATEGIC GOAL	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
Administration	Provide Efficient, Effective and Excellent Administrative Support	Strategic objective 1.1 Provide strategic direction to the Department
Socio-Economic Support	Improved and sustainable socioeconomic status of military veterans	Strategic objective 2.1: Ensure establishment of a secured national military veteran’s database and smooth transition of military service men/ women to civilian life. Strategic objective 2.2: Provide a comprehensive delivery system of benefits and services of military veterans
Empowerment and Stakeholder Management	Empowered and Self-sufficient military veterans	Strategic objective 3.1: Contribute toward reconciliation and nation building. Strategic objective 3.2: Improve the quality of life for military veterans and that of their dependants. Strategic objective 3.3: Recognise and honour military veterans in life and memorialise them in death for their sacrifices on behalf of the nation.

3. OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

3.1 Budget Allocation and Expenditure for 2019/20

The allocation for Vote 19 for the DMV in the Estimates of National Expenditure (ENE) for 2019/20 financial year was R652 553 000. The actual expenditure was R447 205 000, which led to an



underspending of R175 348 000 or 26.9% of the total budget, as depicted in the table below. The Department has thus regressed with more than 13.3% against the spending of the previous financial year.

Table 3: Overview of Budget Allocation and Expenditure for 2019/20³

Programme R'000	Adjusted Appropriation	Virement	Final Appropriation	Actual Expenditure	Variance	Percentage Spent
Administration	141 054 (133 565)	0 (7 020)	141 054 (140 585)	139 614 (138 071)	1 440 (2 514)	99.0% (98.2%)
Socio-Economic Support	365 351 (336 772)	0 (0)	365 351 (336 772)	254 843 (334 660)	110 508 (2 112)	69.8% (99.4%)
Empowerment and Stakeholder Management	146 148 (156 750)	0 (-7 020)	146 148 (149 730)	82 748 (69 246)	63 400 (80 484)	56.6% (46.2)
Total	652 553 (627 087)	-	652 553 627 087	477 205 (541 977)	175 348 (85 110)	73,1% (86.4%)

The Table outlines that the Department spent less of its budget in the FY2019/20 (73.1%) than in the previous financial year (86.47%). The main contributor to the underspending is Programme 3: Empowerment and Stakeholder Management, where only 56.6% or R82 748 246 was spent against an allocation of R146 148.

The spending of in Programme 2: Socio-economic dropped from 99.4% the previous year to 69.8% for the year under review. This is concerning since this is the main service delivery programme dealing with health care, counselling, bursaries, transport and pension, some of the key benefits of the Department.

Underspending

In terms of programme expenditure, all programmes recorded underspending with the highest being Empowerment and Stakeholder Management at 43.4% (53.8% in 2018/19), with Socio-Economic Support at 30.2% and Administration at 1%.

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- It is concerning that the two main service delivery programmes have underperformed regarding the utilisation of their budgets and the DMV should be requested to explain how they plan to improve on the continuing underspending, and what progress has been made since the start of the current financial year.



3.2 Programmes: Budget Allocation and Expenditure for 2019/20

Programme 1: Administration

Table 4: Programme 1: Administration

Programme 1: Administration ⁴							
SUB PROGRAMME	Adjusted Appropriation	Shifting of funds	Virement	Final Appropriation	Actual expenditure	Variance	% of final appropriation
Management	12 106	-	-	12 106	12 517	(411)	103,4%
Corporate Service	66 212	-	-	66 212	68 676	(2 464)	103,7%
Financial Administration	14 542	-	-	14 542	20 977	(6 435)	144,3%
Internal Audit	10 864	-	-	10 864	10 640	224	97,9%
Strategic Planning, Policy development and M&E	19 910	-	-	19 910	13 876	6 034	69,7%
Office Accommodation	17 420	-	-	17 420	12 928	4 492	74,2%
Total: Sub-programmes	141 054	-	-	141 054	139 614	1 440	99,0%

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- It is encouraging that this programme has spent 99% of its budget, but the overspending in three of the sub-programmes should be explained, especially overspending by R6 435 000 in the Financial Administration subprogramme.
- The 74.2% spending on Office Accommodation should be read against the challenges the Department is experiencing with its current headquarters⁵ such as the poor drainage system and the claim that it cannot accommodate all the personnel. The Committee may enquire how far the process is to acquire a new headquarters.
- The subprogramme Strategic Planning, Policy Development and Monitoring and Evaluation continues to underspent (69.7% spending for FY2019/20 and 88.8% in FY2018/19). This is concerning given that this subprogramme is responsible for issues such as the completeness of performance information; adequate documented and approved internal policies and procedures – all issues identified by the Audit Committee as problematic. It should be enquired what is being done to address these challenges.



