

Evaluation Several evaluations of agency performance contracts, annual performance reports and chief executive performance contracts have been conducted. The selected agencies are ranked according to various criteria, making it easy to compare reports and highlight the best examples. Targets should preferably be more precisely formulated to facilitate ex post assessment of achievements; departments should allocate more resources to monitoring agency operations; and a clearer link between appropriated funds and targets should be established to increase pressure to improve productivity. Pointing to possible improvements, the study recommended, among other things, greater involvement of ministers in setting and prioritising targets, a greater effort to ensure that agency contracts are in line with the objectives of the entire ministry and a more flexible use of performance contracts, allowing the concept to be adjusted to suit different ministerial circumstances. Firstly, contracts acted as a vehicle for agency reorganisation processes and activities aimed at improving efficiency, such as the development of internal management and new mechanisms for monitoring results. Finally, contract management had generally led to an improved dialogue between agencies and departments, thereby reducing the asymmetry of information and creating a network for contact between the parties at all levels. In 1998, 1999 and 2000 the Agency for Government Management collected a large number of reports and evaluated the content of each one on the basis of its ability to give a balanced overview of agency operations and a thorough presentation of objectives and achievements.