EXPLORING THE USE OF STRATEGIC AUDIT TO EVALUATE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS AT THE NATIONAL PROSECUTING AUTHORITY IN PRETORIA

by

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at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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DECLARATION

50461613

I Matswatswe Hellen Manchidi, hereby declare that the dissertation Title: Exploring the use of strategic audit to evaluate strategic management process at the National Prosecuting Authority in Pretoria, which I hereby submit for the degree of Master of Arts in the subject of Criminal Justice for the College of Law at the University of South Africa, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other institution.

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Student signature

Date: 30 January 2024

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the use of strategic audit as a comprehensive tool to evaluate the strategic management process at the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) in Pretoria. Employing a qualitative case study design, the research integrates an extensive literature review with semi-structured interviews involving 16 participants (middle managers and senior/top managers) to examine current practices, identify gaps, and propose contextually relevant improvements.

The study extends the application of strategic audit beyond its conventional limitation to the strategy formulation phase, advocating its integration across the full strategic management cycle — formulation, implementation, and review/control. It demonstrates the appropriate use of strategic audit tools as recommended by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) for public institutions while addressing the critical challenge that most such tools, originally designed for the private (business) sector, require adaptation for the public sector context.

Key findings reveal that while NPA managers possess sound theoretical knowledge of strategic audit concepts (including internal and external environmental analysis, tools such as SWOT/SWOC, PESTLE, and others), practical application remains limited, inconsistent, and largely confined to annual planning. This results in strategic drift, internal misalignments, and sub-optimal alignment between the organisation's capabilities and its external environment. Participants highlighted challenges related to capacity, institutionalisation, tool adaptation, and the integration of audit findings into ongoing performance management.

Thematic analysis of the data, supported by rigorous trustworthiness measures (credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity), underpins practical recommendations. These include institutionalising strategic audit as a continuous process, developing a tailored public-sector framework, building organisational capacity, and establishing mechanisms to integrate audit insights into decision-making and adaptive strategy execution.

This research contributes to both theory and practice by providing a nuanced understanding of strategic audit in a South African public prosecutorial context and offering actionable insights for enhancing strategic management effectiveness, organisational performance, and mandate delivery at the NPA and similar public institutions.

Keywords: strategic audit, strategic management process, National Prosecuting Authority, public sector adaptation, qualitative case study, thematic analysis.

LIST OF ACRONYMS OR ABBREVIATIONS

AOP	Annual Operational Plan
APP	Annual Performance Plan
AR	Annual Report
DCS	Department of Correctional Services
DoJ&CD	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
GBVF	Gender-Based Violence and Femicide
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
IMS	Information Management System
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
NCPHS	National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research
NPA	The National Prosecuting Authority
NT	National Treasury
PESTLE	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental factors
RQ	Research Question
SA	Republic of South Africa
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timeframe
SP	Strategic Plan
SPC	Strategic Planning Champion
SPMM	Strategic Planning Monitoring and Management
SWOC	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
UNISA	University of South Africa
URERC	University of South Africa Research Ethics Review Committee

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CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In today's organisational management landscape, strategic management is crucial in determining the success and sustainability of entities in both the public and private sectors. The capacity to devise, execute, and assess strategies is vital for organisations to successfully navigate their complex operating environments and attain their long-term goals. This research investigates the nuances of strategic management within the public sector, particularly the strategic audit process, using the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) of South Africa (SA) as a case study.

Most strategies fail due to implementation problems (Venter, 2014:4), and organisations often face severe operational and financial difficulties due to flawed strategies. Therefore, conducting ongoing strategic audits to evaluate an organisation's strategy is essential and sensible. Researchers such as Wheelen, Hunger, Hoffman, and Bamford (2018:58); cf. Katsioloudes (2006:69-131); cf. Della-Piana, Low, and Lyman (2005:81-123); and Johnson, Whittington, Scholes, Angwin, and Regnér (2017:180) have found that strategic audits should be conducted throughout the entire strategic management process, not just during strategy formulation; this emphasises the increasing importance of using strategic audits to examine an organisation's internal and external environments, identify organisation-wide problem areas, and evaluate the appropriateness of future strategies.

This study extends the application of strategic audit to cover the entire strategic management process, rather than limiting it to the strategy formulation phase as is typically done. It also demonstrates the correct usage of strategic audit tools as recommended by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) for public institutions.

However, the implementation of strategic audits in the public sector is insufficient. This issue is exacerbated because most strategic audit tools, originally designed with a business perspective, are not tailored for the public sector. Moreover, strategic drift, a phenomenon where the rate of environmental change surpasses the organisation's strategic change rate, results in a widening gap. The structures and systems of the NPA consistently misalign with its strategy and the environment, necessitating realignment. Other factors that could hinder the implementation of the strategic audit process in the NPA include apparent administrative deficiencies and the NPA's slow response to environmental issues and changes. Five research problems have been identified as significant contributors to the lack of awareness of the risk posed by the absence of adequate strategic audits in the public sector.

The research study delves into the complexities of strategic audit and its application within the NPA. It aims to ascertain the role of strategic audit in the NPA's strategic management process and seeks to contextualise the adaptation of strategic audit tools primarily designed for the private sector for use in the public sector. The ultimate goal of this research is to contribute to the enhancement of strategic management processes within the public sector, promoting greater efficiency and effectiveness in the proper utilisation of strategic audit tools.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem statement indicates the gap in the knowledge needed for practice (Grove & Gray, 2019:584-585). Similarly, Bloomberg and Volpe (2019:161) add that the problem statement (a) serves a foundational role in that it communicates what is the formal reason for engaging in the dissertation in the first place, (b) is the discrepancy between what we already know and what we want to know, and (c) illustrates the reasons why the study should be conducted.

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe the problem statement as identifying a knowledge gap and justifying the need for the study. They emphasise the foundational role of the problem statement in guiding the research.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, emphasising the crucial role of a well-defined problem statement in highlighting the knowledge gap and the importance of the study (Manchidi, 2024).

For an in-depth exploration of the problem statement (see Section 1.2.1 to 1.2.5).

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

The NPA faces a significant challenge in its strategic management process to effectively comply with the DPME framework, which is mandatory for all South African government departments; while recognising the importance of this framework, a significant gap exists between its theoretical knowledge and practical application (implementation) within the NPA.

An analysis of published 'strategic management documents', including the NPA's Annual Reports (ARs), Annual Performance Plans (APPs), and Strategic Plans (SPs), conducted by the researcher from 10 June 2019 to 12 August 2019, revealed abundant evidence of minimal or non-compliance with the DPME framework in evaluating the NPA's strategic management process—this is also evident in the 'strategic management documents' (cf. SP (2020), AR (2022b), and APP (2023b)) used throughout the literature.

Similar to the challenges faced by the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), as corroborated by Moleki (2019:1) in his statement to the researcher, this *"minimal or*

non-compliance with the DPME framework confirms that the DCS encounters difficulties with compliance" (see Annexure H)—as a DCS employee, while at the Strategic Planning Monitoring and Management (SPMM) Directorate, the researcher has observed these challenges firsthand while working with the APPs, SPs, and Annual Operational Plans (AOPs).

The problem is further exacerbated by the dynamic and complex environment in which the NPA operates, necessitating a strategic management approach responsive to the ever-changing internal and external factors. The lack of effective strategic audit utilisation has led to a strategic drift, where the rate of environmental change has outpaced the rate of strategic change within the NPA, resulting in a growing gap between the organisation's strategic direction and the evolving environmental landscape (Manchidi, 2024), (see Section 1.2.3).

This research study seeks to address these challenges by exploring the use of strategic audit to evaluate the strategic management process at the NPA in Pretoria, explicitly focusing on adapting strategic audit tools designed for the private sector for use in the public sector. By bridging this gap (between the knowledge and compliance with the mandatory DMPE framework, and the implementation/practical application of the strategic audit tools) and enhancing the utilisation of strategic audit tools, the NPA can strengthen its strategic management process, align its strategies with the dynamic environment, and ultimately improve its overall effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate. To thoroughly examine the intricacies of the issue, the problem statement is delineated as follows (Manchidi, 2024):

1.2.1 Business perspective

The inadequacy of strategic audits in the public sector, particularly within the NPA, is compounded by the absence of strategic audit tools adapted to the specific needs and complexities of the public sector. The existing tools predominantly reflect a business perspective, failing to address the nuanced requirements of public sector organisations (Manchidi, 2024).

The problem statement underscores the urgency for the NPA to modify its strategic management approach to address the pronounced deficiency of efficient strategic audits within the public sector. The situation is further complicated by the absence of strategic audit tools tailored to meet public sector organisations' unique needs and complexities. Most existing tools are designed with a business perspective in mind, failing to cater to public sector entities' specific requirements. This mismatch leads to inadequate strategic audits in the public sector (Manchidi, 2024).

1.2.2 Organisation's environment

Strategic management is a complex and dynamic discipline and that a static, linear process does not consider the complexity or the environment in which the organisation operates (Davis, 2019:62).

> The NPA operates in a complex, dynamic, and interrelated environment. The traditional strategic management process, which is static and linear, fails to adequately account for this operational landscape's intricacies. This failure to conduct regular strategic audits increases the risk of overlooking critical environmental changes, which could have significant implications for the organisation's strategy. Furthermore, predicting the impact of these environmental changes on the NPA's strategy is challenging. Therefore, the NPA needs to continuously conduct strategic audits to monitor and assess the internal and external environment effectively (Manchidi, 2024).
>
> This problem statement highlights the need for the NPA to adapt its strategic management process to better respond to its complex and dynamic operational environment. It also underscores the importance of conducting regular strategic audits to ensure the organisation remains responsive and adaptable to its changing context (Manchidi, 2024).

1.2.3 Strategic drift

According to Johnson et al (2017:180) strategic drift emerges when the rate of environmental change starts to outpace the rate of the organisation's strategic change. Figure 1.1 shows environmental change accelerating; however, the NPA's rate of change was still incremental (see Chapter 4), leading to a growing gap with the accumulated environmental change (Manchidi, 2024).

> Mellalieu (1992:15-16) states that the most insidious problem associated with implementing a SP is that of strategic drift. Figure 1.1 illustrates this. The NPA was aware that change was occurring, and has actually implemented strategies to respond to the change. But, imperceptibly, the organisation is drifting away from environmental reality. The NPA is doing the right thing — but not enough of it, and is lulled into a false sense of security, because its doing something.

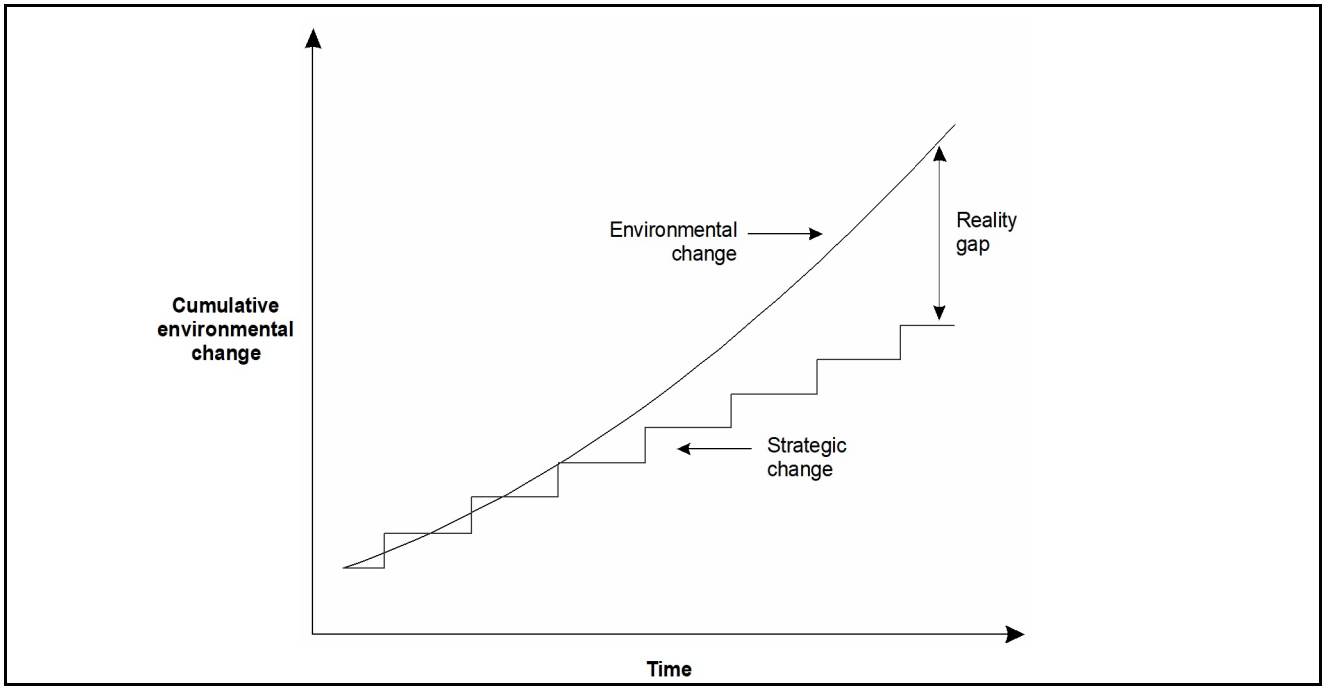


Figure 1.1 Strategic drift

(Source: adapted from Johnson et al, 2017:180; Mellalieu, 1992:15)

From the strategy formulation phase to its implementation, the environmental conditions assessed during the creation of the NPA's SPs may have undergone significant changes. As they strive to achieve their goals during implementation, these changes can lead to a divergence from their original strategic trajectory, resulting in what is known as strategic drift. This drift might cause the NPA to pursue strategic targets that are no longer relevant due to the altered conditions. Therefore, it is crucial to reassess and adjust the strategy to prevent such misalignment regularly (Manchidi, 2024).

1.2.4 Common misalignments

According to Della-Piana et al (2005:43) the most critical element of organisation design is alignment, which is the matching of the NPA processes to the strategy. NPA structures and systems are always falling out of alignment with its strategy and the environment and need to be realigned.

Some common misalignments are shown in Figure 1.2 below (Della-Piana et al, 2005:43-44): *Misalignment 1* shows that the external environment is aligned with the strategy, but everything else in the organisation is moving in opposite directions. *Misalignment 2* shows an organisation not aligned with the environment but perfectly aligned internally. *Misalignment 3* shows chaotic internal systems and multiple strategies. Strategic audit evaluates the NPA's organisation design in terms of its ability to align internal rewards, support systems, feedback loops, etc., with its

strategy. Evaluating the NPA design and resource allocation will bridge the gap between data-gathering and strategy implementation.

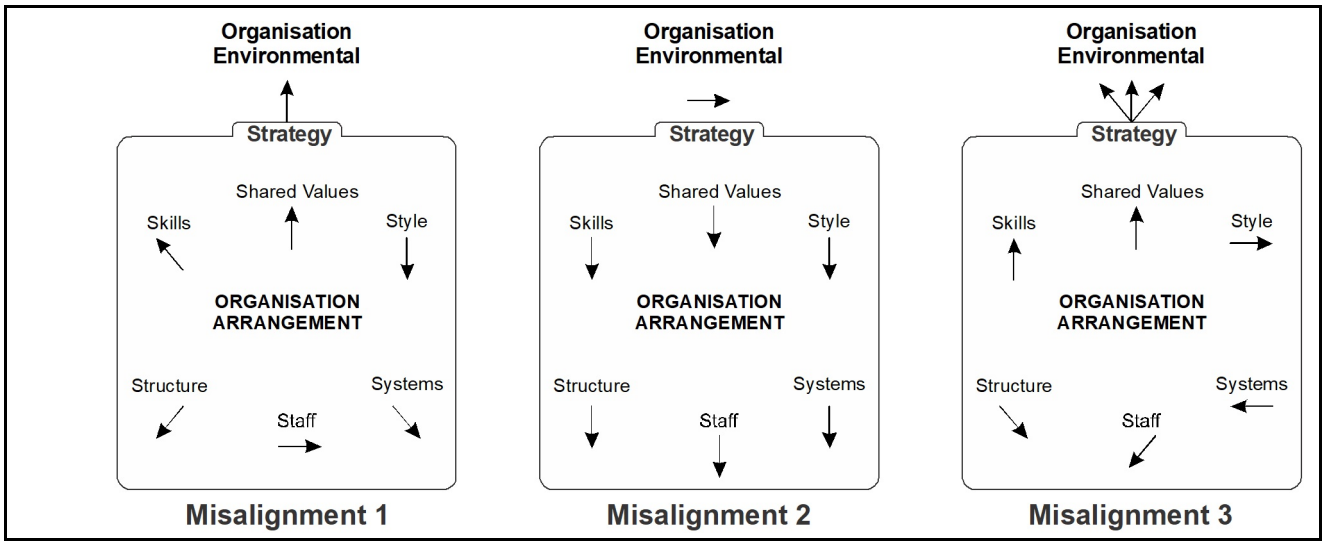


Figure 1.2 Common misalignments
(Source: Della-Piana et al, 2005:43)

Strategic audit goal of determining how well the NPA is aligned with its strategy and environment, is to find misalignments and recommend organisational design changes that ensure continued alignment (Della-Piana et al, 2005:45).

This problem statement encapsulates the core challenges confronting the NPA; it establishes the foundation for a comprehensive investigation into the use of strategic audits within the organisation, the misalignment (disconnect) between the knowledge of strategic audit tools and their practical application, the lack of adaptation of strategic audit tools primarily designed for the private sector to be used in the public sector, and the failure to conduct strategic audits timely and comprehensively are common misalignments that may hinder the NPA's strategic management process (Manchidi, 2024).

1.2.5 Other variables

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), other variables which may impede the application of strategic audit in the NPA include: (a) the apparent administrative shortcomings in the NPA (public institutions), and the obsolete systems, (b) the way in which the NPA (public institutions) responds to environmental issues, and (c) the apparent inability of the NPA to rapidly respond to change. In essence, this problem statement sets the groundwork for a comprehensive examination of the strategic management process and the role of strategic audits within the NPA.

1.3 THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

1.3.1 Research aims

The aims of the research are concerned with the direction in which the research will go – its targets and the benefits involved (Denscombe, 2012:82). Similarly, Oliver (2013:102) states that the research aims fundamentally denote the knowledge expected to be gained from the conducted study.