Programme 2: Socio- Economic Support

Table 5: Programme 1: Socio- Economic Support

Programme 2: Socio- Economic Support ⁶							
SUB PROGRAMME	Adjusted Appropriation	Shifting of funds	Virement	Final Appropriation	Actual expenditure	Variance	% of final appropriation
Database and Benefits Management	14 685	-	-	14 685	7 621	7 064	51,9%
Health care and wellness support	96 095	51 679	-	147 774	144 834	2 940	98,0%
Socio economic support management	254 571	(51 679)	-	202 892	102 388	100 504	50,5%
Total For Subprogrammes	365 351	-	-	365 351	254 843	110 508	69,8%

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The Database & Benefits Management sub-programme has underspent by 48.1% and this subprogramme is responsible for the National Military Veteran's Database. Against the challenges facing the database, which has been raised continuously by the Portfolio Committee, what is being done to improve on this performance and what progress has been made since the start of the current financial year?
- The subprogramme Socio-economic support management is responsible to "develop and implement legislative and policy frameworks, protocols and systems, and establish partnerships to advance access by eligible Military veterans and dependants to legislated benefits pertaining to social development services" and goes to the heart of efficient and effective service delivery by Programme 2. What is being done to address the challenges in this subprogramme as it failed to spend 49.5% of its budget, which is very worrisome.
- While it can be understood why funds have been shifted to the Health care subprogramme, it needs to be clarified what exactly the challenges were in the subprogramme Socio-economic support management.

Programme 3: Empowerment and Stakeholder Management

Table 6: Empowerment and Stakeholder Management

Programme 3: Empowerment and Stakeholder Management ⁷							
SUB PROGRAMME	Adjusted Appropriation	Shifting of funds	Virement	Final Appropriation	Actual expenditure	Variance	% of final appropriation
Provincial Office and Stakeholders Relation	63 376	-	-	63 376	37 024	26 352	58,4%
Empowerment and Skills Development	49 040	-	-	49 040	27 807	21 233	56,7%
Heritage, Memorial, Burial and Honours	33 732	-	-	33 732	17 917	15 815	53,1%
Total:Subprogrammes	146 148	-	-	146 148	82 748	63 400	56,6%



Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- As with the previous financial year, this is the worst performing programme which list a spending of 56.6% of its allocated budget. This should be seen against the background that this is a service delivery programme responsible for, inter alia, provincial offices where poor performance was recorded.
- The programme missed its target for skills development by 4 600, and this should be questioned as this is a much needed benefit to assist military veterans to become less reliant on the Department.
- It is encouraging that 97% of burial support claims have been paid within 30 days of receipt and the Department is encouraged to further improve on this benefit to allow dignified funerals for military veterans.
- The Programme failed to erect the 3 memorial sites for the year and this needs to be improved upon given the importance of memorialising and honouring military veterans. What steps have been taken to address this challenge and have these steps been effective?

3.3 Financial statements

Unauthorised expenditure: There was no unauthorised expenditure incurred by the Department during the year under review. This is for the third consecutive financial year and Department should be commended in this regard. ⁸

Fruitless and wasteful expenditure: An amount of R148 000 (R172 000⁹ in FY2018/19) was incurred as fruitless and wasteful expenditure of which the majority was as a result of payments for services not utilised.¹⁰

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The Department should be commended for decreasing the amount for Fruitless and wasteful expenditure from R3 million in FY2017/18 to R172 000 in FY2018/19 and further to R148 000 for the year under review.
- Concerning is that the A-G states that “I was unable to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence that disciplinary steps were taken against officials who had incurred irregular and fruitless and wasteful expenditure” ¹¹
- The Committee should ask why the appropriate steps have not been taken against officials involved in fruitless and wasteful expenditure in the first place and secondly what progress has been made with the disciplinary steps.

Irregular expenditure:¹² An amount of R4 572 000 was incurred as irregular expenditure. This relates to three (3) remaining cases on contracts entered into in prior years where SCM processes were not adhered to by the department.

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- What has been done to ensure that a re-occurrence of these issues do not occur?
- Have corrective steps been taken to prevent a re-occurrence of the Irregular Expenditure?

