

Estimates of National Expenditure

2004

ISBN: 0-621-35037-0
RP: 16/2004

The *2004 Estimates of National Expenditure* is compiled with the latest available information from departmental and other sources. Some of this information is unaudited or subject to revision.

To obtain copies, please contact:

Communication Directorate
National Treasury
Private Bag X115
Pretoria
0001
South Africa
Tel: +27 12 315 5948
Fax: +27 12 315 5160

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Printed by Formeset Printers



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National Treasury

Republic of South Africa

February 2004



Foreword

After ten years of budgetary and financial management reforms, a strong foundation has been laid for accelerating the delivery of public services in support of government's strategic and policy priorities. Changes in public finance legislation, improved efficiency in budget allocation and execution and new accountability and reporting requirements are amongst our major achievements.

A major step in this reform programme has been the presentation of the budget in the format of the *Estimates of National Expenditure* (ENE).

Improving on last year's format, this year the *Estimates of National Expenditure* provides a detailed account of the national government's service delivery commitments, and key policy developments over the medium term. These are described in the individual chapters of the thirty-four votes.

The measurable objective for each departmental programme remains a central feature of the ENE, as it captures in a single statement the intended impact, the main output and performance level for each programme. Complementing this commitment to budgetary transparency and accountability for expenditure outputs is the introduction of a new economic reporting format in the 2004 Budget. Based on international standards, the new format replaces the old 'standard item' classification, and provides for the classification of receipts, expenses, financing and debt. It also shows the impact of transactions on the cash flow and balance sheet of government. The main benefit is that financial and service delivery information is presented in a way that serves as a useful resource for the various committees of Parliament, and further contributes to public understanding and debate on policy and expenditure plans.

The *2004 Estimates of National Expenditure* is the outcome of a lengthy administrative and executive process through which political office-bearers and public officials collaborate to clarify policy priorities and spending plans over the medium term, reflected in the range of tables in each chapter. A dedicated team at the National Treasury works closely with officials from all departments in putting together this extensive document. The 1055 pages detail how and where public funds are spent. The considerable time and effort that have gone into preparing this publication will, it is trusted, yield rich returns in the insights and understanding it provides to Members of Parliament, officials, analysts and other readers.

Thanks are due to the National Treasury team and their counterparts in other departments who have made possible the publication of this useful resource.



Lesetja Kganyago
Director-General: National Treasury

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