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe research aims as, focusing on the direction, targets, and benefits of the research. They emphasise the knowledge expected to be gained from the study.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, emphasising the crucial role of clearly defined research aims in guiding the direction and expected outcomes of the study (Manchidi, 2024).

The research aims *to explore the use of strategic audit to evaluate strategic management process at the National Prosecuting Authority in Pretoria*.

1.3.2 Research objectives

Research objectives are clear, concise, declarative statements expressed in the present tense to identify the goals of the study (Grove & Gray, 2019:176). Similarly, Parahoo (2014:151) states that determining the research's aim leads naturally to determining its objectives. Research objectives are more specific than the aim and relate directly to the research question.

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe research objectives as, clear and specific statements that identify the study's goals. They emphasise the importance of research objectives in directly relating to the research question and guiding the study.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, emphasising the crucial role of well-defined research objectives in providing clarity and direction for the study (Manchidi, 2024).

The research objectives for the study are as follows:

a) to examine the concept and objectives of strategic audit
b) to determine the impact of employing strategic audit in analysing and evaluating the strategic management process within the NPA and, by extension, other public-sector institutions
c) to contextualise the adaptation of strategic audit tools—originally developed for the private sector—for effective application within the public sector
d) to explore the current and prospective challenges that most significantly impede the NPA from conducting strategic audits

e) to make recommendations based on the findings of this study, which, if applied, would assist the NPA (public sector institutions) on how to conduct strategic audits.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research question is a particularly significant step in research as it narrows the research aim and objective down to specific areas the study will address (Johnson & Christensen, 2017:97; Creswell, 2012:60). Similarly, Denscombe (2010a:15) mention that the research questions specify exactly what is to be investigated. Rule and John (2011:28), and Flick (2011:90), reminds us that research questions are also formulated to establish new facts; therefore, this is an excellent way to determine which methods are going to be used to collect data.

There are noticeable similarities—these definitions describe research questions as crucial for narrowing down the research focus and specifying what is to be investigated. They emphasise the role of research questions in guiding the data collection methods and establishing new facts. The researcher supports the argument raised by these sources, emphasising the importance of well-defined research questions in directing the research process and determining appropriate data collection methods (Manchidi, 2024).

The Research Questions (RQs) and their corresponding prompts (designed to comprehensively address the main research question) are as follows:

a) Objectives of strategic audit (analysis) (see Annexure D and E, Section B):

RQ1. What is strategic audit (analysis)?

1.1 What is strategy?

1.2 What is the purpose of strategic audit (analysis)?

1.3 What are the key components of strategic audit (analysis)?

RQ2. Why should organisations conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

2.1 Why is strategic audit (analysis) important to strategy formulation (planning)?

2.2 What are the benefits of conducting strategic audit (analysis)?

2.3 What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic audit (analysis)?

RQ3. Who should conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

3.1 What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

3.2 How many people should conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

RQ4. When should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?

4.1 How often should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?

4.2 How long should it take to complete the strategic audit (analysis) process?

RQ5. How can strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?

5.1 What information is required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

5.2 What are the steps in the strategic audit (analysis) process?

5.3 Which strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools should be used to audit the internal environment?

5.4 Which strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools should be used to audit the external environment?

b) Strategic management process and adaptation of strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools for the public sector (see Annexure E, Section C):

RQ6. What is the strategic management process?

RQ7. How can the strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools primarily designed for the private sector be adapted for the public sector?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The value of research lies in its practical relevance, and the purpose of theory is to inform practice (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:29). Similarly, De Chesnay (2015:xvi), emphasises clearly, that the significance is underappreciated as an important component of research. Without justifying the importance of the study or the potential impact of the study, there is no case for why the study should be conducted.

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe the significance of research as being tied to its practical relevance and impact. Both definitions emphasise the necessity of justifying the importance of the study to validate its conduct.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, emphasising the crucial role of demonstrating the significance and potential impact of the research (Manchidi, 2024).

For an in-depth exploration of the significance of the research (see Section 1.5.1 to 1.5.6). The researcher adhered to the sixfold *'general purposes for research'* as provided by (Denscombe, 2010a:11-12):

1.5.1 Describing something

The purpose is primarily to collect facts and to describe situations/events; describing *how things are*, rather than *how they will/should be*, or even *why they are as they are* (Denscombe, 2010a:11-12).

The fact that the NPA only elect to perform strategic audit to formulate SPs is not sufficient. The researcher decided to explore the use of strategic audit in the NPA (public sector) to analyse and evaluate the entire organisation's strategic management process. In an attempt to find new information, the researcher consulted more literature. Little information or academic research was found regarding the strategic audit, as a result, qualitative research allowed the researcher to explore previously understudied topic of strategic audit (Manchidi, 2024).

1.5.2 Criticising or evaluating something

The researcher evaluated the existing method utilised by the NPA to analyse its environment, currently the NPA only conducts strategic audit of its strategic formulation, however, the researcher considered that the NPA could improve — by adopting strategic audit as a tool to analyse and evaluate its entire strategic management process; this includes ensuring compliance with the DPME framework and the proper utilisation of strategic audit tools tailored for the public sector.

1.5.3 Forecasting an outcome

The value of the research rests on how well it manages to predict events and supply useful forecasts to those who will use the knowledge, while the purpose of research is to arrive at conclusions about future events or situations (Denscombe, 2010a:11). The researcher provided recommendations based upon the research's outcomes for future study and practice. Furthermore, the researcher is of the opinion that the benefits of frequently conducting strategic audits will provide the NPA with a range of self-assessment audits to:

(a) highlight strengths and weaknesses within the NPA; (b) identify problems before they happen; (c) ensure organisation-wide control of the NPA; (d) benchmarking results with other government departments; and lastly (e) align overall NPA strategy with the organisation's needs and strengths.

1.5.4 Explaining the causes or consequences of something

The primary purpose of research is to understand the relationship between events and phenomena, and to move towards theories or models that explain the *way things work* and to improve our understanding of *why things happen as they do* (Denscombe, 2010a:11).

> Once the report of the NPA strategic formulation analysis is complete, the gap widens between where the NPA is expected to be and where it was during the strategic audit. The ongoing process of strategic audit will bridge that gap. The strategic audit report is a working document and should never be final (Manchidi, 2024).

1.5.5 Developing good practice

Best practice analysis focuses more on *how things get done* than on *what gets done*; it focuses more on the overall secret of success than on particular process improvements (Della-Piana et al, 2005:37).

> The study aims to arrive at recommendations for good practice that, if applied, would assist the NPA and other government departments (the public sector) on how to conduct strategic audits. In addition, the researcher contextualised the adaptation of strategic audit tools which were primarily designed for the private sector to be used in the public sector (Manchidi, 2024).

1.5.6 Empowerment

The aim is to empower those (the NPA, and the public sector) who are the subject of the investigation, and the principal motive for conducting the research is the welfare of those senior and top, and middle managers involved (Denscombe, 2010a:12).

Furthermore, the research aims at adding to the strategic audit knowledge base. The outcomes of the study will benefit not only the NPA, but also other government departments (the public sector). The most notable benefits of the study will be the prospect of raising awareness among government departments on the threat posed by the absence of the strategic audits; strategic audit, will also provide senior and top, and middle managers with a forum for debating and sharing divergent views about the internal and external environmental changes and their possible impact, where ambiguities and uncertainties in the environment can be made more explicit and audited (Manchidi, 2024).

1.6 KEY THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

The researcher needs to have certain key words in mind that captures the essence of the topic he or she wishes to investigate (Denscombe, 2010a:34). However, Maxfield and Babbie (2015:115) are of the opinion that the specification of conceptual definitions does two important things; firstly, it serves as a specific working definition we present so that readers will understand exactly what we mean by a concept; secondly, it focuses our observational strategy. The following definitions will apply for the purposes of this study:

1.6.1 Strategy

Strategy has been described variously as the long-term direction of the organisation, a pattern in a stream of decisions, the means by which organisations achieve their objectives and the deliberate choice of a set of activities to achieve competitive advantage (Venter, 2014:10).

1.6.2 Strategy audit

Commonly referred to as “situational analysis” or “environmental scanning”,

> “A strategy audit involves auditing the actual direction of an organisation and comparing that course to the direction required to succeed in a changing environment. An organisation’s actual direction is the sum of what it does and does not do, how well the organisation is internally aligned to support the strategy, and how viable the strategy is when compared to external market, competitor and financial realities. These two categories; (a) the internal strategic audit, and (b) the external strategic audit, make up the major elements of a strategy audit” (Della-Piana et al, 2005:1-2).

1.6.3 Strategic management

Strategic management emanates from management decisions, processes, and activities, which lead to the strategy being delivered. This is done across all levels of employees, and it involves actions and activities, which lead to the strategy being implemented (Jenkins, Ambrosini & Collier, 2016:1).

1.6.4 Strategy formulation

Commonly referred to as “strategic planning”, the process of setting the strategic direction of the organisation, conducting strategic audits of the internal and external environment, setting strategic goals, and developing and choosing the strategies that will help them attain strategic goals (Venter, 2014:309).

1.6.5 Strategy implementation

Commonly referred to as “action phase” or “strategy execution”, the process during which the organisation draws on both human and non-human factors in the organisation to ensure that the strategy is executed in line with plans devised during strategy formulation phase (Venter, 2014:309).

1.6.6 Strategy review and control

Commonly referred to as “strategy evaluation” or “review or monitoring phase”,

> “the purpose of strategic review and control is to ensure that the formulated strategy remains valid and that the implementation of strategy remains on track. It provides feedback to the formulation and implementation phases, so that the organisation can adapt its SPs to its changing environment or react to immediate challenges or opportunities” (Venter, 2014:5).

1.6.7 External strategic audit

Commonly referred to as “external environmental analysis”, the purpose of the external strategic audit is to identify opportunities and challenges outside of the organisation that may influence the ability of the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives (Venter, 2014:4).

1.6.8 Internal strategic audit

Commonly referred to as “internal analysis”, the focus of internal strategic audit is to identify key strengths (to build on) and (to counter or mitigate) key weaknesses relating to the organisation resources and capabilities that may affect the ability of the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives (Davis, 2019:72).

CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Research is not conducted in a vacuum (Wurm & Napier, 2017:106) but is framed within a research paradigm (Henning, Gravett & Van Rensburg, 2004:12). According to Kothari and Garg (2019:1), research comprises defining and redefining problems, formulating hypotheses or suggested solutions, collecting, organising and evaluating data, making deductions and reaching conclusions, and finally carefully testing the conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulated hypothesis.

Sahithi (2021:282) defines research methodology as the art of studying how research is done systematically; it aims to explain how to conduct research, identify the problems that need to be answered, and highlight the pitfalls encountered while conducting a research. Kothari and Garg (2019:7) further define research methodology as a way to systematically solve the research problem.

> There are noticeable similarities across the definitions. Wurm and Napier, along with Henning, Gravett and Van Rensburg, underscore that research operates within a broader contextual and paradigmatic framework. Kothari and Garg present both a comprehensive procedural outline of the research process and a concise definition of methodology as a systematic approach to solving research problems. Sahithi complements this by emphasising the reflective and cautionary role of methodology in guiding researchers. Collectively, the sources portray research methodology as a systematic, structured, and contextually embedded practice essential for effective inquiry. The researcher supports the arguments raised by these sources, emphasising that a robust understanding of research methodology is fundamental for systematically addressing research problems within appropriate paradigmatic boundaries, thereby enhancing the rigour, coherence, and overall validity of the study (Manchidi, 2024).

This chapter outlines and justifies the research methodology adopted in the study. It provides a detailed account of the qualitative research approach, exploratory case study design, purposive and snowball sampling techniques, data collection methods (comprising a comprehensive literature review and semi-structured interviews), thematic data analysis procedures, and the strategies employed to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. The chapter concludes with ethical considerations.

2.2 RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

2.2.1 Research approach

Research approaches are plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The selection of a research approach is also based on the nature of the research problem or issue being addressed, and the audiences for the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:40).

2.2.1.1 Qualitative research approach

In light of the purpose of the research, the researcher adopted the qualitative research approach.

Qualitative research involves looking at characteristics, or qualities, that cannot be entirely reduced to numerical values. A qualitative researcher typically aims to examine the many nuances and complexities of a particular phenomenon—most likely to see qualitative research in studies of complex human situations (e.g., people's in-depth perspectives about a particular issue, the behaviours and values of a particular cultural group) or complex human creations (e.g., television commercials, works of art) (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:6).

In the context of the study, qualitative research would be instrumental in understanding the intricate dynamics and strategic management processes within the NPA (Manchidi, 2024). Qualitative research studies typically serves the following purposes (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:253):

a) *exploration*: little information or academic research was found regarding the strategic audit, as a result, qualitative research allowed the researcher to explore previously understudied topic of strategic audit (see Section 2.2.2.1)
b) *multifaceted description*: According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

   A multifaceted description of the strategic audit process at the NPA shows that the organisation faces major difficulties in complying and implementing the DPME framework, which is mandatory for all SA government departments. Although the NPA has knowledge of the framework and its importance, there is a significant gap between the theoretical knowledge and the practical application of these guidelines—this gap leads to strategic drift, where the NPA's strategies do not evolve at the same rate as the rapidly changing internal and external environment. while the NPA takes these appropriate actions, these efforts are insufficiently adjusted, leading to misalignment with the evolving conditions pursuing outdated goals, creating a false sense of security. The study also explores the nuances of adapting (or translating) the strategic audit tools designed for the private sector to the public sector. The under-utilisation of these tools prevents the NPA from effectively assessing, and realigning its strategies—to address this, the NPA has to continuously reassess and adjust its strategies, enhance the application of strategic audit tools to strengthen the strategic management process, ensure

alignment with internal developments and external changes, and ultimately enhance its effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate

c) *verification*: the majority of the reviewed literature have a business perspective (Manchidi, 2024). The researcher was able to test the gap between practice and theory of strategic auditing in the public sector
d) *theory development*: the researcher was able to contextualise the adaptation of strategic audit tools primarily designed for the private sector to be used in the public sector
e) *problem identification*: strategic audits are generally not undertaken in the NPA (public sector), as evident in their (the NPAs) 'strategic management documents'; according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the problem is also escalated by:
   (i) a highly flexible, non-static NPA environment; (ii) strategic drifts; (iii) common misalignments; (iv) the fact that some of the strategic audit tools are not adapted for the public sector; and (v) NPAs major difficulties complying with the DPME framework, which is mandatory for all SA government departments
f) *evaluation*: currently the NPA only conducts strategic audit in the strategic formulation process, however, the researcher is of the opinion that the NPA could improve, by implementing strategic audit as the formal review process of analysing and evaluating its entire strategic management process (Manchidi, 2024). By embedding strategic audit as an integral, ongoing evaluation tool across the full spectrum of strategic management, the NPA would achieve greater strategic alignment, responsiveness, and overall effectiveness in its operations.

2.2.2 Research design

Bezuidenhout (2011:40) maintains that research design is the blueprint, the procedure or the plan of action, which acts as a framework or guideline of the study. Denscombe (2010a:100) confirms this, stating that a research design explains how the key components of the research project link together, explaining the logic of the research process as it moves from the one phase to the next, and showing how the data collection and analysis are consistent in terms of their general philosophy.

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe research design as a structured plan that guides the research process. Both definitions emphasise the importance of linking key components and ensuring consistency in data collection and analysis.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, emphasising the crucial role of a well-defined research design in providing a coherent framework for the study (Manchidi, 2024).

2.2.2.1 Exploratory research (study) approach

Commonly referred to as “interpretive research” or a “grounded theory” approach due to its flexible and open-ended nature, aims to *“collect information where little or no information is available”* (Fouchè & De Vos, 2011:96). This methodological approach is (a) utilised when the issue being studied is new or when the data collection process is challenging; (b) often qualitative and primary in nature—direct data collection methods entailing various types of interviews, surveys, and focus groups—allowing researchers to explore new areas without preconceived notions; and (c) can also be used when a general idea or a specific question under study has no preexisting knowledge or paradigm with which to study it (George, 2023:1).

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe exploratory research as, a flexible and open-ended approach that is often qualitative and primary in nature. Both definitions emphasise the importance of using direct data collection methods to gather information where little or no information is available.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, emphasising the crucial role of exploratory research in investigating new or challenging issues. Due to the shortage of relevant academic literature regarding the strategic audit, the researcher was compelled to use the explorative study. In SA, no published research relating to the theme could be found. The research aims at adding to the strategic audit knowledge base (Manchidi, 2024).

2.2.2.2 Case study research design

Case studies aim to examine a single case intensively and then engage in a theoretical analysis of the data; however, case studies can be associated with both theory generation and theory testing (Bryman, Bell, Hirschsohn, Dos Santos, Du Toit, Masenge, Van Aardt, & Wagner, 2016:113). Similarly, Houghton, Casey, Shaw, and Murphy (2013:13) highlight a major strength of the case study design as the opportunity to use different sources of evidence through triangulation. In a case study (sometimes called idiographic research), the use of strategic audit in the strategic management process of the NPA was studied in depth for a period of the research study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:253).

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe case study research as, an intensive examination of a single case, with the potential for theory generation and testing. Both definitions emphasise the use of multiple sources of evidence, particularly through triangulation, to enhance the robustness of the findings.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, highlighting the critical role of case studies in providing in-depth insights and the use of various evidence sources to ensure comprehensive analysis (Manchidi, 2024).

The case study approach enabled in-depth insights as follows:

The case study allowed a small number of NPA's senior and middle management to be studied (Manchidi, 2024). A case study enabled the researcher to learn more about a little known or poorly understood topic of strategic audit (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:254);

In the study, the researcher spent an extended amount of time on site (at the NPA), regularly interacting with participants; the researcher also recorded details about the context—surrounding the strategic audit, including information about the internal and external environment (Manchidi, 2024).

2.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Population is the universe of units from which a sample is to be selected (Bryman et al, 2016:186). According to Denscombe (2010b:27), a good sampling frame should be: (a) *relevant*: it should contain things directly linked to the research topic; (b) *complete*: it should cover all relevant items; (c) *precise*: it should exclude all the items that are not relevant; (d) *up-to-date*: it should incorporate recent additions.