Contingent liabilities: The Department lists its Contingent Liabilities as R 207 620 000,¹³ with R1 994 000 having been incurred for the year under review.¹⁴ Various companies are listed such as



Zeal Health (R198 159 000), B&M Catering Services R2 074 000, and PSA obo J Mocheat R613 000, etc.¹⁵

As in the previous financial year, the A-G has expressed its concern in this regard as the Department is the defendant in contract cancellation lawsuits.¹⁶ It stresses that the “*ultimate outcome of these matters cannot presently be determined and no provision for any liability that may result has been made in the financial statements.*”¹⁷ This is also listed as an Emphasis of Matter, by the AG.¹⁸

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The Committee has previously expressed its concern around the claim by Zeal Health, especially given the amount that is being claimed (R198.16 million). The Department should be requested to update the Committee on this claim.^{19&20}
- The Department should also be requested to update the Committee on the other claims carried over from the previous year, especially given the A-G’s concern in this regard.
- What are the details of the claims incurred during the period under review to the amount of R1 994 000?²¹

3.4 Preliminary Findings of the Auditor General of South Africa

The Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) audited the financial statements of the Department for the FY2019/20, and the DMV received an unqualified audit outcome for 2019/20,²² similar to that of FY2018/19.²³ This is the fourth consecutive unqualified audit outcome and the Department should be congratulated, albeit that it should attempt to achieve a clean audit opinion.²⁴

Report on the audit of the annual performance report

The A-G evaluated the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information in accordance with the criteria developed from the performance management and reporting framework, for the following selected programmes presented in the annual performance report for the year ended 31 March 2020: ²⁵

- **Programme 2: Socio-Economic Support.**

It states that the achievements reported in the annual performance report materially differed from the supporting evidence provided for the indicators:

- Total number of military veterans with access to healthcare services.
- Number of bursaries provided to military veterans and their dependants per year.²⁶

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The Committee should request clarity on how and why there is a discrepancy between what was reported and what the A-G found as well as steps taken to correct this.



Compliance with legislation:

Expenditure management

As indicated in section 3.2 above, the AG raised concerns around “Effective steps were not taken to prevent **fruitless and wasteful expenditure** amounting to R148 000 as the majority of fruitless and wasteful expenditure. “ The majority of the fruitless and wasteful expenditure resulted from payments for services not utilised, which is a repeat of the finding in FY2018/19.²⁷

Strategic planning and performance management

Specific information systems were not implemented to enable the monitoring of progress made towards achieving targets, core objectives and service delivery, as required.

Consequence management

The A-G was unable to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence that disciplinary steps were taken against officials who had incurred irregular as well as fruitless and wasteful expenditure, as required by the PFMA. This was as a result of significant delays in performing investigations relating to these matters.²⁸

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- These are recurring findings and the Department should explain what are the reasons why specific and appropriate systems were not implemented and operational as required.
- The lack of Consequence Management has been raised by the Committee on previous occasions. The Department should be asked to explain the challenges to implementing this action, and especially what progress has been made in this regard since the start of the current financial year.

Leadership:

The AG states that “*Leadership did not exercise adequate oversight over performance reporting, compliance with applicable legislation and related internal controls.*” Action plans to address audit matters were not effective in addressing prior year findings. Management did not implement effective controls to ensure that information contained in performance reports was reliable before submission for audit. This was mainly a result of inadequate reviews and a lack of proper performance and record management systems. Furthermore, management did not review and monitor compliance with legislation.²⁹

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- Why was the accounting officer unable to exercise effective leadership and oversight responsibility regarding financial and performance reporting, compliance and related internal controls?
- Why were policies and procedures relating to core benefits paid by the DMV not documented and approved for implementation?
- It is concerning that action plans to address prior year audit matters were not properly documented and monitored, and the D-G should be requested to explain this lapse.



4. OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

The Department planned to achieve 20 performance targets areas during the 2019/20 financial year. Of the 20 targeted performance areas, nine (9) targets were achieved which constituted 45% overall achievement.³⁰ This shows a regression from the 50% achievement in 2018/19.³¹

Table 7: Annual Targets and Total Budgets

	Annual Report FY2019/20	Annual Report FY2018/19
Total targets set	20	16
Targets achieved	9/20	8/16
Targets not achieved	11/20	8/16
Success rate	45%	50%
Total Budget Spent (%)	73.1%	86%

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The spending of 73.1% of the budget versus an achievement of 45% of the set targets for the year is concerning. It means that 73% of the budget has been spent to achieve less than half of the targets set. This decreasing performance should be seen against the 50% success rate and 86% of the budget spend in the previous financial year. The Committee should question whether this is indeed “value for money” given the importance of these benefits to military veterans and their dependents.
- The Department should be requested to indicate what kind of measures it has put in place to improve both the overall spending and the success rate in meeting its targets.

