

XXX Institution

Combined Assurance Plan

(for the purposes of this guideline, the term “Institution” refers to National Departments, Provincial Department, Constitutional Institutions, Public Entities, Provincial Entities, Municipalities (Metropolitan, Local and District) and Municipal Owned Entities)

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Example: Combined assurance plan

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“Naganela Pele – Think Ahead”

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1 Introduction

The combined assurance plan has been compiled from the risk analysis performed by the **XXX Institution** (Institution), which was facilitated on **XXX**.

This will enable management to assign resources priority efficiently to mitigate the risks to an acceptable level and to identify who is responsible for each risk.

2 Objectives

The objectives of the combined assurance plan are mainly to:

- Identify and specify the sources of assurance over the Institutions risks;
- Provide the Risk Management Committee, the Accounting Authority / Officer and Executive Management with a framework of the various assurance parties;
- Link risk management activities with assurance activities. This will also assist the Accounting Authority / Officer to review the effectiveness of the risk management system; and
- Provide a basis for identifying any areas of potential assurance gaps.

3 Approach

The combined assurance plan has been designed to highlight the relevant high-risk areas and the assurance to be provided by management, external audit,

internal audit and other consultants or service providers in order for the Executive Authority to be appraised of the risk management efforts undertaken to manage the risks to an acceptable level.

The risk analyses performed during **XXX** formed the basis for determining the combined assurance plan for the Institution. The combined assurance plan was developed through:

- Analysis of the risk assessment; and
- Discussion and agreement with assurance priority.

4 Combined Assurance Plan

4.1 Results - Assurance providers

Based on the results of the risk assessment and discussions with Management as well as our experience and understanding of the underlying risk of its occurrence, certain of the risks identified may require additional independent assurance. These have been included in the combined assurance plan in point 4.2 of the report.

The Accounting Authority / Officer will ultimately decide on the most appropriate assurance provider for the identified risks. Where internal audit is identified as the most appropriate assurance provider, the Audit Committee must approve the scope of coverage and audit plan. Similarly, if external audit is to be relied upon for assurance, the Accounting Authority / Officer should inform them of this reliance to determine from the external auditors whether or not such reliance is appropriate from their work performed or will performed.

Executive Management may be engaged as assurance providers as part of its ongoing activities or part of an identified special project.

4.2 Combined assurance plan

The facilitated risk assessment has identified risks, which if materialise, may have a negative impact on the Institution as a whole. In order to ensure that this exposure is appropriately mitigated, a combined assurance plan has been developed to allocate responsibility and accountability for the risks to Executive Management, External Audit, Internal Audit, or a combination thereof. Due to the nature of risk management, Executive Management is ultimately responsible for all risks within the Institution and hence assumes overall responsibility and accountability for all the identified strategic risks.

The combined assurance plan based upon the key business risks is documented below:

Risk/Control	Three Lines of Defence															
	Management				Corporate Functions								Third Party Assurance			
	Reviews	Sign-offs	CSAs	KPIs	Finance	HR	IT	Operations	Technical	Quality	Marketing	Other	External Audit	Internal Audit	Specialist Audit	Compliance
The name of the risk as recorded in the risk register needs to be recorded in this column. Care should be taken to ensure that as the risk profile changes the combined assurance plan is reviewed and if necessary amended	These columns should be utilised to indicate the assurance provider and the frequency of the assurance. Should internal or external audit be identified as an assurance provider, care should be taken to ensure that it has been reflected in their respective audit plans.															
1. Inappropriate skills / Inadequate skills														Q		
2. Deterioration of the socio economic environment																
3. Theft, fraud and corruption	B	B														
4. Inadequate public participation by communities														A		
5. Under spending of the budget					M								A			

Legend

Y: Yearly Q: Quarterly

B: Bi-annually M: Monthl

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