There are noticeable similarities—Bryman et al. focus on defining the population as, the entire set of units from which a sample is drawn, while Denscombe outlines the characteristics of an effective sampling frame. Both definitions emphasise the importance of relevance and completeness in ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the sample.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, highlighting the critical role of a well-defined sampling frame in ensuring that the sample accurately represents the population and is suitable for answering the research questions (Manchidi, 2024).

In this study, not only senior and top managers are strategists. The researcher extended the strategists perspective to include, strategic planners, middle managers and consultants (Manchidi, 2024).

2.3.1 Target population

Table 2.1 Details of research participants

	Targeted population description	Sampling method	Size	
			Site - target population	Interviewed from Samples
Sample A	Middle managers (salary band: highly skilled supervision, Levels 9 - 12)	Purposive	324	3 participants
Sample B	Senior and top managers (Levels 13 - 17)	Purposive	46	13 participants

(Source: adapted from University of South Africa Research Ethics Review Committee (URERC), 2020:16-17)

In relation to the NPA target population (summarised in Table 2.1 above), the following points can be highlighted (Manchidi, 2024):

a) the total target population, comprising samples ***(Sample A and B)*** of middle managers as well as senior and top managers, was ***370 at the end of March 2020***
b) of the total headcount of 370, Sample A consists of ***324*** employees categorised as ***Sample A: Middle managers (salary band: highly skilled supervision, Levels 9 - 12)***, and
c) of the total headcount of 370, Sample B consists of ***46*** employees categorised as ***Sample B: Senior and top managers (Levels 13 - 17)***.

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the target population for the interview in this study was selected according to the following criteria:

A *purposive sample of the NPA senior and top, and middle managers* (both male and female) was selected as having had at least more than a year of experience working with the 'strategic management documents' (SP, APP, AOP, and ARs) within the NPA (see Section 2.3.2.1 A.(i) b). *NPA's approval was sought* before the researcher proceeds with the interviews, and the subjects were informed of such approval (see Annexure B). Interviewees must be willing to partake in the research, and must declare their willingness by signing the *consent letter* (see Annexure C.2). Prior to the interviews, participants were provided with an *interview schedule* listing amongst others of research purpose and questions (see Annexure D and E). To obtain *credible data* from the interviews, the researcher intended to interview at least 15 - 20 participants. The researcher had the right research *sample size* (see Section 2.3.2.1).

In order to obtain valuable information, participants were carefully selected and purposive sampling was best suited for this research (Manchidi, 2024).

2.3.2 Purposive sampling

Although sampling procedures in the social and behavioural sciences are often divided into two groups (probability and purposive), there are actually four broad categories, as illustrated in Table 2.2. Probability, purposive, and convenience sampling are discussed briefly below to provide a background for mixed methods sampling strategies (Teddlie & Yu, 2007:77-78):

I. *Probability sampling* techniques—are primarily used in quantitatively oriented studies and involve ''selecting a relatively large number of units from a population, or from specific subgroups (strata) of a population, in a random manner where the probability of inclusion for every member of the population is determinable''. Probability samples aim to achieve representativeness, which is the degree to which the sample accurately represents the entire population
II. ***Purposive sampling (Non-Probability)* techniques—Table 2.2 (II. C), further discusses this method (Purposive sampling) and its sub-method (Sequential sampling)**
III. *Convenience sampling*—involves drawing samples that are both easily accessible and willing to participate in a study. Two types of convenience samples are captive samples and volunteer samples
IV. *Mixed methods* sampling strategies—involve the selection of units or cases for a research study using both probability sampling (to increase external validity)and purposive sampling strategies (to increase transferability).

Table 2.2 Taxonomy of sampling techniques for the social and behavioural sciences

I. Probability sampling

II. Purposive (Non-Probability) sampling

a. Sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability

b. Sampling special or unique cases

c. Sequential sampling

Bryman et al. (2016:186) refer to purposive sampling as a non-probability form of sampling, meaning the researcher cannot generalise to a population or randomly sample participants. The aim is to strategically sample participants to ensure their relevance to the research questions. Similarly, Teddlie and Yu (2007:77) define purposive sampling techniques as primarily used in qualitative studies, selecting units (e.g., individuals, groups, institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study's questions.

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe purposive sampling as, a strategic and non-random method of selecting participants. Both definitions emphasise the importance of relevance to the research questions and the specific purposes of the study.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, highlighting the critical role of purposive sampling in ensuring that the selected participants are relevant and appropriate for answering the research questions (Manchidi, 2024).

In this study, purposive sampling is a non-probability method frequently used in qualitative research. The researcher selected participants based on the research questions to obtain rich data. Additionally, participants were chosen to represent the appropriate population, as advised by Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:69). In addition Teddlie and Yu (2007:77) mention that the sampling strategy chosen for this study was a non-probability sampling strategy to identify participants within the NPA in Pretoria. The method of sampling employed was purposive sampling, which was deemed appropriate as it allowed the researcher to deliberately select a sample from a carefully chosen group

d. Sampling using multiple purposive techniques

III. Convenience sampling

IV. Mixed methods sampling

(Source: adapted from Teddlie and Yu, 2007:78)

Teddlie and Yu (2007:80) further consolidated and presented the typologies of purposive sampling techniques—as detailed in Table 2.3, there are three broad categories of purposive sampling techniques (plus a category involving multiple purposive techniques), each of which encompasses several specific types of strategies:

A. *Sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability*—these techniques are used when the researcher wants to (a) select a purposive sample representing a broader group of cases as closely as possible or (b) set up comparisons among different types of cases
B. *Sampling special or unique cases*—employed when the individual case itself, or a specific group of cases, is a major focus of the investigation (rather than an issue)
C. ***Sequential sampling***—uses the gradual selection principle of sampling when (a) the goal of the research project is the generation of theory (or broadly defined themes) or (b) the sample evolves of its own accord as data are being collected. Gradual selection may be defined as the sequential

selection of units or cases based on their relevance to the research questions, not their representativeness. **Table 2.3 (C.14), further discusses this method (Sequential sampling) and its sub-method (Snowball sampling)**

D. *Sampling using multiple purposive techniques*—involves using multiple qualitative techniques in the same study.

Table 2.3 A typology of purposive sampling strategies

A. Sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability

B. Sampling special or unique cases

C. Sequential sampling

11. Theoretical sampling (also referred to as "theory-based sampling")
12. Confirming and disconfirming cases
13. Opportunistic sampling (also referred to as "emergent sampling")
14. ***Snowball sampling***

Commonly referred to as "chain sampling", according to Welman et al. (2005:69), snowball sampling is defined as a process wherein, in the first phase, researchers approach a few individuals from the relevant population. These individuals then act as informants and identify other members (i.e., acquaintances or friends) from the same population for inclusion in the sample. This process continues, with each new participant identifying further relevant individuals, causing the sample to grow like a rolling snowball until it reaches saturation. Similarly, Bryman et al. (2016:179-180) describe snowball sampling as a non-random sampling technique primarily used in qualitative research. The researcher makes initial contact with a small group of people relevant to the research topic and then uses these people to establish contacts with others. This method is considered a form of convenience sampling.

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe snowball sampling as, a process that involves initial contact with a few individuals who then help identify further participants. Both definitions emphasise the non-random nature of this technique and its use in qualitative research.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, highlighting the critical role of initial informants in expanding the sample and the convenience aspect of this method (Manchidi, 2024).

In the NPA study, the researcher encountered difficulties in arranging interviews with participants because of their busy work schedules—as a result, the researcher had to use snowball sampling (see Section 2.3.2.1 B). This involved initially contacting a small group of participants who then helped to connect the researcher with other participants for interviews (see Annexure F). Using this method, the researcher was able to interview a total of 16 participants, including 3 middle managers and 13 senior/top managers.

D. Sampling using combinations of purposive techniques

(Source: adapted from Teddlie and Yu, 2007:81)

2.3.2.1 Sample size and selection of the sample group

In the NPA study, an adequate sample size was selected to align with the research rationale, ensuring the study's purpose could be fulfilled, as prescribed by Marshall and Rossman (2016:223). The researcher considered the findings of Francis, Johnston, Robertson, Glidewell, Entwistle, Eccles and Grimshaw (2010:1241), which suggest that saturation occurs after a certain number of interviews:

behavioural beliefs after fifteen, normative beliefs after thirteen, and control beliefs after fourteen. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006:59) also state that saturation typically occurs within the first twelve interviews. The researcher was mindful of reaching saturation as—defined by Creswell and Creswell (2018:262) as the point where no new information or insights are revealed.

In the NPA study, saturation was achieved after eight interviews. The researcher aimed to interview at least 15 participants but decided to select 24 to ensure a minimum of 15 interviews (see Section 2.3.2.1 D). A list of initial few potential participants was obtained from the NPA Research directorate via WhatsApp LLC (2024) (see Section 2.3.2.1 B). The inclusion (see Section 2.3.1, Table 2.1, and 2.3.2.1 A(i)) and exclusion criteria (see Section 2.3.2.1 A(ii)) were used to select participants (Manchidi, 2024).

A. *Participant criteria*:

   (i) *Inclusion criteria*: the list included, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024); (a) senior/top managers and middle managers from various professional and managerial backgrounds (strategic management and support, research, performance information management, finance, human resources, administration, service delivery improvement, public prosecutions, operations) balance, and (b) the number of years - must be more than a year of experience dealing with SP, APP, AOP, and ARs within the NPA

   (ii) *Exclusion criteria*: (c) those excluded were middle, and senior and top manager who were serving notice, and (d) newly appointed middle, and senior and top managers (Manchidi, 2024)

B. *Selection process*: 13 Senior and top managers and 3 middle managers were chosen (Manchidi, 2024). The timeline was as follows: The researcher attempted to arrange interviews from 2021 to December 2023 unsuccessfully. However, from mid-December 2023, the researcher successfully secured a few initial participants and applied the snowball sampling technique until January 2024. The researcher informed the initial few participants of the interview's place, date, and time via telephone and email.

C. *Confidentiality*: A confidentiality agreement was signed by the participants prior to the interview (see Annexure D and E (Researchers' assurance (f)), where the participants real names and surnames, positions, and contact details are reducted (see Annexure F), only the researcher and the supervisor have a copy of the unredacted version (first submitted dissertation) (Manchidi, 2024)

D. *Interview outcomes*: Out of 24 participants, none declined, eight did not respond, and none withdrew before the interview (Manchidi, 2024). Detailed profiles and pseudonyms (or aliases) are provided in Annexure F.

2.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes (Amanullah, 2018:124). Similarly, Leedy and Ormrod (2016:260) state that data collection must be both: (a) reasonably *accurate* with regard to the characteristics and dynamics of the entities or situation being studied (this is *validity*); and (b) *consistent* in the patterns and dynamics they reflect (this is *reliability*).

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe data collection as, a systematic process that involves gathering and measuring information. Both definitions emphasise the importance of accuracy (validity) and consistency (reliability) in the data collection process.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, highlighting the critical role of systematic and reliable data collection in ensuring the validity and consistency of research findings (Manchidi, 2024).

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the quality of the research results depends upon the reliability of the data, for that reason, utmost care was exercised while collecting data. The researcher obtained suitable, accurate, and adequate data from some of the sources relevant to the research. The researcher gathered data by means of a comprehensive literature study and semi-structured interviews.

2.4.1 Literature study

Sekaran and Bougie (2016:54) indicates that literature study involves the identification of the various published and unpublished materials that are available on the topic of interest, and gaining access to these. Similarly, Sekaran and Bougie (2016:57) further state that the purpose of the literature review is to help the researcher to build on the work of others and to make informed decisions during the various stages of the research project.

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe literature study as, a process that involves identifying and accessing relevant materials. Both definitions emphasise the importance of building on existing work and making informed decisions throughout the research process.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, highlighting the critical role of literature study in providing a foundation for research and guiding the researcher’s decisions (Manchidi, 2024).

All research should address the resources that are available and that are needed to carry out the study (De Vos, Strydom, Fouchè & Delport, 2011:111). While identifying and collecting relevant literature, the researcher (Manchidi, 2024) considered the following:

a) literature review was guided by the research aims and questions
b) to establish what has already been done in the research, it was important for the researcher to conduct a thorough literature review
c) the researcher also emailed a detailed list of requested journals with *'Digital Object Identifier'* (DOI) numbers to the University of South Africa (UNISA) library services, but they were unable to assist
d) the researcher also performed a broad literature search foundation of academic journal and conference papers. The researcher achieved this by performing a search on the literature databases: Emerald Insight (https://www.emerald.com/insight/), EPDF.PUB (https://epdf.pub/), and The Open Access Button (https://openaccessbutton.org/).
e) literature mainly focusing on strategic audit was selected. To be able to classify the most relevant papers within strategic audit over decades, the selection of literature should:
   i. be highly regarded amongst reputable scientists reflected in the frequently cited on *'Google Scholar'*, ii. be only highly-ranked journals and conference papers
f) the researcher also requested published 'strategic management documents' (including the NPA's ARs, APPs, and SPs) from the NPA on 04 June 2019, and on 10 June 2019, the requested materials were collected
g) the literature used in this study was sourced from published;
   i. case studies, international academic journals and textbooks related to the specific subject (strategic management, and situational analysis), ii. NPA ARs and other publicly available material
h) the researcher found that, scarce literature on the topic had mostly been indirectly duplicated
i) the researcher found few books relevant to the topic being researched, and most of these books contain few chapters regarding strategic audit.

However, all of the available materials on the topic of strategic audit were not specific to the public sector (Manchidi, 2024). The researcher ensured that all the sources used were correctly referenced and backed-up. Web-published materials were bookmarked, printed and filed.

2.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

Bryman et al (2016:225) mention that in a semi-structured interview, the researcher has a list of questions on fairly specific topics to be covered, often referred to as an *'interview guide'*, but the interviewee has leeway in how to reply.

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews since they had the distinct advantage of enabling a researcher to establish rapport with potential participants and therefore gained their cooperation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:142). The researcher executed several roles in the study as an *observer, interviewer, recorder, data processor, and analyst*.

2.4.2.1 Interview role players

A. The researcher's multifaceted role

In qualitative research paradigm, the researcher is serves as the primary instrument of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003: 3; cf. Wa-Mbaleka, 2020: 33-41) and, therefore, facilitating the transmission of insights through interpersonal engagement rather than mechanical devices or standardised inventories (Simon, 2011: 1). This embodied role demands the degree of reflexivity, wherein the researcher articulates her positionality (or pertinent aspects)—including expectations, assumptions, vulnerabilities, biases, and prior experiences—to affirm her competence and mitigate interpretive distortions (cf. Greenbank, 2003: 791–801); such transparency, not only enhances the credibility of the study, but also ensures that participants' voices are amplified, thereby counter-balancing the researcher's predispositions, thus safeguarding the authenticity of emergent narratives.

The researcher, as an interviewer, should ensure she creates a fair dialogue that elicits deep, layered responses. This task entails answering participants' questions, asking specific questions, and closely noting their answers (Manchidi, 2024).

In the study, the researcher (Manchidi, 2024): (a) ascertained whether the participant grasped the questions; by employing interviewing techniques such as open-ended questions, neutral probes, tracking, clarification, appropriate feedback, and reflective summary; and determined whether the provided answer was clear, (b) listening to the respondent, both verbally and non-verbally, promoted an adequate flow of the interview and assisted in ensuring the correctness of the information, (c) the interviewer dictated the pace of the interview and kept the participant focused and interested, and (d) the researcher ensured a comfortable and pleasant atmosphere at all times.

B. Role of the participant

A research participant, also referred to as a “human subject”, “study participant”, “subject”, “trial” or “an experiment”, is an individual who, on a voluntarily basis, participates in human subject research after giving informed consent to be the research subject (cf. American Psychological Association (APA), 2020:21-22,96-97,100-101,120,278). Research participants differ from those that cannot give informed consent, such as animals, infants, and children; it is thus preferable to identify those as subjects (Manchidi, 2024).

In the NPA study, the role of the participant was limited to stating the way they knew and had experienced the phenomenon under study; there were no right or wrong answers; and information was taken ‘as is’, without alterations (Manchidi, 2024).

2.4.2.2 Pilot interviews

> A pilot interview can be defined as a miniature version or a trial run of the research interview in preparation for a full-scale interview and may be explicitly conducted to pre-test a research instrument. Performing pilot interviews is essential to the success of any research, as it assists in detecting possible measurement instrument flaws. The instrument is pre-tested with a small group of participants with similar characteristics to those of the main study participants. Essentially, pilot interviews assist in determining the extent to which a research interview instrument functions within the actual research interviews by identifying potential issues and areas for adjustment (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001:1-2).

However, a pilot study can also serve as the pre-testing or ‘trying out’ of a particular research instrument, such as a semi-structured interview (Baker, 1994:182-183). It assists with providing the researcher with the opportunity to practice and refine interview techniques (Berg, 2001:75). Additionally, it assesses whether all the questions essential to measure all concepts have been incorporated into the research (Berg, 2001:215). It also helps to discard or modify highlighted unnecessary, complicated, unclear, or ambiguous questions and interview protocols. Furthermore, it examines the responses to each question to assess their suitability and determines if responses can be interpreted sufficiently regarding the required information (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001:3). Moreover, it determines and records whether the interview’s duration is reasonable and adds credibility to the research study (Manchidi, 2024). The study was piloted, and the outcome thereof was used to adapt and finalise the data collection tool.

2.4.2.3 Interview process (methodology) and techniques:

> The interview technique is one of the essential and most powerful tools for primary data collection in social research, revealing the views, perspectives, experiences, and values of the population under study. The interview process (methodology) comprises several aspects: (a) planning the interview process, (b) designing the interview schedule, (c) conducting the interview, (d)

transcribing the data, (e) verifying the results, and (f) reporting the results. The researcher adhered to the following interview process and techniques when conducting interviews (Sociology Group, 2019:1):

2.4.2.3.1 Planning the interview

a) the researcher sought written permission to conduct interviews from the NPA (see Annexure B)
b) the researcher sought written consent from participants prior to conducting interviews (see Annexure C.2)
c) The researcher restricted the invitation to one interview per participant and did not conduct any follow-up interviews because they were deemed unnecessary.

2.4.2.3.2 Designing the interview schedule

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the interview schedule is a list of the questions or subject areas that the interviewer intends to cover or inquire about during the interview. It should be prepared, whether the interview is structured or unstructured. The researcher compiled an interview schedule containing questions guided by the research aims and questions (see Annexure D and E).