4.1 Administration Programme

The main purpose of the programme is to provide management and strategic administrative support to the Ministry, and overall management of the Department.

Table 8: Administration Targets and Total Budgets

	FY2019/20	FY2018/19
Total targets set ³²	7	7
Targets achieved	3	5
Targets not achieved	4	2
Success rate	43%	71%
Total Budget Spent (%)	99%	98%

As shown above, the Administration programme had a total of 7 targets for the last two years of which 3 have been achieved leading to a success rate of 43% for the FY2019/20 (71% in FY2018/19).³³



Possible BRRR questions and comments:

The fact that 99% of this programme's budget was spent to achieve only 43% of the targets is very concerning as money is spent with little success to achieve its objectives. If the 43% is further compared with the success rate 71% of the previous year, this is cause for further concern and this regression should be investigated and addressed as a matter of urgency.

Table 9: Selected Performance Indicators for Programme 1: Administration³⁴

Performance Indicator	Planned Target	Actual Achievement	Deviation	Comment
Percentage of representation of women SMS level	50%	50%	N/A	N/A
Percentage of Communication Strategy activities implemented	100%	70%	-30%	Limited resources
Percentage cases from Presidential Hotline resolved	100%	97%	-3%	11 cases where not resolved during the 2019/20 financial year
Fully integrated military veterans' benefits management system	Integration of benefits and external entities	The system was not delivered, although user requirements specifications were developed. The registration module also developed, however it did not pass the test. Overall, SITA has not been able to deliver the project.	Integration of benefits and external entities	The Department has contracted SITA to develop and implement the IDBMS, however SITA has not been able to deliver the project.
Percentage of legitimate invoices paid within 30 days of receipt	90%	73%	-17%	The variance of was mainly due to payments related to Travel with Flair where there was a catch up on long outstanding invoices.
Number of liberation struggle history research outputs	5	5	Target was achieved as planned	There were no deviations
Percentage representation of persons with disability	2%	1.4%	-0.6	There were no applications received from prospective persons living with disabilities and no targeted recruitment was done.



Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The reasons namely “lack of resources” why the Communication strategy target was missed, is insufficient and the Department should be requested to properly explain the reason.
- What are the reasons why 11 cases reported on the Presidential hotline were not resolved during the financial year under review?
- The Committee should request a full explanation why the target of a “*Fully integrated military veterans’ benefits management system*” has not been reached as it indicates that SITA could not deliver on the project. What has since been done to address this situation?
- The Committee may request the Department to explain more on the “*Number of liberation struggle history research outputs*” and whether these products are freely available or accessible for the broader public.
- Regarding the “*Percentage representation of persons with disability*” the explanation for the deviation alludes to there being no applications from prospective persons living with disabilities and especially that no targeted recruitment was done. Why was there no targeted recruitment given that the Department is aware of this target?

Table 10: Expenditure for Administration Programme

Sub programme R'000	Final Appropriation	Actual Expenditure	Over)/Under Expenditure	Percentage spent
Management	12 106	12 517	(411)	103,4%
Corporate Services	66 212	68 676	(2 464)	103,7%
Financial Administration	14 542	20 977	(6 435)	144,3%
Internal Audit	10 864	10 640	224	97,9%
Strategic Planning, Policy Development, Monitoring & Evaluation	19 910	13 876	6 034	69,7%
Office Accommodation	17 420	12 928	4 492	74,2%
Total	141 054	139 614	1 440	99,0%

In terms of budget, this programme has spent R139.614 000 of the allocated R141 054 000. This means Programme 1 recorded an underspending of R1 440 000 or 1% of the total allocated budget. However, as indicated earlier, three of the subprogrammes overspend, while the worst performing subprogramme was the Strategic Planning, Policy Development, Monitoring & Evaluation, followed by Office Accommodation and Internal Audit.

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The Administration Programme is the heartbeat of the Department and its average target achievement (43% %) should be questioned especially as it relates to crucial functions like the Internal Audit, Office Accommodation and Financial Management.
- As stated earlier, the fact that the *Strategic Planning, Policy Development, Monitoring and Evaluation subprogramme* did not spend R6.03 million of its budget is especially worrisome as this it hosts Policy development and M&E, which has been poorly managed over the years.