2.4.2.3.3 Conducting the interview

Interviews were conducted with selected senior, top, and middle management. Prior to every interview session, the researcher (Manchidi, 2024) adhered to the following procedures for every interview:

a) *Scheduling the interviews*

Appointments were scheduled at times that suited each participant when possible, and snowball sampling was used to secure interviews with other participants (Manchidi, 2024), (see Section 2.3.2.1 B).

b) *The interview setting*

The researcher ensured that the time and location of the interview were appropriate, providing participants with precise information on the location of the interview room; a quiet room suitable for conversation was secured. Chairs were positioned to encourage face-to-face interviewing, and lastly, a tape recorder was prepared (Manchidi, 2024).

To ensure that the interviewees were at ease, the researcher conducted interviews in their *'natural'* setting. When necessary, a suitable alternative location that was convenient, safe, and free from any disturbance was also arranged (Manchidi, 2024).

c) *Participants' orientation*

The participants were provided with the context, objectives, and the anticipated length of the interview prior to the interview. Pre-determined questions were sent in advance, allowing the participants time to consider their answers and collect any relevant documentation (Manchidi, 2024).

Table 2.4 Participants' orientation process prior to interviews

Prior to the interviews, participants were taken through a structured orientation process, which, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), entails the following elements: *i. Informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality* Participants were informed of the objectives and aims of the study before obtaining their *informed written consent* (see Annexure C.2). Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained. For ensuring that *confidentiality*, interviewees are referred to in this study as *'participants, respondents, or subjects'*. Participants had the right to request that their names be kept confidential, known only to the researcher, the supervisor and members of URERC. Alternatively, participants' names were not recorded, ensuring *anonymity* (see Annexure C.1:5-6 and cf. URERC, 2020:6-37). *ii. Restriction on participants' withdrawal from the study after consenting to participate* Participants were informed of the option to withdraw at any time without giving a reason. However, withdrawal after the interview was transcribed was impossible (see Annexure C.2:8). *iii. The risks or negative consequences of taking part in the study* Potential risks are classified based on the anticipated degree of risk. The research was categorised as ***low risk***; thus, direct human participant involvement. The only foreseeable risk of harm is the potential for minor discomfort or inconvenience; thus, research that would not pose a risk above the everyday norm (see Annexure C.1:5). *iv. Data security and protection by the researcher* The researcher stored the electronic information and hard copies of the participants' answers on a password-protected computer for a duration of five years in locked drawers at the researcher's residence for future academic or research purposes. Interviews were recorder and transcribed using *'otter.ai'* speech-to-text transcription and kept on a password-protected USB in a safe for five years. Future utilisation of the stored data will be subject to further review and authorisation by the URERC, where applicable. Physical copies were shredded, and digital copies were permanently erased from the laptop's hard drive using relevant utility software - IObit File Shredder (IObit, 2020) (see Annexure C.1:6). *v. The potential benefits for participants from participating in this study* Benefits to participants participating in the study are listed under the 'significance of the research' (see Section 1.6). There were no payments or rewards offered, financial or otherwise, to participants for participating in this research study. Participant incurred no costs for participating in this study (see Annexure C.1:6).

d) *Explaining the interview process*

The researcher appreciated the participant's interest and time in participating in the study. The researcher ensured that participants had an indication of the potential duration of the interview. The interview was not to take more than an hour and a half (90 minutes) to consider the other commitments of the participants (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012:5). The duration of interviews depended on the amount of interest in the topic, information, personal opinions, and experience of the respondent, the expected duration of participation, and the time needed to complete specific research interviews (Manchidi, 2024). However, the researcher allocated an average of 6–8 weeks to engage with participants and limited the interviews to 60 minutes per interview session.

The researcher reminded the participant of the agreement (see Annexure C.2) and indicated that the interview was semi-structured. The semi-structured interview procedure allowed focus and reframing (flexibility) during the interviews (Manchidi, 2024). The researcher explained that probing questions would be dictated by the information conveyed by the participant. For probing additional details, the researcher followed the standard questions with one or more individually tailored questions to get clarification or probe a person's reasoning. Consistent with the recommendation of Krefting (1991:220) to enhance credibility within the interview process, several prompts were included in the interview protocol (see Section 1.4), which allowed the expansion of answers and the opportunity, if required, to request more information. To verify observations and meanings, the researcher asked indirect questions about participants' experiences. Finally, the researcher sought permission from the interviewee before recording and used a digital audio recorder to record interviews.

e) *Establishing rapport*

Establishing rapport is a vital element of effective communication. It creates a climate of trust and understanding, providing the researcher with the ability to connect with participants. In the study, the researcher established rapport by conducting face-to-face interviews (Manchidi, 2024).

These interviews have the distinct advantage of enabling a researcher to establish rapport with potential participants, thereby gaining their cooperation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:142). Once a relationship was successfully built, mutual trust and respect increased, and communication became more effective (Youell & Youell, 2013:89).

The researcher strived to build rapport, consistent with Talbot's (1995:477) guidance on building rapport with the interviewee: (i) *obtaining honest and open responses*: this entailed maintaining eye contact, paying attention to what the participant said, did, thought, and felt, not interrupting, never assuming (if the researcher was unsure, she asked), remaining non-judgmental (the researcher intended to understand, not to evaluate), examining her own style of questioning, and developing a healthy appreciation for silence; (ii) *asking open-ended questions*: encouraging participants to share more freely and feel heard helps in building rapport. Open-ended interview questions were asked in English, with the intention of offering participants leeway in their responses to the posed questions; (iii) *maintaining interview integrity*: ensuring participants' words are respected builds trust and rapport. The researcher never attempted to change what the interviewees said nor put words in their mouths; and (iv) *concluding the interview*: expressing gratitude reinforces a positive relationship and mutual respect. At the end of every interview session, the researcher expressed gratitude to the participant for taking part in the study.

2.4.2.3.4 Transcribing the data

Transcription, although rarely explicitly defined, refers to the process of reproducing spoken words, such as those from an audio recorded interview, into written text (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006:38). Verbatim transcription refers to the word-for-word reproduction of verbal or audio data, where the written words are an exact replication of the audio recorded words (cf. Poland, 1995:291-294).

Recorded interviews were transcribed for data analysis purposes; the researcher (Manchidi, 2024) used a two-step approach to the data transcription, namely:

a) *Intelligent verbatim transcription*

   Commonly referred to as “clean” or “edited transcription”, *'otter.ai'* ensured accurate, high-quality transcription of audio into concise, readable text, and it also removed filler phrases such as *'err, hmm, ums, om's or you know'*, overlapping conversation, ambient sounds, and unnecessary non-verbal communication.

b) *Manual transcription*

   The researcher manually edited the 'intelligent verbatim transcription' with the intent to construct the text in the most natural way possible and to strike a balance between readability and completeness. Several minor paraphrases were made while preserving the original meaning; some sentences were rearranged to make the text more comprehensible, and unnecessary repetitions were removed.

2.4.2.3.5 Verifying the results

Commonly referred to as “participants feedback” or “member checking”, once the data collection was completed and the interviews conducted, the researcher reflected and provided feedback in writing. After the interview, the researcher submitted a transcript of the interview and got from the interviewee either a written acknowledgment of its accuracy or a corrected copy (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:269)

The researcher verified the trustworthiness of the collected data by applying the technique called member checking — seeking participant feedback (see Section 2.6.1.9). Member checking (seeking participant feedback), is a technique that involves the continuous verification of data, analytical categories, interpretations and findings with participants from whom data was originally obtained (Krefting 1991:219). This feedback may be obtained either in writing or in face-to-face conversations, and is also a way to obtain additional data (Billups, 2014:10).

In the NPA study, informal member checking was done during the interview process; and more formally after data have been analysed in follow-up interviews: (a) *during the interview*: the researcher restated or summarised information and then questioned participants to determine accuracy; (b) *member checks completed after the study*: was conducted following transcription by sharing all of the findings with the participants involved; this allowed participants to analyse the findings and comment on them critically (Manchidi, 2024).

2.4.2.3.6 Reporting the results

According to URERC (2020:36): (a) dissertations are traditionally published on the Unisa Institutional Repository (UnisaIR), and the NPA was supplied with the direct link thereof, and or (b) the NPA can request an electronic copy of the dissertation from the researcher (the researcher will not publish the journal article nor the dissertation since the copyrights belong to the institution—UNISA.

> Semi-structured Interviews allowed the researcher to explore the contexts and dynamics of strategic audit in lessening some of the uncertainties in the NPA's internal and external environments by highlighting strengths and weaknesses within the NPA and considering how they align with the external opportunities and challenges. The collected data was transcribed before it was deemed ready for analysis (Manchidi, 2024).

2.5 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

Data analysis is the application of reasoning to understand the data that have been gathered; in its simplest form, analysis may involve determining consistent patterns and summarising the relevant details revealed in the investigation (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2013:68). Similarly, TryMyUI (2023:1) defines qualitative data analysis as a methodical process for interpreting and comprehending non-numerical data, unlike quantitative data, which involves measurable quantities; the goal of qualitative data is to explore meanings, patterns, and themes through the use of subjective information such as text, images, or audio—and is commonly utilised in fields such as the social sciences, humanities, and other fields where grasping the context and nuances of the data is crucial.

> There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe data analysis as a process that involves identifying patterns and summarising information. Both definitions emphasise the importance of reasoning and interpretation in understanding data, whether it is numerical or non-numerical.
>
> The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, highlighting the critical role of systematic analysis in uncovering meaningful insights from data, regardless of its form (Manchidi, 2024).

For an in-depth exploration of data analysis (see Section 2.5.1, and 2.5.2).

The researcher (Manchidi, 2024) chose thematic analysis for its; a) adaptability to the research questions, b) effectiveness in managing and interpreting large and complex data sets, allowing the researcher to identify and organise key themes, and c) facilitating a deep exploration of participants' experiences, views, and opinions, providing rich insights.

2.5.1 Thematic analysis

Theming involves a process of combining codes from several transcripts in order to present qualitative research findings coherently and meaningfully (Manchidi, 2024). According to Braun and Clarke (2006:6), thematic analysis is a method that identifies, analyses and reports on patterns (themes) within the data. The researcher followed the Braun and Clarke (2006:16-23) six-phase thematic analysis process, described in detail in Table 2.5 below:

Table 2.5 Braun and Clarke six-phase thematic analysis process

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data:	The researcher started by transcribing data (using *'otter.ai'* speech-to-text transcription), and the researcher continuously: listened to audio recordings; read over the notes and scripts, and lastly; noted down initial ideas with the objective of understanding data better
2. Generating initial codes:	The researcher used Corel WordPerfect (2021) to manually code data for easy interpretation and organise and store data for effortless navigation. In addition, the researcher easily marked and managed relevant data to each code and coded interesting features of the data systematically across the entire dataset.
3. Discovering themes or searching for themes:	The researcher compiled codes according to potential themes, sub-themes and gather all relevant data to each potential theme
4. Reviewing themes:	The researcher also checked if the themes worked in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire dataset (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis. Furthermore, the researcher identified the relevance of themes to the study and determined which themes required alteration or removal
5. Defining and naming themes:	During this phase, the researcher continued with the ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis told, generated clear definitions and names for each theme
6. Writing the analysis/report:	The researcher provided and maintained a good balance between the codebook (see Chapter 5 – Findings) with contains illustrative extracts of sample interview answers from participants. The researcher also reported all gathered information and applied it scientifically relating to the literature, the research aims and the questions.

Once the participants verified the transcribed research interviews, the researcher began coding.

2.5.2 Coding

Coding in qualitative research refers to the process of identifying topics, issues, similarities, and differences that are revealed through the participants' narratives and interpreted by the researcher (Sutton & Austin, 2015:228). It involves finding patterns and themes in qualitative data by systematically categorising excerpts to gain an in-depth understanding of the transcribed data; in essence, coding entails labelling and organising data to identify different patterns, themes, and their relationships (Manchidi, 2024).

2.5.2.1 Benefits of coding (Delve, n.d.:1):

a) *data structuring and organisation* — coding enables data to be structured and organised, which facilitates systematic and valid analysis
b) *bias awareness* — coding makes the researcher to be aware of her potential biases in data analysis
c) *representation evaluation* — coding allows the researcher to evaluate if the analysis accurately represents the participant base and aids in avoiding over-representation of an individual or group of people.

The goal of coding is to transform raw data into a sorted and categorised form that allows for a more in-depth understanding of the collected information. It is a critical step in ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative research. Qualitative coding is a crucial process in qualitative research.

2.5.2.2 Deductive coding method (LaiYee, 2022:1):

Before initiating the coding process, it is crucial to decide on the approach to be adopted. This decision could involve starting with a predefined set of codes and adhering to them, known as deductive coding. Alternatively, one could develop codes based on the data observed, a method referred to as inductive coding. A combination of both methods could also be employed.

Deductive coding is a top-down approach. It commences with the creation of a codebook that contains an initial set of codes. These codes could be derived from various sources, such as research questions, an existing research framework, or a theory. Following the creation of the codebook, the data is reviewed, and excerpts are assigned to the relevant codes.

Upon completion of the analysis, it was expected that the codes will closely resemble the initial codebook. This method proves beneficial when there is a pre-established structure required for the final findings. For instance, deductive data analysis and approaches may be instrumental in studies involving program evaluation or content analysis.

In the NPA study, the researcher elected to utilise the deductive approach. This process commenced with a predefined set of codes and a codebook (see Chapter 5 – Findings), which was developed prior to the analysis of the research data; this set was formulated based on the research questions. For instance, in response to the research question (RQ1): *'What is strategic audit (analysis)?'*, the researcher predefined a list of codes or prompts designed to address the main research question comprehensively. These included codes or prompts such as *'What is strategy?'*, *'What is the purpose of strategic audit (analysis)?'*, and *'What are the key components of strategic audit (analysis)?'*. Keeping this list in mind, the researcher meticulously read through the research data, assigning the predefined codes or prompts where appropriate (Manchidi, 2024).

2.5.2.3 Development of the codebook (cf. LaiYee, 2023:1-2):

> The codebook also referred to as the "coding manual" or "content analysis dictionary", contains written instructions to coders specifying a set of rules that define the categories used to classify text. It provides; (a) a list of all the dimensions, (b) the different categories subsumed under each dimension, (c) the letters of numbers (i.e. codes) that correspond to each category, (d) guidance on what each dimension is concerned with, the definitions or rules to be used in assigning words to categories, and any factors that should be taken into account in deciding how to allocate any

particular code to each dimension. The codebook thus enables the message content to be coded in a consistent manner (Bryman et al, 2016:303).

A qualitative codebook is an essential tool in qualitative research, mainly when dealing with large data sets. It serves multiple purposes: it facilitates organisation during the coding process, ensures the consistent application of codes when working within a team, and provides a valuable reference throughout the study. Furthermore, it offers context for any individual examining the data post-analysis, facilitating a better understanding of the coding decisions made.

The key components of a qualitative codebook include:

a) codes or prompts — these are *"labels"* employed to tag concepts or values discovered in a narrative or text

b) *definitions* — the codebook includes definitions of these codes, providing clarity and consistency in their application

c) *examples* — practical instances of code application are provided in the codebook, offering guidance on how to use the codes

d) *themes* — the codebook includes definitions of themes and sub-themes, which serve as references for the coding of narrative text.

A well-structured qualitative codebook is instrumental in ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative research. It not only aids in data organisation and code application but also provides valuable insights into the coding decisions made during the study.

A variety of different tools can be utilised for creating a qualitative codebook: (a) *document editor* — this method offers a straightforward approach to employ an already accessible tool. It is imperative to keep the qualitative codebook updated as the codes undergo changes during the analysis, (b) *pen and paper* — this traditional method is beneficial when conducting manual analysis. The tactile nature of using paper can be beneficial, allowing for maintaining the qualitative codebook on a physical medium, and (c) *qualitative software* — specialised software for qualitative data analysis can automatically update the qualitative codebook as the codes evolve throughout the analysis.

In the NPA study, the researcher elected to utilise a document editor, specifically Corel WordPerfect (2021). This decision was based on the researcher's preference and the tool's ability to meet the requirements of the study.

The researcher analysed the collected data to draw conclusions about the 'strategic audit' phenomenon.

2.6 ENSURING TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

The perspectives of quantitative research are reliability and validity, and for qualitative research is trustworthiness (Manchidi, 2024). Polit and Beck (2018:572) defines trustworthiness or rigor of a study as the degree of confidence qualitative researchers have in their data, analyses, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study. To develop trustworthiness in qualitative research, cf. Lincoln and Guba (1985:289-331) initially presented four criteria: *credibility*, *dependability*, *confirmability*, and *transferability*, and in 1991, Krefting (1991:217-220) added several strategies for the achievement of rigor in qualitative research. In 1994, Lincoln and Guba added a fifth criterion, *authenticity* (Cope, 2014:89).

Table 2.6 Method to ensure trustworthiness

Criteria	Technique	Application of technique to achieve rigour
2.6.1 Credibility Commonly referred to as 'truth value' (parallels quantitative research: 'internal validity'); *Are the qualitative findings believable? Do the findings appear truthful, capturing a holistic representation of the phenomenon under exploration (Billups, 2014:10)?* The essence of credibility in research is the extent to which a researcher can demonstrate the accuracy and the appropriateness of the data collected (Denscombe, 2014:297).	*2.6.1.1 Prolonged engagement* *How extensive will field contacts be in order to satisfy the requirement of prolonged engagement?; and how will the shift be managed from an open-ended "I don't know - what I don't know" posture to a relatively more focused approach that can be characterised as persistent observation of salient elements (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:247)?* In conjunction with **persistent observation in the field** (intense focus on the aspects of setting and phenomenon), suggests that the researcher must spend considerable time in the research field to thoroughly understand participant perspectives and to offset the researcher's own bias (although how much time depends on the nature of the study (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989) (as cited in Billups, 2014:10)). "If prolonged engagement provides scope, persistent observation provides depth" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:304).	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the concept of prolonged engagement did not translate into a lengthy interview; instead, the researcher developed a close familiarity with participants as they work in their *'natural'* setting (NPA in Pretoria). The researcher was also in the research field long enough (an average of 6–8 weeks) to: (i) get oriented towards the situation in order to appreciate and understand the context; (ii) be able to detect and account for data distortions, the researcher built trust and blended-in with the participants and made them feel comfortable disclosing information that no longer *'tows the party-line'*; and (iii) enable the researcher to rise above her preconceptions.

	2.6.1.2 Time sampling Krefting (1991:218) defines time sampling as a strategy that highlights the significance of the environment in which data is collected and establishes credibility. Similarly, Dagar and Chauhan (2020:258) defines time sampling as a method of gathering data by observing participants at various intervals and record whether a particular behaviour or activity occurred.	In the NPA study, the researcher employed a time sampling strategy (see Table 2.3 C(14)) to secure participants because of their hectic work schedules, which led to the snowball sampling method being employed, and – a flowchart was used to systematise participants contacts and observation to determine whether the researcher was sampling all possible situations, including different times of day, and week; and interactions among different social groups (senior/top managers, and middle managers) (Knafl & Breitmayer, 1989) (as cited in Krefting, 1991:218).
	2.6.1.3 Interview process and techniques According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the interview technique is one of the essential and most powerful tools for primary data collection (revealing the views, perspectives, experiences, and values of the population under study) in social research; while the interview process (methodology) comprises of several aspects: (i) choosing a topic; (ii) research on existing knowledge; (iii) planning the interview process; (iv) designing the interview schedule; (v) conducting the interview; (vi) transcribing the data (using *'otter.ai'* speech-to-text transcription); (vii) analysing the data; (viii) verifying the results (member checks); and (ix) reporting the results.	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the researcher's retired primary supervisor, Van der Merwe (2019-2022), approved the interview schedule before the actual data collection; and the researcher used 1–2 pilot interviews to refine the interview protocol, time-management and to optimise the overall process. Consistent with the recommendation of Krefting (1991:220) to enhance credibility within the interview process: (a) the semi-structured interview procedure allowed focus and reframing (flexibility) during the interviews; (b) several prompts were included in the interview protocol (Annexure D and E, Section B), which allowed the expansion of answers and the opportunity, if required, to request more information; in order to verify observations and meanings, (c) the researcher also asked indirect questions about participants' experiences.
	2.6.1.4 Establishing authority of researcher Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014:42) expanded and outlined four qualities necessary for the assessment of the 'human instrument's' trustworthiness: (i) *familiarity with the phenomenon and research context*:	In this study, the researcher had several years' experience in the

		monitoring and evaluation of the SP, APP, and the AOP in the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) components and extensive security risk management-based research experience and track records conducting such work.
	(ii) *good investigative/research skills*:	In this study, the researcher has over three years' experience in qualitative data collection and one year's specific experience in individual interview techniques.
	(iii) *theoretical knowledge and skills in conceptualising large datasets*:	In this study, the researcher has post-graduate experience analysing qualitative data; and qualitative research skills in coding and interpretation of large volumes of qualitative data.
	(iv) *ability to take a multidisciplinary approach*:	In this study, the researcher's multidisciplinary background in security management, strategy formulation processes, monitoring and evaluation of the SPs, AOPs and the APPs, enabled the researcher to explore various theoretical perspectives and applied an eclectic approach to interpreting the findings. Conducting research on a subject with which the researcher has firsthand experience presents significant advantages and can enhance the credibility of the research.
	2.6.1.5 Collection of referential adequacy materials (archiving of data) *What referential adequacy materials will be collected? How will they be achieved? When and by whom will they be utilised (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:248)?* Involves the collection of materials and documents that may not be used in the initial analysis but are to be archived and later compared against data analyses to test their adequacy and the validity of the researcher's findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:283).	In this study, consistent with the recommendation of Lincoln and Guba (1985:313) to collect any additional relevant resources – a separate set of materials from the on-site data collection were maintained by the researcher, which included: (i) documents; (ii) raw data (audio-recordings transcribed verbatim using *'otter.ai')*; and (iii) field notes – providing additional information concerning the study's context, its findings, and interpretation of results. These materials were collected and used at various data analysis stages and archived for future reference and safekeeping of confidential material.

	2.6.1.6 Establishing referential adequacy Ensured credibility and involved testing analyses and interpretations made after completing the field study against other research theories and data sources (Guba, 1981:86).	In this study, consistent with Lincoln and Guba (1985:313) suggestion of establishing referential adequacy: (i) the researcher kept field notes and transcribed verbatim all audio-recordings (using *'otter.ai'*), to ensure that raw data could undergo further analysis and interpretation; (ii) the researcher performed referential adequacy testing by returning to the raw data to ensure that all conclusions are firmly focused on the data and compared to the developed themes; and (iii) the bibliography references are valid, current, and accounted for; the researcher also added appendices to provide an accurate audit trail.
	2.6.1.7 Structural coherence Ensured that there were no unexplained inconsistencies between the data and their interpretation and was also influenced by the way the researcher integrated the immense loosely connected data masses into a holistic, logical picture in the report (Krefting, 1991:220).	In this study, consistent with Coombs's (2017:2) key guidance for crafting high-quality qualitative research reporting and ensuring that the study also had high coherence and transparency levels: the researcher presented a discussion of two overarching themes, transparency and structural coherence, that permeate throughout the review and concluded with a series of reflective questions and associated resources to help her focus on key considerations for crafting this research study. These themes are structured around the core components of a research method: (i) establishing philosophical underpinnings; (ii) clarifying theoretical aims; (iii) selecting qualitative methods; (iv) demonstrating rigour in qualitative data analysis; and (v) grappling with generalisation.
	2.6.1.8 Negative case analysis *What provisions will be made to carry out negative case analysis, subject emerging hypotheses to continuous test, and refine them until they are fully explanatory of observed phenomena (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:248)?* Use disconfirming evidence to seek contrary interpretations in a study; the application of conflicting findings creates a richer picture of the phenomenon	In this study, not all evidence fits the code or a theme pattern; therefore, the negative case analysis (Manchidi, 2024): (i) allowed the research questions to be reformulated; (ii) improved the research study's rigour; and (iii) provided a realistic assessment of the phenomenon under study. The researcher also accounted for other plausible alternative viewpoints

	and enables results to be continually refined (Creswell & Poth, 2018:341). The authors put forth that negative case analysis occurs when data emerging from the research study contradicts the expectations of the researcher.	emerging from the data and participants.
	2.6.1.9 Member checking (seeking participant feedback) *How will member checks be provided for during a given field excursion? From one excursion to the next? In the final member check of the draft case study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:248)?* Is a technique that involves the continuous verification of data, analytical categories, interpretations and findings with participants from whom data was originally obtained (Krefting 1991:219). Different from peer debriefing in that, select participants are asked to review the findings or preliminary analysis to assess whether those findings reflect what they expressed to the researcher. This feedback may be obtained either in writing or in face-to-face conversations, and is also a way to obtain additional data (Billups, 2014:10).	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), informal member checking was done during the interview process; and more formally after data have been analysed in follow-up interviews: (i) *during the interview*: the researcher restated or summarised information and then questioned participants to determine accuracy; (ii) *member checks completed after the study*: was conducted following transcription by sharing all of the findings with the participants involved; this allowed participants to analyse the findings and comment on them critically. The researcher strived to build rapport with the interviewee in order to obtain honest and open responses. The participants either affirmed or not – that the summaries reflected their views, feelings, and experiences. If the participants affirmed the accuracy and completeness, then the study was deemed credible.
	2.6.1.10 Triangulation *How will triangulation be incorporated? By sources? By methods? By multiple investigators? By theory (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:247)?* The two primary purposes of triangulation are to confirm the data and ensure that the data is complete: according to Houghton et al (2013:13); and Casey and Murphy (2009:41), *confirmation* is the process of comparing data collected from multiple sources to determine the extent to which findings are verifiable; Shih (1998:633) also emphasises that, the *completeness* of the data is	In the NPA study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), to ensure *confirmation*: observations were conducted in the NPA area to identify the factors that assisted or impeded strategists from monitoring and conducting internal and external strategic audits in the public sector settings. Participants were asked to discuss their perceptions of the factors that assisted (why should organisations conduct strategic audit (analysis)?, see Section

	primarily aimed at gathering multiple perspectives from various sources so that the most complete picture as possible of phenomena can be constructed and the varied dimensions revealed.	4.2.1) or impeded (the potential risks of not conducting strategic audit, see Section 4.2.5) the NPA's ability to conduct strategic audit. The similarities in the results of both methods corroborated the findings. To ensure *completeness*: the researcher gathered multiple perspectives from various sources (two data collection methods), literature study, and semi-structured interviews to paint a complete picture of a single phenomenon under study. Each of the two data collection methods presented specific benefits that, when used together, maximised the potential for in-depth comprehension and completeness of the cases and their context.
	2.6.1.11 Reflectivity Commonly referred to as 'field journal' — clarifying researcher bias or engaging in reflexivity. *Are the researcher's motives, background, perspectives, and preliminary hypotheses presented, and is the effect of these issues sufficiently dealt with (Malterud, 2001:485)?* The researcher disclosed her understanding about the biases, values, and experiences that she brings to a qualitative research study from the outset of the study so that the reader understands the position from which the researcher undertakes the inquiry (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995) (as cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018:341).	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the researcher kept a field journal (analogous to a personal diary) and field notes throughout the research process; the researcher took note of her observations during the interviews about the research environment and participants' behaviours. Information in the field journal also contains: (a) *personal diary (the daily schedule and study's logistics)*: thoughts, ideas, and feelings and hypotheses arising from contact with participants; (b) *methods log (where decisions on methodology and rationale are described)*: problems, questions, frustrations concerning the entire research process. The researcher became aware of her own biases, perspectives, preconceived assumptions, and changed how she collected the data. The researcher applied bracketing when analysing the data. Bracketing is a cognitive process that involves discarding

		what is known (or one's own beliefs) and intuiting (focusing on the phenomenon; or not passing judgment on what is heard or observed) in order to avoid bias and explore the phenomenon with an open mind.
2.6.2 Transferability Commonly referred to as 'applicability' (parallels quantitative research: 'generalisability or external validity'); *Are the findings comparable or applicable to similar settings (Billups, 2014:11)?* The essence of transferability in qualitative research is the extent to which readers are provided with evidence that the research study's findings could be applicable to other contexts and settings (situations, times, and population) or with other groups (Polit & Beck, 2018:416).	*2.6.2.1 Do theoretical or purposive sampling* Involves selecting participants using this sampling technique to maximise the information to be uncovered from few participants but not for generalisability; and the sampling process's nature is regulated by emerging insights into what is essential and relevant (Guba, 1981:86).	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the selection of participants to fulfil the needs of the study was enhanced through purposive sampling. The researcher approached participants who were experienced and knowledgeable about the phenomenon under study (those involved in strategic management and strategy formulation). The researcher also provided a detailed description of the population, and geographical boundaries in order to increase confidence in the transferability of the study findings (see Section 2.3).
	2.6.2.2 Time sampling Is a structured observation sampling method that entails using a criterion (semi-structured interviews) to decide when the observation will occur Bryman et al (2016:385). Krefting (1991:221) argues that (like member checking) time sampling is a strategy that assists in determining whether the data is typical.	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the researcher employed transferability-time sampling. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with senior/top managers and middle managers in early to mid-December 2023 and during January 2024, which falls within two quarterly intervals (October 2023 to December 2023, and January 2024 to March 2024) over one financial year. This structured approach

		ensured that the data collected was representative of the entire strategic planning cycle. The findings could apply to other prosecutorial authorities with similar organisational structures, strategic goals, and policy frameworks.
	2.6.2.3 Thick (dense) description *How will thick description be provided for? What information will be collected that can later be synthesized into such a description (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:248)?* Occurs when a phenomenon is described in sufficient detail, in a way that one can begin to evaluate the extent to which the conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:316).	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), a thick (or dense) description of the methods provided information on how the study was unique and repeatable, as follows: (i) the researcher provided a detailed and appropriate description of the exact methods of research design, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation to provide a thick or detailed description (as outlined in 'chapter 2') and to enhance the study's trustworthiness; (ii) the researcher was not tempted to limit an interview to 60 minutes, when the conversation might have yielded greater detail or richer descriptions of the participant's experience regarding the phenomena if the session had been extended; (iii) in this study, detailed and appropriate descriptions (when recording conversations) were offered so that readers could make informed decisions about the applicability of the findings to specific contexts; (iv) those details included examples of raw data (illustration of direct quotes from participants, supported by probes for observation; field notes rubrics; and excerpts from the field notes showing how themes developed from the data) and the account's context to enable consideration of alternative interpretations.
2.6.3 Dependability Commonly referred to as 'consistency' (parallels quantitative	*2.6.3.1 Dependability audit* *How will an audit trail be laid for a final dependability audit? Who (or what kind of person) will be commissioned to do the audit (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:248)?*	In this study, consistent with Thomas and Magilvy (2011:153), the researcher developed an audit trail by: (i) describing the specific purpose

research: 'reliability'); *Are the findings stable and consistent over time and across condition? Would the same data collection methods yield the same or similar result (Billups, 2014:11)?* The essence of dependability in qualitative research is the extent to which findings would be consistent if the study were replicated with similar participants in similar conditions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290).	Examines the *process of the inquiry* (how data was collected and kept; and the accuracy of that data); and to comment on the extent to which the procedures comply with the generally accepted practice (Guba, 1981:87).	of the study; (ii) discussing how and why the participants were selected for the study; (iii) describing how the data was collected and how long the data collection will last; (iv) explaining how the data was reduced or transformed for analysis; (v) discussing the interpretation and presentation of the research findings; and (vi) communicating the specific techniques that were used to determine the credibility of the data.
	2.6.3.2 Triangulation — overlap methods *How will triangulation be incorporated? By sources? By methods? By multiple investigators? By theory (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:247)?* A type of triangulation that is generally recommended to overcome disadvantages of individual methods; different (two or more) methods are teamed (used in tandem) such that the weakness of one is compensated by the strengths of another (Guba, 1981:86).	In this study, triangulation enabled the researcher to use alternative data collection methods to compensate for the weaknesses in one data collection method (Krefting, 1991:221). This combination of methods allowed the researcher to achieve the best of each method while simultaneously overcoming inherent bias or deficiencies of using a single method; a major strength of the case study research design is the opportunity to use different sources of evidence (literature study and semi-structured interviews) through triangulation (Houghton et al, 2013:13); the researcher chose these methods because they complemented each other.
	2.6.3.3 Peer examination The use of colleagues and methodological experts (peer examination) to check the research plan and its implementation ensures dependability (Krefting, 1991:221).	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), to ensure the dependability of the study, the research plan and its implementation were carefully examined and discussed with the researchers retired primary supervisor, Van der Merwe

		(2019-2022). The retired primary supervisor, Van der Merwe (2019-2022), also assisted in: (i) identifying negative cases; (ii) identifying categories not covered by the research questions. The researcher obtained feedback and perceptions from the retired primary supervisor (peer), Van der Merwe (2019-2022), in order to improve the quality and dependability of the study findings.
	2.6.3.4 Code-recode procedure or strategy (coding agreement) A researcher codes the data, leaves the analysis for some time, and then comes back and recodes the data and compares the two sets of coded materials (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010:503; Krefting, 1991:221).	In this study, the researcher coded the same data twice, giving one or two weeks' gestation period between each coding – the results from the two coding's were compared to see if the results would be the same or different (Chilisa & Preece, 2005:171). The researcher established that the current study's coding results – is in agreement, and thus, enhance the dependability of the qualitative inquiry.
2.6.4 Confirmability Commonly referred to as 'neutrality' (parallels quantitative research: 'objectivity'); *Are the findings accurate? Can you find other ways to corroborate your results (Billups, 2014:11)?* The essence of confirmability in qualitative research is the extent or neutrality in which findings represent the participants' responses and not the researcher's biases or viewpoints (Polit & Beck, 2018:416).	*2.6.4.1 Confirmability audit* *How will an audit trail be laid for a final confirmability audit? Who (or what kind of person) will be commissioned to do the audit (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:248)?* Examines the *products of the inquiry* (to certify that the findings, interpretations and recommendations are supported by data), and this inquiry requires extensive documentation (Guba, 1981:88).	In this study, consistent with Lincoln and Guba (1985:319-320), six categories of records proposed by Halpern (1983:214-223) that the researcher provided when developing an audit trail: (i) *raw data*: including audio recordings; field notes, and unobtrusive measures (documents); (ii) *data reduction and analysis notes*: including summaries and theoretical notes; (iii) *data reconstruction and synthesis products*: including category structures (definitions, themes and relationships); findings and conclusions (interpretations and inferences); and a final report (with connections to the existing literature, and integration of concepts, relationships, and interpretations); (iv) *process notes*: including research methodology notes (design strategies, rationales, and procedures); trustworthiness notes (relating to credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity); and audit trail notes; (v) *materials related*

		to intentions and dispositions: including the study proposal (submitted in November 2019 and approved in December 2019); personal notes (motivations and reflexive notes); and expectations (intentions and predictions); and (vi) *instrument development information*: including pilot work, interview schedules, and observation formats.
	2.6.4.2 Triangulation *How will triangulation be incorporated? By sources? By methods? By multiple investigators? By theory (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:247)?* Entails contrasting various methods (methodology, data source, and theoretical) in the social phenomena study to cross-check the research findings (data and interpretation) as a reliable and valid means of understanding complex social realities Bryman et al (2016:45). It is therefore recommended to incorporate one or two triangulation techniques in qualitative research. Various types of triangulation exist. The following three types of triangulation processes, as introduced by Denzin (1978:294-297,301-302), were considered:	
	I. Methodological (methods) triangulation Involves using multiple research methods or data collection techniques (selected because each taps a different aspect or dimension of the problem being studied) (Knafl & Breitmayer, 1991:234), to gather data about the same phenomenon or situation.	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), various data collection techniques (literature study and semi-structured interviews) added to the triangulation completeness function by offering explanatory insights from various data sources. Interview data resulted in a better contextual understanding of the circumstances that assisted or impeded the NPA from conducting strategic audits.
	II. Data (source) triangulation Is the most common strategy in which the researcher explicitly attempts to maximise the range of participants or data sources that would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the concept or topic being studied (Knafl & Breitmayer, 1991:233) including (or in subsets of) people, time, and space (Billups, 2014:11). No information should be accepted which cannot be verified	In this study, data collected through various methods were compared (Krefting, 1991:219). The researcher also provided documentation for every claim and interpretation from two or more sources (where applicable) throughout the study to ensure that the data supported the researcher's analysis and interpretation of the study findings.