4.2 Socio-Economic Support Programme

Table 11: Socio-Economic Support Targets and Total Budgets

	FY2019/20	FY2018/19
Total targets set³⁵	8	4
Targets achieved	3/8	2
Targets not achieved	5/8	2
Success rate	38%	50%
Total Budget Spent (%)	69%	99.4%

As shown above, Socio-Economic Support had a total of 8 targets (4 in FY 2018/19) of which 3 have been achieved leading to a success rate of only 38% (50% in FY2018/19). Given the poor performance of 38%, against a spending of 69%, serious attention should be paid to improve on reaching the set targets. ³⁶

Table 12: Selected Performance Indicators for Programme 2: Socio-Economic Support³⁷

Performance Indicator	Planned Target	Actual Achievement	Deviation	Comment
Total number of military veterans with access to health care services	18 000 (1 000)	18 390 (1 320)	390 deviations from the cumulative 17 197 authorizations from 2018/19FY minus 131 deceased Military Veterans in 2019/20FY. □ Deviation from the 2019/20FY planned annual target is (320) as 1 320 authorizations were done in 2019/20FY.	Healthcare is in high demand and access cannot be denied to eligible Military Veterans who apply for the benefit, as this will be a contravention of section 27 (2) of the constitution and the Military Veterans benefits regulations
Number of deserving military veterans with decent housing per year	300 houses	477	177	Overachieved due to the improved coordination between different role players.
	100 Bond rescue	28	-72	The benefit is demand driven and as such fewer application than those that were planned for were received. Some were rejected in accordance with the set Regulation.
Percentage of military veterans who are verified and captured on the National Military Veterans' Database	30 000	40 892	10 892	The data cleansing project in collaboration with DoD made difference with steady walk-ins that resulted in overachievement
Number of bursaries provided for military	7 466	4 449	-3 017	Students previously funded by DMV were referred to NSFAS.



veterans and their dependants per year		(2 832 Basic Education and 1 617 Tertiary Education)		There was a moratorium on the intake for new education support applicants during the 2019 and 2020 Academic years. There are still a number of outstanding documents which have delayed the finalisation of the applications.
Number of military veterans provided with compensation payment.	300	148	-152	Payment of compensation to eligible applicants depends on the availability of the SAMHS medical team for assessments and adjudication of the applicants, but due to competing priorities, their availability is a challenge. 25 assessments done in February 2020, but were only paid in during Quarter 1 of 2020/21 FY. Not all applicants assessed qualify for compensation due to various reasons.
PPI 206: Number of military veterans and their dependants provided with counselling and treatment.	1 000	643	-357	Challenge with receipt of reports from SAMHS, reports always received retrospectively therefore, distorts quarterly reporting.
Approved policy on military veteran's pension benefit.	Policy on military veteran's pension benefit approved	Draft Policy on pension benefit was developed	Policy on military veteran's pension benefit was not approved	Intense consultations with internal and external stakeholders required before sign off.
PPI 208: Approved policy on military veteran's transport benefit	Policy on military veteran's transport benefit approved	Policy Process initiated	Policy on military veteran's transport benefit was not finalized and approved	Intense consultations with internal and external stakeholders required before finalizing the draft policy.



Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The performance in terms of health care and housing should be appreciated and commended,
- The achievement around the database's verification and capturing need to be further interrogated given the concerns raised at the JSCD Meeting of 6 February 2020.³⁸
- With regard to bursaries, what is being done to address the number of outstanding documents which have delayed the finalisation of the applications?
- The target with regards to counselling and treatment should be treated with the necessary urgency and seriousness and the Department should be requested to speedily address the challenges with the provision of these crucial services.
- The underperformance regarding the military veterans provided with compensation payment, is noted against the reasons for this such as not all applicants qualifying. The Department should explain how they plan to address the other challenges to ensure the speedy compensation payments given that military veterans are ageing.
- With regard to pension and transport benefits, the importance of these benefits should be impressed on the Department and they should be encouraged to enhance their efforts in this regard.

Table 13: Expenditure for Socio-Economic Support Programme³⁹

Sub programme R'000	Final Appropriation	Actual Expenditure	(Over)/Under Expenditure	Percentage Spent
Database and Benefits Management	14 685	7 620	7 064	51.8%
Healthcare and well-being support	147 774	144 834	2 940	98%
Socio-Economic Support Services	202 892	102 388	100 504	50.5%
Total	365 351	254 843	110 508	69,8%

In terms of budget, this programme has spent **R254 843 000** of the allocated **R365 351 000**. This means that Programme 2 recorded an underspending of 30.2% or **R110 million** of the total allocated budget for the programme. It is concerning that the Socio-economic support services subprogramme is the worst in terms of spending with 50.5%, meaning that more than R100 million was not utilised to service military veterans with benefits. Similarly, the Database and Benefits subprogramme with only spent 51.8% of its allocation.