	from at least two sources (Guba, 1981:85).	
	III. Theoretical (theory) triangulation Uses multiple theories or perspectives to interpret data or to examine a phenomenon or situation (UNAIDS, 2010:16); meaning that data yielding alternative explanations or perspectives from diverse or competing theories can be tested (Krefting, 1991:219); and entails the use of multiple perspectives to interpret the data (Billups, 2014:11).	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the researcher sought to adapt the four main theoretical frameworks regularly used in the strategic audit process for the public sector. The researcher established that two frameworks, McKinskey's 7s model and PESTLE (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental factors), are well suited for the public sector; while a modified version of SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) was recommended, where *"Threats"* are reconceptualised as *"Challenges"*, thus SWOC; The remainder and most challenging framework is the Porter's Five Forces Analysis; for adapting Porter's model for the public sector, the researcher explored two diverse or competing theoretical perspectives: (a) Vinings' expanded public agency program 5 forces framework; and (b) McKevitt's street-level public organisations model. Each theory or perspective provides an opportunity to compare and contrast the findings from each of them and identify the most relevant Porter's model for the public sector.
	2.6.4.3 Practicing reflectivity *Is reflexivity (the effects of the researcher on processes, interpretations, findings, and conclusions) addressed (Malterud, 2001:485)? To what extent has the researcher worked to neutralise his or her own bias, motivation or interest as findings are reported (Billups, 2014:11)?* Is an assessment of the influence of the researcher's own background, perceptions, and interests on the qualitative research process (Ruby, 1980) (as cited in Krefting, 1991:218); that also includes the effect of the researcher's	In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), a reflective journal evidently showed how transparent decisions were made throughout the study, thereby demonstrating the research process's transparency and enhancing the study's confirmability. During data collection, scribbled ideas and opinions helped develop the final themes and sub-themes, thereby 'creating a connection with the real world of practice'.

	personal history on qualitative research (Krefting, 1991:218). In addition, Krefting (1991:221) also mention that reflexive analysis is useful to ensure that the researcher is aware of their influence on the data.	Once the data collection was completed and the interviews conducted, the researcher reflected and provided feedback in writing. The researcher's role as a *'data collection tool'* was balanced by allowing each participant's voice to offset her natural assumptions. To appreciate the robust interpretation of the findings, the researcher used a reflexive journal to record sensitive topic issues or any potential ethical issues that could have affected data analytics. The researcher kept all electronic (audio recordings) and non-electronic records (field notes and documents) throughout the research; these records enabled the data to be cross-checked with the drafting of the final report of the study.
2.6.5 Authenticity Commonly referred to as 'reality(ies)' (parallels quantitative research: 'accuracy'); *What is the intended value of the research? How does the research benefit participants? Are all the "realities" represented to give meaning to the findings (Billups, 2014:11)?* The essence of authenticity in qualitative research is the extent to which the researcher fairly and faithfully expresses a range of different realities (in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of their		In this study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the implied benefit to many stakeholders, the study intended value, and the assurance that as many voices as possible were considered, are all issues that were addressed by the researcher when presenting the findings. Many of these issues were typically addressed in the executive summary, draft report, or in the summary statements where these issues were 'answered'. The researcher customised the results for different constituencies, and thus, constituting another way of enhancing the applicability, usefulness, and even the authenticity of the findings.

data) and realistically convey participants' lives (feelings, emotions, and experiences) (Polit & Beck, 2018:538).		

(Source: adapted from Krefting, 1991:217-220)

2.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research study was measured against two complementary guidelines for ethical research and for research involving human participants: (a) the first standard was the ethical considerations as outlined in the UNISA 'policy on research ethics' (UNISA, 2013:1-17); (b) the second standard was the Belmont report's standards for 'ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research' (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research (NCPHS), 1978:1-20), which complements the first principle.
The researcher endeavoured to uphold the appropriate ethical standards by obtaining written consent to undertake research from: (a) the NPA; and (b) the participants, prior to conducting interviews.

Measures to ensure privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of participants, as well as any risk of breach of confidentiality and anonymity should be explained (UNISA, 2013:13). The particulars of the participating NPA of SA and the identities (anonymity) of all the research participants (the NPA's senior/top, and middle managers) were protected and all gathered information was classified as confidential (Manchidi, 2024).

To avoid plagiarism, the researcher meticulously implemented accurate referencing techniques and acknowledged all information sources. This consideration provides the basis of the ethical approach this research study followed (Manchidi, 2024).

2.7.1 Ethical research pillars

> According to NCPHS (1978:1-20), the Belmont report established pillars that uphold the ethicality of research. These basic principles were: (a) to respect the person that the research impacts upon, the research must; (b) take the beneficence of the people involved in the study into account; and (c) comments made and burdens assigned would be the product of judicious consideration.

The following Belmont report ethical research pillars were considered during the study:

2.7.1.1 Respect for the person

Respect for the person impacted by the research study raised at least two considerations, each person has the right to be regarded as an independent individual, and the individual is entitled to protection (NCPHS, 1978:4). Research participants are entitled to have their choices considered and their opinions respected, the researcher respected the opinions of the participants and also had not interfered with their choices, unless it was at the disadvantage of others (Manchidi, 2024).

Participants were briefed about the aim and objectives of the research and the role each was expected to play in the study (Manchidi, 2024). The researcher ensured that participants voluntarily entered into conversation and were of a sound mind.

2.7.1.2 Beneficence

In the Belmont Report, the principle of beneficence is defined as *'do no harm'* and it transcends acts of charity or kindness. The Belmont Report formulated two basic rules for beneficence: (a) 'not to do any harm'; and (b) to minimise any harm that might result from the study while maximising any benefit that might be gleaned from the work (NCPHS, 1978:6).

In this research, the participants were not subjected to any harm, and the benefit exceeded any potential harm resulting from the research (Manchidi, 2024).

2.7.1.3 Justice

Criteria for the selection of participants of research should be fair, besides being scientific. Easily accessible individuals or groups should not be inordinately burdened with research being carried out repeatedly on them (UNISA, 2013:10).

Justice was the scale of weighing consequences, actions and in principle, the research participants must always benefit from the weighing. Justice is a principle that was considered during the research (Manchidi, 2024).

2.7.1.4 Free from harm

The researcher had not exposed research participants to unnecessary physical or psychological harm and had treated all participants in a courteous and respectful manner. The researcher considered how senior and top, and middle managers might gain something useful from participating in a study—apparently, unique insights about the topic of strategic audit or simply a sense of satisfaction about contributing in a small way to advancements of the implementation of strategic audit in public institutions. The researcher was also mindful that by engaging participants, it might raise expectations that the researcher would assist them in the implementation process of the strategic audit. The researcher had to manage said expectations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016:102).

2.7.1.5 Free from exploitation

There were benefits and no exploitation of the NPA and the participants in this research. The NPA and the research participants had received feedback on research carried out on them (UNISA, 2013:10). The researcher safely stored data (during the research process) and destroyed all confidential data (after completion of the research).

2.7.2 Application of principles

The Belmont report general principles are the ethical basis for which the research study was conducted. Application of the general principles to the conduct of research leads to consideration of the following requirements; informed consent, risk/benefit assessment, and the selection of subjects of research (NCPHS, 1978:10):

2.7.2.1 Informed consent

According to Bryman et al (2016:124), participation in research requires informed, uncoerced consent of participants. The researcher informed participants of the implications and aim of the study, and of any other factors that may reasonably be anticipated to influence their willingness to participate.
The researcher presented an informed consent pledge to ensure an ethical research (see Annexure C).

2.7.2.1.1 Right to information

Participants had the right to be fully informed regarding their purposes, the research procedure, risks, and anticipated benefits that might be derived from participation in the study (NCPHS, 1978:11). Participants have been offered the chance to pose questions, and they have also been advised that they could withdraw at any time from the research (Manchidi, 2024).

2.7.2.1.2 Comprehension of information

While it is necessary for the researcher to adapt the presentation of the information to the participant's capacities. The manner and context in which information is conveyed is as important as the information itself (NCPHS, 1978:12). The researcher ensured that participants comprehended the information prior to conducting the interviews.

2.7.2.1.3 Right of choice

> According to NCPHS (1978:14), the element of informed consent requires conditions free of coercion and undue influence. Coercion occurs when an overt threat of harm is intentionally presented by one person to another in order to obtain compliance. Undue influence, by contrast, occurs through an offer of an excessive, unwarranted, inappropriate or improper reward or other overture in order to obtain compliance.

Participants in this research reserved the right to choose whether or not to participate in the study (Manchidi, 2024). The researcher has not remunerated participants for their participation in the research.

2.7.2.2 Risk versus benefit of participation

The requirement that research be justified on the basis of a favourable risk/benefit assessment bears a close relation to the principle of beneficence, just as the moral requirement that informed consent be obtained is derived primarily from the principle of respect for persons (NCPHS, 1978:15).

Assessment of the justifiability of research should reflect at least the following considerations (NCPHS, 1978:17-18):

a) risks should be reduced to those necessary to achieve the research objectives.
   The researcher acknowledges that the element of risk can never be eradicated, but can be reduced significantly by applying risk mitigation strategies. Care was taken to keep the risk to the NPA to a minimum
b) relevant risks and benefits must be thoroughly arrayed in documents and procedures used in the informed consent process.

In the study, confidential information that may compromise the NPA has been excluded from the study. The outcomes of the study will benefit not only the NPA but also other government departments. The most notable benefits of the study will be the prospect of raising awareness among government departments on the threat posed by the absence of the strategic audits. The benefits of frequently conducting strategic audits will provide the NPA with a range of self-assessment audits to: (i) highlight strengths and weaknesses within the NPA; (ii) identify problems before they happen; (iii) ensure organisation-wide control of the NPA; (iv) benchmarking results with other government departments; and lastly (v) align overall NPA strategy with the organisation's needs and strengths (Manchidi, 2024).

2.7.2.3 Subject selection

Criteria for the selection of participants of research was based on the principle of justice and was fair, besides being scientific (UNISA, 2013:10). The researcher ensured that outcomes and 'participants selection procedures' had not disadvantaged or benefitted individuals indiscriminately.

In order to obtain valuable information, participants were carefully selected, and purposive sampling was best suited for this research (Manchidi, 2024).

2.8 SUMMARY

This chapter outlines the research methodology, approach, and procedures employed in the study, justifying their selection to ensure rigour, coherence, and validity.

The study adopted a *qualitative research approach* within an *exploratory case study design*; this combination was chosen due to the limited existing academic literature on strategic audit. The qualitative approach enabled in-depth exploration of the complex strategic management processes within the NPA, including strategic drift, misalignment with the DPME framework, and the adaptation of private-sector strategic audit tools to the public sector context.

Data were gathered through (a) a comprehensive *literature review* of academic sources, journals, textbooks, and official NPA strategic documents; and (b) *face-to-face semi-structured interviews*, supported by pilot testing, informed consent, rapport-building, audio recording, and member checking. Interviews were conducted in participants' natural work setting and lasted approximately 60 minutes.

Thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase process was applied. A *deductive coding* approach was used, guided by a codebook developed from the research questions. Interviews were transcribed using intelligent verbatim (Otter.ai) followed by manual editing.

Trustworthiness was ensured through Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria — *credibility*, *dependability*, *confirmability*, and *transferability* — via strategies such as prolonged engagement, triangulation, member checking, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, and structural coherence. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, and data security, were strictly observed throughout.

In essence, the study employed a well-justified qualitative, exploratory case study methodology, supported by purposive sampling, semi-structured interviews, and thematic analysis, to generate rich, contextually grounded insights into strategic audit practices within the NPA.

CHAPTER THREE: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT – CONCEPTS AND PROCESS

PART 1: STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of strategic management, particularly emphasising its application within the public sector. Strategic management plays a crucial role in organisational decision-making and planning, aiding organisations in aligning their vision, mission, goals, and strategies with their internal and external environments.

The chapter is divided into two primary sections: Part 1 delves into strategy and strategic management concepts. Part 2 delineates the strategic management process, detailing its three phases: strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy review and control. This study extends the application of strategic audit to cover the entire strategic management process rather than limiting it to the strategy formulation phase as is typically done. This section also explores various tools and techniques that support strategic management, such as the Theory of Change and the Logical Framework Approach. The understanding of strategic management and the strategic management process serves as a foundation for the concept of strategic audit, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

Drawing from a diverse range of literature and the case study of the NPA, this document illustrates the fundamental concepts and principles of strategic management. It aims to serve as a comprehensive and practical guide for public sector managers and employees involved in or interested in strategic management.

3.2 STRATEGY

Strategy is the *direction provided by the actions and decisions of strategists (primarily a human activity) in pursuit of organisational goals* (Venter, 2014:10). Similarly, Brawley (2016:15) expands this view by emphasising that 'strategy' is also a comprehensive plan (outlining the organisation's goals and the tactics it will use to achieve those goals) and process that looks at *what an organisation does, how it does it*, and *why it does it*.

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe strategy as, a multifaceted concept that involves setting goals and the methods used to achieve them. Both definitions emphasise the importance of planning and implementation, underscoring the comprehensive approach required to meet organisational goals.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, emphasising the crucial role of strategists in directing these processes through their actions and choices (Manchidi, 2024).

For an in-depth exploration of strategy (see Section 3.2.1 to 3.2.3).

Participant responses on RQ1, Prompt 1.1: What is strategy?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"What is strategy?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (1.1), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- Only one participant (MM.1) gave a clear and concise definition of strategy as *"a roadmap that guides an organisation in achieving its mandate"*.
- The rest of the participants did not explicitly define strategy, but implied that it was the result of strategic analysis and planning, or the plan that is informed by the strategic analysis and the factors that influence it.
- Their understanding was generally implied and incomplete.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (1.1), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Four participants (SM.6, SM.5, SM.3, and SM.12) gave a clear and comprehensive definition of strategy as the articulation of an institution's vision and mission, the direction the institution intends to take, and the plan to achieve its desired outcomes and outputs.
- The rest of the participants did not explicitly define strategy, but implied that it was the outcome of strategic analysis and alignment, the targets and tasks that are informed by the data and the feasibility study, or the strategies that are reviewed by the strategic audit.
- Their understanding was generally implied and partial.

In summary, Sample B showed a more comprehensive and explicit understanding of strategy compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, only 5 (31.25%) gave a clear definition of strategy, while the rest 11 (68.75%) implied their understanding of strategy. Out of the 3 participants in Sample A, only 1 (33.33%) explicitly defined strategy, while out of the 13 participants in Sample B, 4 (30.77%) explicitly defined strategy.

3.2.1 Strategy-in-practice

The practice of strategic management has led to some new insights and realisations about strategy, some of which are outlined as follows (UNISA, 2015:9-10): strategy is *'what people do'*, not what organisations have; additionally, strategy is not solely the domain of senior and top management. Furthermore, strategy is a conversation and involves dialogue and communication.

3.2.2 Importance of strategy

A good strategy serves multiple purposes in an organisation (Venter, 2014:9):
It can *inspire, unite, and motivate* members of the organisation, fostering a sense of unity and shared goals. Moreover, it provides a *framework to guide decision-making*; this helps members of the organisation make decisions that align with the overall strategic direction. Additionally, it *verbalises the organisation's aspirations*, providing an inspirational element that may be far removed from the realities of the present
The strategic management process combines the views and thinking of many members of the organisation and communicates the outcome back to the organisation so that everyone follows the same strategy. In essence, the importance of a strategy lies in its ability to guide an organisation towards its goals in a coordinated and unified manner.

3.2.3 Strategic alignment

According to UNISA (2015:10-11); strategic management, as a holistic and integrated management process, is crucial in aligning various dimensions both internally and externally within an organisation; this alignment manifests itself in different ways:
Firstly, there is alignment between the organisation and its external environment. In the NPA study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the NPA, aligns its operations and strategies with the broader governmental objectives and legal framework of SA; this ensures that the NPA's actions are in sync with the country's socio-economic goals and legal mandates.
Secondly, there is alignment between the organisation's strategy and its vision, mission strategic intent and long-term objectives. In the NPA study (NPA, 2022b:7), the NPA's strategy is guided by its vision of ensuring justice for all South Africans.
Thirdly, there is alignment between the organisation's strategy and its leadership, culture and key people in the organisation. In the NPA study, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the leadership within the NPA plays a crucial role in aligning the organisation's strategy with its culture and key personnel; this ensures that everyone within the organisation is working towards a common goal.

Lastly, there is alignment between the organisation's strategy and its focus on financial, public-sector-clients, internal operational processes and learning and growth dimensions (the typical balanced scorecard approach to alignment).

Strategic alignment (used to refer to alignment between the organisation's strategy and its internal operations) is a concept that is more encompassing than the notion of *"strategic fit"*; it pervades the entire strategic management process. The role of exceptional leadership is pivotal in ensuring this alignment within an organisation.

Organisations need to evaluate their existing strategies on an ongoing basis. More recent research has suggested that strategy is not this sequential and discrete, but is rather more messy, overlapping and iterative (Venter, 2014:10,12).

3.3 WHAT IS STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT?

Strategic management has been defined as setting strategic direction, setting goals, crafting a strategy, implementing and executing the strategy, and then over time initiating whatever corrective adjustments are deemed appropriate (Thompson, Strickland & Gamble, 2010:xi). Similarly, Jenkins et al. (2016:1) describe strategic management as emanating from management decisions, processes, and activities, which lead to the strategy being delivered; this is done across all levels of employees, and it involves actions and activities, which lead to the strategy being implemented.

> There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe strategic management as, a continuous and dynamic process that involves setting the direction of an organisation, creating strategies, putting them into action, and making adjustments as needed. Both definitions emphasise the importance of management decisions, processes, and activities in ensuring the organisation remains aligned and adaptable to changes.
>
> The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, emphasising the crucial participation of employees at all levels in delivering and putting the strategy into practice (Manchidi, 2024).

For a detailed discussion on strategic management (see Section 3.3.1 and 3.3.2).

3.3.1 Purpose of strategic management

The purpose of strategic management is to ensure that the organisation applies four key elements, namely (Grant 2013:15; UNISA, 2019a:20):

Firstly, a *clear and consistent strategic direction* outlining what the organisation wants to achieve. Secondly, a *profound understanding of the external environment* to align the organisation with the opportunities and challenges. Thirdly, strategic role players must have an *objective knowledge of the resources and capabilities* of the organisation and also *understand their value* in building a competitive advantage. Lastly, the *structure, systems, culture, functions and operations* of the organisation (collectively referred to as 'organisational architecture') must be *aligned* to ensure that SPs, programmes, projects and initiatives are implemented effectively.