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- Given that this can be viewed as **the** core programme regarding benefits, it is disappointing that only 69.8% of the Programme's budget has been spent. Added to this is that only 3 of the 8 targets have been met, implying that serious attention should be paid to improve the achievement of the set targets for the year.
- When does the Department foresee that the pension and transport benefits will be realised, especially given that these benefits have been vaunted since the establishment of the Department and that military veterans are yearning for these benefits?



4.3 Empowerment and Stakeholder Management Programme

Table 14: Empowerment and Stakeholder Management targets and budgets

	FY2019/20	FY2018/19
Total targets set⁴⁰	5	5
Targets achieved	2/5	2
Targets not achieved	3/5	3
Success rate	40%	40%
Total Budget Spent (%)	56,6%	46,2%

The Empowerment and Stakeholder Management Programme had a total of 5 targets of which only 2 have been achieved, similar to the previous financial year, leading to a success rate of 40 percent. It spent slightly more of its budget (56.6%) than the previous financial year (46.2%). The targets are below. ⁴¹

Table 15: Selected Performance Indicators for Programme 3: Empowerment and Stakeholder Management⁴²

Performance Indicator	Planned Target	Actual Achievement	Deviation	Comment
Number of private sector companies and organs of state in partnership with the Department of Military veterans per year	4	4	Target was achieved as planned	There were no deviations
Number of deserving Military Veterans to access relevant training and skills development per year	5 500	900	-4 600	Demand far below the set target
Number of military veterans' businesses provided with access to empowerment opportunities	110	163	53	Proactive approach and initiatives by the Directorate resulted in the achievement
Percentage of approval burial claims paid within 30 days of receipt	100%	97%	-3%	All the claims were paid within 30 days of the receipt of the claim, however 3 files were not available at the time of verification of the claims processed.
Number of military veterans' memorial sites erected per year	3	0	-3	This is work in progress - Intergovernmental legacy liberation heritage projects

This Programme's performance remained the same at 40%, while it improved on its spending with more than 10%.

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The reason for failing to achieve the target of training and skills development should be further investigated. If the demand was far below the offering, how was the target determined and what



will be done to ensure that a more reasonable target is set? This should be seen against the background that the Department stated in the previous annual report already, that one of the reasons for the underperformance, was that the “*present mode of service is reactive rather than proactive.*”

- The Department should be commended for assisting 308 military veterans’ businesses with access to empowerment opportunities and be encouraged to further enhance this initiative.
- The failure to meet the target of “*Number of military veteran’ memorial sites erected per year,*” for the third year running, is concerning. This year’s reason of it being “work in progress - Intergovernmental legacy liberation heritage projects” coupled with last year’s reason of logistical challenges, are unacceptable given that there is no movement on this target.

Table16: Expenditure for Empowerment and Stakeholder Management Programme⁴³

Sub programme R’000	Final Appropriation	Actual Expenditure	(Over)/Under Expenditure	Percentage Spent
Provincial offices and stakeholder relations	63 376	37 024	26 352	58.4%
Empowerment and Skills development	49 040	27 807	21 233	56,7%
Heritage, memorials, Burials and Honours	33 732	17 917	15 815	53.1%
Total	146 148	82 748	63 400	56,6%

In terms of budget, this programme has spent R82 748 000 of the allocated R146 148 000. This means that the Programme recorded an underspending of R63 million or 43.4% of their allocated budget.⁴⁴

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The Heritage, memorials, Burials and Honours subprogramme is an important subprogramme and the fact that it did not spend R15.8 million of its allocation, is worrisome. As indicated above, the excuse that with regard to memorial site, that it is work in progress and entails intergovernmental relations, does not justify that for the last three years there have been no movement on this benefit.
- This poor performing programme is responsible among other things, for provincial offices, which have been a problematic area for the Department for years, as it is indicated that the subprogramme did not spend R26 million of its budget. This need to be addressed as these offices are crucial especially for military veterans who reside far from urban areas.