3.3.2 Risks of strategic management

If strategy formulation and strategic management are executed incorrectly, it could negatively affect an organisation's operational advantage; notable risks associated with strategic management (Manchidi, 2024):

Firstly, *time* — strategy formulation requires time, and in today's complex operational environment, managers are often too busy solving short-term problems to focus on long-term strategy formulation. Secondly, *unrealistic expectations of managers and employees* — engaging in strategy formulation activities sometimes creates unrealistic expectations in managers and employees. Thirdly, *the uncertain*

chain of implementation — strategy formulation takes place at senior and top management level, whilst strategy implementation takes place at all levels of the organisation, leading to an uncertain chain of implementation. Additionally, *negative perception of strategic management* — the strategic management approach might sometimes suffer from a lack of buy-in by potential participants, resulting in a negative perception of strategic management. Furthermore, *negative perception of strategic management* — without measurable outcomes, it will be difficult to determine if strategy implementation is going according to plan. *culture of change* — generally, people in the organisation may be resistant to change, creating a culture of change. Lastly, *success groove* — today's success is no guarantee of tomorrow's operational advantage.

According to Venter (2014:10), strategic management is ultimately about consistently aligning the organisation with its internal and external environments.

PART 2: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The strategic management process is a vital component of effective organisational decision-making and planning. UNISA (2019:17) defines strategic management as *"the process for planning, implementing and controlling the strategy of the organisation"*. It therefore consists of three phases or components, namely; (a) strategic formulation, (b) strategic implementation, and (c) strategic review and control. Figure 3.1 below, illustrates these phases in a very simplistic way.

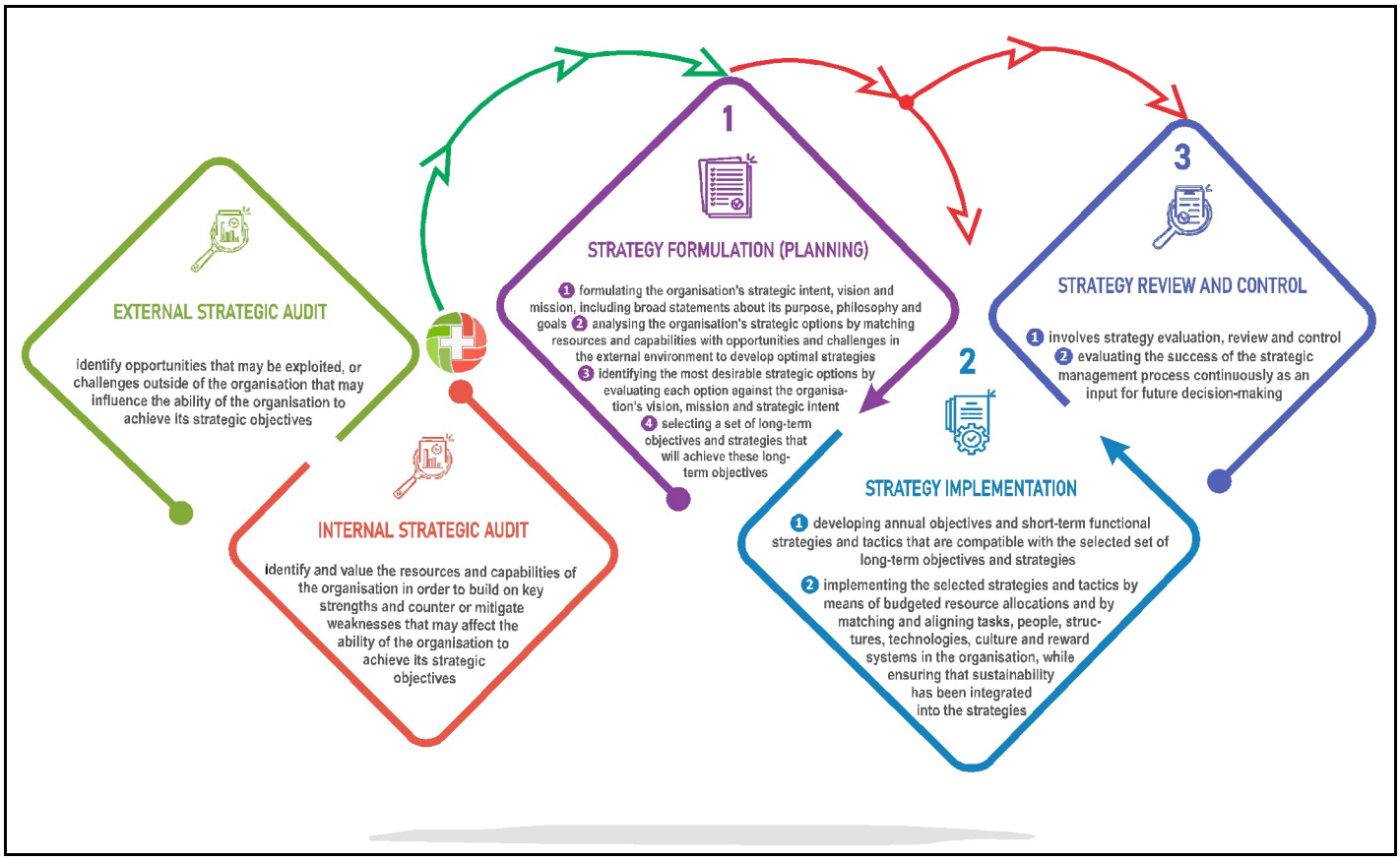


Figure 3.1 Strategic management process
(Source: adapted from Venter, 2014:6)

Figure 3.1 illustrates that organisations currently conduct strategic analysis primarily for 'strategy formulation (planning)', as represented by the green lines; however, this study extended the conduct of strategic audit (analysis) to encompass the entire strategic management process, as indicated by the maroon line (Manchidi, 2024).

Strategic management consists of three stages, namely (UNISA, 2019b:6):
the first stage is (a) *strategy formulation (planning)*; which is a conceptual process that consists of the strategic audit (environmental analysis) and the development of strategies; the second stage is called (b) *strategy implementation*; during this phase, all staff in the organisation are tasked with implementing the strategies; the third and last stage is (c) *strategic review and control*; the strategy review phase is aimed at monitoring progress and providing feedback.

3.4 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT: THE PROCESS PERSPECTIVE

3.4.1 Strategic management: the process perspective

Pearce and Robinson (2009:3) view strategic management as the following set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation, implementation, and review and control of action plans designed to achieve organisation's objectives. Strategic management process consists of the following most important elements (UNISA, 2015:21):

3.4.1.1 Strategy formulation:

actions (a) to (f) above essentially form part of strategy formulation:

a) formulating the organisation's strategic intent, vision and mission, including broad statements about its purpose, philosophy and goals
b) conducting external strategic audit (analysing the organisation's external environment)
c) conducting internal strategic audit (analysing the organisation's internal environment) in terms of its strengths and weaknesses relating to its resources and capabilities
d) analysing the organisation's strategic options by *matching* resources and capabilities with opportunities and challenges in the external environment to develop optimal strategies
e) identifying the most desirable strategic options by evaluating each option against the organisation's vision, mission and strategic intent
f) selecting a set of long-term objectives and strategies that will achieve these long-term objectives

3.4.1.2 Strategy implementation:

actions (g) and (h) are part of strategy implementation:

g) developing annual objectives and short-term functional strategies and tactics that are compatible with the selected set of long-term objectives and strategies
h) implementing the selected strategies and tactics by means of budgeted resource allocations and by matching and aligning tasks, people, structures, technologies, culture and reward systems in the organisation, while ensuring that sustainability has been integrated into the strategies

3.4.1.3 Strategy review and control:

action (i) involves strategy evaluation, review and control:

i) evaluating the success of the strategic management process continuously as an input for future decision-making.

3.5 STRATEGY FORMULATION

Strategy formulation is the first phase of an integrated strategic management process (Manchidi, 2024). Venter (2014:309) defines strategy formulation as the process of setting the strategic direction of the organisation, conducting internal and external strategic audits (analysing the internal and external environments), setting strategic goals, developing and choosing the strategies that will help them attain strategic goals.

Table 3.1 defines how the key strategic management documents, the SP, APP, and AOP, are integrated into the specific steps of the strategy formulation process, highlighting their roles and development timelines as described by Manchidi (2024).

Table 3.1 Integration of Strategic Management Documents within the Strategic Formulation Stage

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024): In the context of the strategic management process it is crucial to, identify the specific stages at which the 'strategic management documents', namely, the SP, the APP, and the AOP, are developed or used. Each document — serves distinct function(s) at particular stages:

(a) **Strategic Plan (SP)** (see Section 3.5.3.4 (V)): The SP is crafted throughout the entire *strategic formulation process*, from *'Strategic direction setting'* (see Section 3.5.1) to *'Selecting appropriate strategies'* (see Section 3.5.4)

i. *Strategic direction setting* (see Section 3.5.1): The SP includes the vision, mission, strategic intent, and value statement and organisational values

ii. *Conducting internal and external strategic audits* (see Section 3.5.2): The SP, encompasses a thorough auditing of both the internal, and external environments

iii. *Setting strategic goals* (see Section 3.5.3): The SP, translates the mission into long-term goals, incorporating strategic goals, and applying the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timeframe) principles, along with the Theory of Change

iv. *Selecting appropriate strategies* (see Section 3.5.4): The SP, assesses, the operational level strategies ensuring, they align with the strategic goals, and strategic choices.

(b) **Annual Performance Plan (APP)** (see Section 3.5.3.4 (V)): The APP, is primarily developed during the *'Setting strategic goals'* (see Section 3.5.3), and *'Selecting appropriate strategies'* (see Section 3.5.4) stages. The APP, outlines the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and targets an organisation aims to achieve over a specific period—typically one year.

(c) **Annual Operational Plan (AOP)** (see Section 3.5.3.4 (V)): The AOP, is primarily developed during the *'Setting strategic goals'* (see Section 3.5.3), and *'Selecting appropriate strategies'* (see Section 3.5.4) stages. The AOP, provides a detailed outline of the organisation's focus for the near future—usually the upcoming year.

Thus, understanding the correct stage in which these documents are introduced, or used is essential within the strategic management continuum.

As delineated in Table 3.1, which maps the integration of strategic management documents across the

formulation stages, the strategy formulation phase fundamentally involves the top management team in deciding 'what to do'. Typically, this phase engages primarily senior management, who commission strategic audits of the organisation itself as well as the environment in which it operates; part of this phase encompasses setting the strategic direction—in other words, deciding on the future of the organisation and establishing its overarching goals (Davis, 2019:58).

3.5.1 **Strategic direction setting** (deciding on the future of the organisation)

The first stage in the strategic formulation is the establishment of strategic direction (Venter, 2014:4): (a) this usually consists of a vision and mission statement, strategic goals, strategic intent, value statement and organisational values, (b) the strategic direction leads to more specific strategic objectives, these are typically long-term in nature (typically a three-to-five-year focus), and (c) have measurable outcomes.

3.5.1.1 Strategic direction (Davis, 2019:64):

The organisation's management and employees need to know the reasons for the organisation's existence. The strategic direction clarifies the overarching purpose and goals of the organisation, as well as indicating to external stakeholders what the organisation is about. Several management tools (the vision statement, the mission statement and the strategic goals) are used to set the strategic direction and also used to direct the actions and strategic efforts of the organisation over the long term. Not only does the strategic direction provide the organisation and its members with a primary direction, but it also helps bind the organisation members as a cohesive unit.

Figure 3.2 depicts the benefit of strategic direction. The diagram below indicates the multiple different directions in which the organisation and its members are working. The other one shows how the overall stated strategic direction (represented by the blue arrow) aligns the efforts of the entire organisation and its members in one direction.

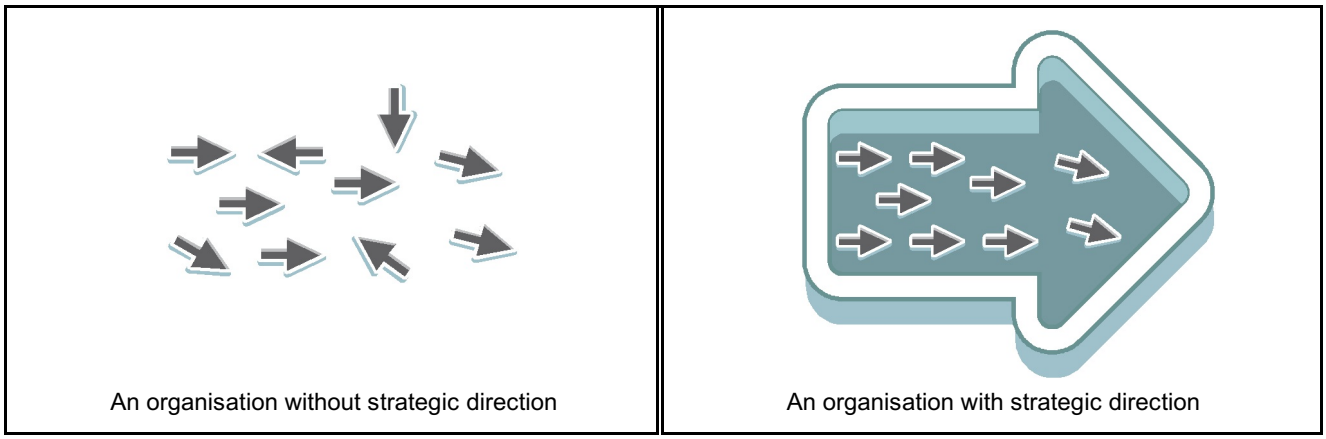


Figure 3.2 The benefit of strategic direction
(Source: adapted from Davis, 2019:64)

Having sound strategic direction is a powerful contributor to strategic success as it forms the starting point for a carefully planned and implemented strategy. It also provides focus and directs all actions towards achieving the same goal.

Some organisations do not have separate vision and mission statements, while others have only mission statements. Organisations are diverse and varied, just like the people who work in them, and this creates room for a range of different practices. The strategic direction can be expressed through a vision, a mission or both. What is crucial is that the entire organisation and its members know where they are going and what they are working towards.

I. Advantages of a clear strategic direction

The advantages of having clear strategic direction (expressed through the vision and mission statements of organisations) (Davis, 2019:65):

a) it provides direction and a clear indication of what the organisation is aiming for
b) it ensures that all the organisational efforts and all the organisation members are working towards the same goals
c) it offers a clear message to internal and external stakeholders on what the organisation wants to achieve over the long term
d) it guides problem-solving and decision-making as the end goal is clear to all
e) it provides the organisation with a unique identity
f) it contributes to synergy among all managers and other employees and stakeholders.

> Strategic direction is long term and ought to remain unchanged for an extended period; organisations that change their strategic direction on an annual basis send a message that they are not sure where they are going. The vision and mission statements are an expression of the strategic direction, these should also remain largely unchanged except perhaps for minor amendments to the wording (Davis, 2019:67).

> Some organisations do not have separate vision and mission statements, while others have only mission statements. What is crucial is that the entire organisation and its members know where they are going and what they are working towards (Davis, 2019:64).

3.5.1.2 Vision (or Vision statement) – 'the dream of the organisation' (Unisa, 2015:22):

A vision statement should reflect the desired future state of an organisation. David (2013:75) states that the vision statement should answer the question: *What do we want to become?*

A well-formulated vision statement should provide:

(a) direction for organisational members to work towards, (b) become a powerful motivational factor

where the vision is *"lived by leadership"*, (c) accepted by all in an organisational culture of shared values, and (d) excellent vision statements are crisp, clear and unambiguous in terms of the message they convey to internal and external stakeholders as well as the community at large.

Guidelines for what a vision statement should be, namely (Davis, 2019:65):
(a) it should present a clear picture of a desirable future, something to which the organisation and its members (and other stakeholders) can aspire, (b) it should guide decision making, yet be flexible enough to allow the organisation to respond to changes in the environment, (c) it should be easy to communicate, to explain and to understand. There is no standard format for a vision statement and is often not realistic in literal terms and may seem overly ambitious.
Some organisations may opt for short and punchy vision statements, while others may opt for more descriptive versions.

In the NPA study, the NPA's vision is to achieve *"justice in South African society so that people can live in freedom and security"* (NPA, 2022b:7)—embodies the conceptualisation of the vision statement as the *'dream of the organisation'*. This is evident in its aspirational depiction of a societal ideal, which furnishes a directional framework for prosecutorial endeavours, galvanises internal stakeholders through a shared ethical imperative, and communicates an unambiguous, motivational narrative that aligns organisational efforts with broader societal aspirations, thereby fulfilling the theoretical criteria of clarity, inspiration, and strategic guidance inherent to effective vision statements.
Specifically, the NPA's vision reflects the desired future state by presenting a clear, aspirational picture of societal justice and security (Davis, 2019:65), whilst providing organisational direction and motivation through its emphasis on freedom as a lived outcome (David, 2013:75). It guides decision-making with flexibility to adapt to evolving legal environments, remains crisp and unambiguous for easy communication to stakeholders, and fosters acceptance within a culture of shared values by linking prosecutorial roles to communal well-being.

3.5.1.3 Mission (UNISA, 2015:22-23):
Commonly referred to as "purpose statement" – deals with reality (what the organisation does and why it exists), vision statements form the basis for developing relevant mission statements. Pearce and Robinson (2009:25) define a mission statement as the unique purpose that sets an organisation apart from others of its type and identifies the scope of its operations in benefits or services, market and technology terms.

A mission statement is more current and basically defines the purpose of an organisation and the rationale for its existence (contrary to the vision statement that generally indicates a desired future state for an organisation); a mission statement addresses the basic question: *What is our operations?*.

At a minimum, the mission statement; (a) states what the organisation does and why it exists, (b) it builds on the vision statement and is as much an internal statement as it is an external statement (Davis, 2019:65-66), and (c) is broadly framed, enduring and aimed at both internal and external stakeholders.

The following elements that are often included in a mission statement over and above benefits or services, market and technology considerations: (a) commitment to employees, (b) commitment to stakeholders, (c) orientation towards survival and growth, (d) organisational values and organisational philosophy.