5. GOVERNANCE

5.1 Effectiveness of Internal Control

The Audit Committee Report is headlined “draft” but note can be taken of their remarks when they state that “*A lot more still needs to be done to stabilize the control environment in the department.*” There were instances of non-compliance and internal control deficiencies, such



as the following, which Management has committed to strategies and processes to address the control deficiencies:⁴⁵

- Completeness of performance information as reported by the service delivery branches;
- Inadequate documented and approved internal policies and procedures;
- Increase in irregular expenditure, fruitless and wasteful expenditure;
- Lack and / or absence of consequence Management;
- Inadequate sourcing of the internal audit function;
- Control weaknesses within the IT environment; and
- Delays in filling the position of the Director General of the department.

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- Note is taken that the Audit Report is a draft and the Committee endeavours to interrogate the Report more fully after the submission of the Annual Report.
- Management has given the Audit Committee the assurance that they will implement strategies and processes to address the control deficiencies. Has this been done, what kind of strategies have been put and in place and are these strategies working?
- The issues raised by the Audit Committee are also listed by the Auditor-General and it is especially issues such as Leadership and a lack of Consequence Management that are concerning. What has the Department done in the new financial year to address these issues? Can examples be provided where Consequence Management has been implemented and what was the outcome of such an intervention?

5.2 Internal Audit

The purpose of the Internal Audit is to provide internal audit and risk management services to the Department by managing and conducting compliance audit services.⁴⁶ As noted in Table 4 above, Internal audit has spent R10 640 000 of its allocated budget of R10 864 000. The Annual Report further states that “The department’s internal audit function is performed by the in-house Internal Audit Unit which fulfils an independent assurance function.”⁴⁷ And further that “Internal audit findings were communicated timely and management implemented measures to mitigate the risks. Significant matters identified during the audit were reported to the Audit Committee.”

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- It is concerning that the Audit Committee has once again raised the “*Inadequate sourcing of the internal audit function.*” Given that the Director Internal Audit and Risk Management⁴⁸ has been appointed, what other issues are referred to here?
- As Internal Audit Section continues to be plagued by capacity constraints, the Committee should impress on the Department the urgency and necessity to have a fully capacitated Internal Audit Section.

5.3 In-Year Management and Monthly/ Quarterly Report

The Department has submitted monthly and quarterly management/financial reports to National Treasury as per the PFMA requirements. Similar to the previous year, the Audit Committee stresses that although there were some improvement in the content and quality of these reports, greater



greater improvement of performance reports is still required especially in the service delivery branches.⁴⁹

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The continuous monitoring of the submissions of reports is important not only for compliance, but to ensure that deficiencies are identified early and it is therefore important that the Department be encouraged to adhere in-year monthly/quarterly reporting requirements.
- It is concerning that the service delivery branches that struggle with performance reports and the Department should be encouraged to improve the quality of these reports.

6. HUMAN RESOURCES

6.1 Overview and vacancies

At the end of the financial year, the Department had 32 funded vacant posts, which translates to 19% of the total funded posts. The 2019/20 financial year saw the re-prioritisation of the Department and the filling of key posts to strengthen human resources and improve efficient service delivery. The following key posts were filled during the 2019/20 financial year:

- Director Legal Services,
- Director Information Communications Technology,
- Chief Director Military Veterans Skills Development and Empowerment,
- Chief Director Military Veterans Beneficiary Support,
- Chief Director Research and Policy Development, and
- Director Military Veterans Beneficiary Support.

As of February 2020, the Department had advertised 15 of the 32 vacant posts whose filling will result in a 91% staffing level thus reducing the vacancy rate to 9%. During the period under review the Department has managed to achieve fifty percent (50%) female representatively within the senior management service level, which is a government imperative.⁵⁰

As of 31 March 2020, the Department had an approved establishment of 169 posts, of which 137 were filled and had an overall vacancy rate of 19%,⁵¹ down from 25% the previous year. It also had 63 employees additional to the establishment.⁵²

The **vacancy rate for Programme 1: Administration** was at 16% during 2019/20 similar to the 2018/19 financial year.⁵³ The programme comprise of 102 permanent posts on the approved structure, 86 filled, and 34 were additional to the establishment.

The **vacancy rate for Programme 2: Socio-Economic Support** was at 2% an improvement on the FY2018/19 when it was 10%.⁵⁴ The programme comprise of 21 permanent posts on the approved structure, with 19 filled and 22 were additional to the establishment.

The **vacancy rate for Programme 3: Empowerment and Stakeholder Management** was at 14% a huge improvement on the 28% for the 2018/19 financial year.⁵⁵ The programme comprise of 46 permanent posts on the approved structure, and 32 posts are filled with 7 members additional to the establishment.



Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- While the vacancy rate has decreased from 25% to 19%, the Committee should be aware of the continued instability at the top management level of the organisation which is indicated as 13% at the Senior management (Levels 13-16).⁵⁶ Members should note that the vacancy rate has been consistently been around 20% since the FY2015/16.
- While it is acknowledged that 6 senior appointments have been made, the Committee may want to ask around progress being made to fill the other vacancies, as well as the progress to appoint a permanent Director-General for the Department.
- The Department is also staffed with an additional 63 (73 in FY2018/19) posts being filled on contract basis versus the establishment of 169 posts, giving the Department a total workforce of 236 people.⁵⁷ Questions can be asked whether the DMV has the right balance regarding expertise, experience, and competencies given the continued poor performance by the Department. Also what is the spread of personnel between provinces and the head office, especially because of challenges experienced by military veterans and their dependents to access the Department and provincial offices.
- How far is the process to change the Organisational Structure of the Department, given that the new structure will be aligned to the current realities facing the Department and would also streamline the benefit delivery mechanisms?

6.2 Skills Audit

As opposed to the previous year, only one reference is made to the Skills Audit namely “*Payment made to PTES consulting and recruitment for skills audit - Payment made for 250 officials to be assessed vs 170 who actually participated*” The Department reported in the previous financial year that due to the challenges it is experiencing in attracting and retaining critical and scarce skills, a programme for the implementation for Skills Audit is in place and will be conducted during the 2018/19 financial year.⁵⁸ It has also appointed consultants to conduct the Skills Audit to the tune of R478 800.⁵⁹

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The Skills Audit is an issue that the current Committee has raised with the Department on several occasions, given the challenges with capacity and the effectiveness with which benefits and services are being delivered.
- Has the Department instituted proceedings to claim back the over-payment from the Consultants?
- What is the latest development on the Skills Audit given that close to half a million rand has been spent on this exercise?
- When can the Committee expect to be fully briefed on the Skills Audit and related matters?

6.3 Misconduct, Disciplinary hearings and Grievances

The Department lists the resignation of 13 members during the period under review,⁶⁰ and that two people have received final written warnings.⁶¹ There were four misconduct cases: one each for assault and sexual harassment and two for gross dishonesty. Of concern is the 33 grievances⁶² that have been lodged, of which 22 have not been resolved. This against the background of a similar number of grievances in FY2018/19.⁶³ The Department also reported the suspension of three



members where the suspension periods were beyond 30 days and for an average number of days of 327 at a cost of R1 293 088.36. With regard to the signing of performance agreements by SMS members, it is indicated that of the 27, only 21 have signed and reasons why the other six have not signed, differ from two who have exited the system, one was due to ill-health and three did not sign.⁶⁴

Possible BRRR questions and comments:

- The Department should be requested to explain the reasons why 13 members have resigned, as it might be indicative of the challenges facing the Department as well as the reasons for the continued under performance. Do the DMV conduct exit interviews when personnel leave the department as a means to improve employee-relations and management?
- What were the outcomes of the four misconduct cases especially for the sexual harassment and gross dishonesty cases?
- The suspension of the three members with the average days of 327 and at a cost of R1 293 088.36 is very concerning. The Department should indicate whether these cases have been resolved in the meantime, and if not, what is it doing to bring these cases to finality?
- The thirty-three grievances (32 in FY2018/19) is concerning and the Committee should enquire what are the main issues raised during these grievances, and why only 11 of these have been resolved.
- What were the reasons that three of the SMS members did not sign their performance contracts and have it since been signed? What actions were taken against these members? This is important given that they are entrusted to implement Consequence Management against their members when they breach policies.

7. CONCLUSION

The Department of Military Veterans has yet again been unable to spend its budget, as the total budget spent decreased from 86.4% to 73,1% for the year under review. If this is read with the decrease in the achievement of its targets from 50% in the previous financial year to 45% for the FY2019/20, it raises serious concerns. Whether it is the instability at the top management level of the Department or the concerns around the skills set in the Department as well as its Organisational structure that is not attuned to the current reality, the Department has much reason for concern. The lack of any progress to amend the founding act, the slow progress to establish provincial offices, as well as the fact that there is no substantive progress on the subsidised transport benefit and pensions, all add to the dismal picture in the Department. Add to this the slow progress to cleanse and finalise the national database, it becomes clear that some urgent and decisive interventions are required to turn the Department around.

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