In the NPA study, the NPA is *"guided by the Constitution of SA in fulfilling its mission to ensure justice for the victims of crime by prosecuting without fear, favour, or prejudice, and by working with partners and the public to solve and prevent crime"* (NPA, 2022b:7).

3.5.1.4 Strategic intent

An organisation is said to exhibit strategic intent *"when it relentlessly pursues an ambitious strategic objective, concentrating the full force of its resources and competitive actions on achieving that objective"* (Thompson, Peteraf, Gamble & Strickland, 2012:86). Strategic intent implies an obsession with winning at all levels of the organisation (UNISA, 2015:25).

In the NPA study, the concept of strategic intent is applicable to public sector entities like the NPA. The key difference lies in the nature of the strategic objective - while private companies often aim to outperform competitors, public sector entity like the NPA aim to deliver on their mandate in the most effective and efficient manner possible. For example, the NPA's strategic intent could be to *"relentlessly pursue justice for all"*. This intent would guide all levels of the organisation and concentrate its resources on achieving this objective. It implies an obsession with delivering justice at all levels of the organisation, similar to how Komatsu intended to *"encircle Caterpillar"* and Canon aimed to *"beat Xerox"* (Manchidi, 2024).

In terms of providing strategic direction for the organisation: In the NPA study, the NPA's value statement could be an element that guides its actions; for example, a value statement such as *"Upholding justice through fair and unbiased prosecution"* could serve as a compass directing all strategic decisions and actions within the NPA (Manchidi, 2024).

3.5.1.5 Value statement and organisational values (UNISA, 2015:25):

An organisation's value statement as an element providing strategic direction for the organisation is now considered. Many organisations have developed statements to reflect the values that the organisation intends to pursue in terms of conducting its operations and the behaviour it expects from its personnel.

> An organisation's overarching values are the beliefs, traits and behavioural norms that guide the organisation in pursuing its vision and mission and include factors such as fair treatment, integrity, ethical behaviour, loyalty, innovativeness, teamwork, pursuing excellent quality and superior customer service, social responsibility and citizenship (Thompson et al, 2012:75).

In essence, organisational values involve ethical behaviour, respect for others, opportunities for staff to reach their full potential, a passion for excellence, and being socially and ecologically responsible. These values become more powerful the more they are ingrained in the organisation's leadership and culture. The importance of leadership excellence and enhancing organisational cultures in strategic management is addressed in the strategy implementation phase.

In the NPA study, the NPA lives its values of (NPA, 2022b:7):

a) *independence* — is demonstrated by acting without bias and having the confidence to justify legal decisions through established precedents and transparent policies. Decisions are not only impartial but also perceived as such due to freedom from external control and financial autonomy
b) *professionalism* — which is evidenced by commitment, dedication, punctuality, competence, and professional conduct in and out of court
c) *accountability* — which is based on transparent actions and spending, regular contact with partners and routine reporting
d) *credibility* — which is built by behaving consistently and aiming to inspire belief and trust
e) *integrity* — which is demonstrated through ethical conduct, high moral standards, honesty, moral principles and values, zero tolerance for bribery and corruption, keeping promises, truthfulness and being beyond reproach
f) *service excellence* — which is proven by providing first class customer service and complying with the *Batho Pele* principles.

These values underpin the NPA's vision of a system of justice that enables people to live in freedom and security (Manchidi, 2024).

Having set the strategic direction of an organisation, internal and external strategic audits needs to be conducted.

3.5.2 Conducting internal and external strategic audits

Internal and external strategic audits need to be conducted, more specifically, the importance of auditing its external environments (macro-environment) in order to identify actual as well as potential external opportunities and challenges (O and C) of relevance to the organisation (Manchidi, 2024).

It is also necessary to conduct internal strategic audit to identify the organisation's internal resources, capabilities and competencies in auditing its strengths and weaknesses (S and W) (UNISA, 2015:25). In combination, these strategic audits constitute the basis of the adapted SWOC analysis for the public sector (see Section 4.8.4.3), which will be highlighted in Chapter 4 (Manchidi, 2024).

For an in-depth exploration of conducting internal and external strategic audits (see Section 4.5.2 and 4.5.3). Once the internal and external strategic audits have been conducted, the attention is turned to the third decision stage of strategy formulation, namely the setting of strategic goals to translate the mission into long-term goals (Manchidi, 2024).

3.5.3 **Setting strategic goals** (translating the mission into long-term goals)

The mission statement therefore still needs to be translated into measurable, long-term goals to ensure that it is clearly understood by everyone in the organisation (Smit, Botha & Vrba, 2016:94-102).

3.5.3.1 Strategic goals (UNISA, 2015:24):

Commonly referred to as “strategic” or “long-term objectives”, the strategic goals flow from the organisation's mission statement. According to Dess, Lumpkin and Eisner (2008:28), strategic goals are; (a) used to operationalise the mission statement, are (b) specific, (c) cover a well-defined timeframe and (d) provide guidance on how the organisation can work towards pursuing its mission and vision.

Organisations have a hierarchy of objectives, ranging from (at the top) those that are long term, strategic and relatively less specific, yet still measurable, to (at the bottom) those that are short term, more specific and measurable. Organisations thus need both long and short-term objectives. According to Davis (2019:68), the strategic goals have a shorter time frame than the vision and mission statements (5 to 10 years) because they are determined by the nature and the level of complexity and rate of change in a particular sector.

3.5.3.2 SMART principles to formulate strategic goals

Appropriate strategic goals to be of value, need to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and have a definite Timeframe – the SMART approach in setting goals (UNISA, 2015:24). Over and above being SMART, strategic goals should also be congruent with the mission statement components and the overall strategic direction; the SMART principles can be used to formulate good strategic goals (Davis, 2019:68-69):

Table 3.2 The SMART principles

S — Specific	Goals should be specific so that people know exactly what it is that will be expected of them
M — Measurable	Goals should be measurable so that people know exactly what it is that will be expected of them
A — Achievable	Goals must be considered attainable by those who need to work towards achieving them (if they seem impossible to reach, people will see no point in even trying or quickly become discouraged)
R — Realistic	The goals should be realistic, yet aimed at a level that will motivate people (on the other hand, if they are too easy to reach, people will not be inspired to work harder)
T — Time	A well-formulated goal is linked to a specific time period so people have a deadline to work towards (an open-ended goal will impart no sense of urgency and could take years to complete).

Once the strategic direction for an organisation has been set and the outcomes for the strategic audit are available as a basis for decision-making, the most appropriate strategy(ies) are selected (UNISA, 2015:26).

3.5.3.3 Theory of Change (ToC) for strategy formulation

Theory of Change is a tool *primarily used during* the 'Setting strategic goals (translating the mission into long-term goals)' (see Section 3.5.3), and 'Selecting appropriate strategies: strategic choice' (see Section 3.5.4) stages (Manchidi, 2024).

The ToC is defined as a process that maps out the change process and its expected outcomes; it helps in understanding how interventions lead to desired results; and is often used in conjunction with log frame approaches and is applied in planning, monitoring, evaluation, and communication (National School of Government (NSG), 2019:53-55). The ToC can be explained by the figure 3.3 below:

Figure 3.3 The Theory of Change
(Source: adapted from NSG, 2019:53)

I. Various methods and tools for developing Theory of Change

Developing a ToC involves a combination of desk review, literature review, and a participatory process with program managers and stakeholders; various methods and tools can be used, such as workshops, focus group discussions, stakeholder analysis, Theory of Action, and role plays (NSG, 2019:55).

II. Components of a Theory of Change

A ToC consists of several components, including a problem statement, a vision of change, outcomes, activities, assumptions, and indicators. It provides a logical framework for understanding how inputs and activities lead to desired outcomes (Manchidi, 2024).

III. The Results Chain

The results chain is a visual representation of the ToC, showing the causal relationship between inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts (Manchidi, 2024). According to NSG (2019:10,19) it helps in understanding the sequence of events and the expected results. The results chain is translated into different sections of SPs, APPs, and AOPs.

IV. Developing the Theory of Change

Task 1: Identifying the impact (NSG, 2019:59):

In developing the ToC, the first task is to identify the desired impact. This involves being specific and visionary about the direction in which the organisation aims to work towards. The impact should be ambitious yet achievable, and it should indicate the change required, why it is necessary, and for whom it is intended.

Task 2: Developing pathways of change (NSG, 2019:59-62):

The second task involves developing pathways of change, also known as outcomes. These pathways outline the specific steps and changes that need to occur in order to achieve the desired impact. It is important to be as detailed as possible in describing the outcomes, as they provide a roadmap for how success will be achieved.

Task 3: Operationalising outcomes (NSG, 2019:62-67):

Task 3 focuses on operationalising the outcomes identified in Task 2. This involves defining measurable indicators that will be used to track progress towards the outcomes. These indicators should be SMART. They provide a way to assess whether the desired outcomes are being achieved.

Task 4: Defining interventions (NSG, 2019:68):

Task 4 involves defining the interventions or actions that will be taken to bring about the desired outcomes. These interventions should be based on evidence and best practices, and they should be aligned with the resources and capacities of the organisation. It is important to consider both internal and external factors that may influence the success of the interventions.

Task 5: Articulating assumptions (NSG, 2019:69-72):
The final task in developing the ToC is articulating the assumptions underlying the strategy. Assumptions are the beliefs and hypotheses about how change will happen. It is important to identify and acknowledge these assumptions, as they may impact the success of the interventions. By making these assumptions explicit, they can be tested and adjusted as needed.

V. Writing the narrative Theory of Change

Irrespective of the scope of the map used to present the ToC, it is important to present it in a written format as well (Manchidi, 2024). Writing the narrative ToC can help draw causal links and organise thinking; it may also help to challenge information in the map and help identify elements that are missing (Harries, Hodgson & Noble, 2014:18) and imperative to ensure the successful implementation of the plan (NSG, 2019:78).

Key information that should be included in the narrative relates to the following (NSG, 2019:78):
Firstly, in writing the narrative ToC, it is important to provide *context about the organisation*. This includes information about the legislative and policy frameworks that guide the organisation's planning processes, as well as any relevant strategies or policies that inform the ToC.

Secondly, the narrative should clearly articulate the *assumptions that underpin the ToC*. These assumptions may relate to the political, social, economic, or environmental context in which the organisation operates. It is important to acknowledge and address any potential risks or uncertainties associated with these assumptions.

Thirdly, the narrative should provide *evidence to support the activities and outcomes* identified in the ToC. This may include research findings, case studies, or best practices from similar contexts. By providing evidence, the organisation can demonstrate the rationale behind its chosen interventions and outcomes.

Additionally, the narrative should also consider the *internal and external enablers* that may support or hinder the achievement of the desired outcomes. Internal enablers may include the organisation's resources, capacities, and leadership, while external enablers may include partnerships, funding, or policy support. By identifying these enablers, the organisation can better plan for their utilisation or mitigation.

Furthermore, the narrative should outline the *budget allocation and provision* for the activities identified in the ToC. This includes specifying the financial resources required for each activity and how they will be allocated. It is important to ensure that the budget aligns with the strategic priorities and available resources of the organisation.

Lastly, the *narrative should be linked to the organisation's SPs and APPs*. This involves aligning the outcomes, activities, and indicators of the ToC with the goals and objectives outlined in these planning documents. By doing so, the organisation can ensure that its planning processes are coherent and integrated.

VI. Activities, timeframes, and budgets (NSG, 2019:108):
Relevant activities and outputs: in the planning process within the NPA's context, it is important to identify relevant activities that contribute to the desired outputs. These activities should be aligned with the sub-programmes and should be clearly outlined. The outputs should be specific and measurable, reflecting the goals and objectives of the planning process. It is crucial to ensure that all relevant outputs are included, even if they are not reflected in the APP.

Activity timeframes: each activity should have a defined start and end date. This helps in ensuring that the activities are carried out within a specific timeframe and allows for effective monitoring and evaluation. By setting timeframes for each activity, it becomes easier to track progress and ensure that the planning process stays on track.

Activity budget allocations: the organisation should allocate a budget for each activity based on the allocated budget of the sub-programme. This helps in ensuring that the necessary resources are allocated to each activity and that the planning process is adequately funded. By assigning a budget to each activity, it becomes easier to manage and track the financial aspects of the planning process.

Activity dependencies: dependencies refer to factors that contribute to the achievement of activities. It is important to identify and outline all the dependencies for each activity. This helps in understanding the interdependencies between different activities and ensures that all necessary factors are considered in the planning process. By identifying dependencies, it becomes easier to manage and coordinate the activities effectively.

Activity responsibilities: each activity should have a designated official responsible for its implementation. This helps in ensuring accountability and clear lines of responsibility. By assigning responsibilities to specific individuals, it becomes easier to track progress and address any issues or challenges that may arise during the planning process.

> The process of developing a ToC involves identifying ultimate outcomes and intermediate outcomes that are preconditions to achieving the ultimate outcomes. This is done through a process of backwards mapping, where each outcome is carefully analysed to determine its relevance and alignment with the higher-level outcomes. The outcomes are then measured by determining indicators that will track progress and document success (NSG, 2019:61).

The ToC is further developed through a narrative that includes the context, assumptions, evidence, and enablers necessary for the change process to occur. According to the NSG (2019:86) this information is then transferred to the logical framework, which includes baseline data, targets, outputs, activities, and inputs.

The ToC and logical framework can be applied to the planning process, specifically in the development of the SP, APP, and AOP. The NSG (2019:90) states that the strategic audit provides the context for the implementation of planned initiatives and should be informed by various planning tools and research.

3.5.3.4 Logical Framework Approach (LFA) for strategy formulation

Commonly referred to as “Logframe” or “Log Frame”,

> According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):
> While the logical framework is *primarily focused on strategy implementation* (see Section 3.6), it is also *closely connected to strategy formulation* (see Section 3.5) and *strategy review and control* (see Section 3.7), making it an integral part of the *entire strategic management process*.
>
> The logical framework is *built upon the Theory of Change* (see Section 3.5.3.3), which is developed during the *strategy formulation phase*. The ToC explains the process to reach the desired impact and outcomes, and it *serves as the foundation for the Logframe*.
>
> Additionally, the Logframe includes indicators, baselines, and targets, which are used to monitor and evaluate the progress of the strategy; this *monitoring and evaluation process is part of the strategy review and control phase*, as it *allows for adjustments and improvements* to be made based on the results and feedback received.

The Logical Framework (Logframe) is defined as a structured and mostly linear process that helps in planning, implementing, managing, monitoring, and evaluating an organisation's strategy (NSG, 2019:80). It highlights the logical linkages between the impact, outcomes, outputs, activities, and inputs of the strategy (NSG, 2018:8). It also identifies indicators of success and potential risks (Manchidi, 2024).

I. Understanding the Logical Framework

Importance of the Logical Framework:

The Logframe is a valuable tool for improving planning and management within an organisation (NSG, 2019:17). It provides a clear structure for the strategy, ensures alignment between different components, and facilitates monitoring and evaluation; and it also helps in resource allocation and decision-making (Manchidi, 2024).

Key components of the Logical Framework:

Key components of the Logframe entails several essential elements, namely (NSG, 2019:6,82-86):

The *narrative summary*: provides a concise description of the strategy, including the impact, outcomes, outputs, activities, and inputs; it serves as an overview of the Logframe (Manchidi, 2024);

Performance indicators: are used to measure the progress and achievement of each result, whether it is an outcome or an output; indicators should be selected based on their relevance to the intervention and their ability to measure the desired change;

Assumptions: are the underlying beliefs and conditions that need to be in place for the strategy to be successful; they should be identified and documented to ensure that they are considered in the planning and implementation process;

The *impact statement*: describes the long-term and overarching change that the strategy aims to achieve; it should be SMART (see Section 3.5.3.2);

Outcomes: are the intermediate changes that occur as a result of the strategy, they are the direct results of the outputs, while *outputs* are the tangible products or services that are delivered as part of the strategy;

Activities: are the specific actions that need to be undertaken to deliver the outputs and achieve the outcomes; they should be *time-bound* and have clear start dates and deadlines (Manchidi, 2024);

Resource considerations: include the human and financial resources required to implement the activities and deliver the outputs; this includes the personnel, equipment, facilities, and budgetary requirements.

II. Developing a Theory of Change

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024): Developing a Theory of Change is an essential step in creating a Logical Framework. Developing a ToC is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.5.3.3 (IV)).

'Developing a Theory of Change' has been comprehensively discussed in the cited sections as indicated above, and the remaining portion is covered below:

Linking the Theory of Change to the Logical Framework: The ToC should be linked to the Logframe by transferring the key information, such as indicators, baselines, targets, assumptions, and outputs, from the theory of change to the Logframe (Manchidi, 2024).

III. Comprehensive Logical Framework Template

Comprehensive Logframe Template entails several essential elements, namely (NSG, 2019:81):

Overview of the template: the comprehensive logical framework template is a tool used to structure the planning and management of an organisation's strategy. It provides a clear and logical way to organise the various components of the strategy, including the impact, outcomes, outputs, activities, and inputs. The template is presented in a matrix format, allowing for a comprehensive overview of the results chain;

Narrative summary: the narrative summary section of the template provides a brief description of the strategy's impact, outcomes, and outputs. It serves as an introduction to the Logframe and sets the context for the rest of the template;

Performance indicators: performance indicators are essential for measuring the progress and success of the strategy. In this section of the template, specific indicators are identified for each level of result, including the impact, outcomes, outputs, and activities. Baseline data, targets, and assumptions are also included to provide a clear understanding of what is being measured and how progress will be assessed;

Assumptions: assumptions play a crucial role in the Logframe as they represent factors that are accepted as true and certain to happen without proof. This section of the template allows for the identification and documentation of key assumptions that underlie the results chain. By acknowledging and addressing these assumptions, the strategy can be better prepared for potential risks and challenges;

Impact statement: the impact statement is a concise statement that describes the overall intended impact of the strategy. It outlines the long-term change or benefit that the strategy aims to achieve. This section of the template provides a space to clearly articulate the impact statement and ensure alignment with the overall goals and objectives of the organisation;

Outcomes and outputs: the outcomes and outputs section of the template focuses on the intermediate results that the strategy aims to achieve. Outcomes represent the desired changes or benefits that will result from the strategy, while outputs are the specific products or services that will be delivered to contribute to those outcomes. This section allows for the identification and description of outcomes and outputs, ensuring a clear understanding of the intended results;

Activities and timeframes: activities are the specific actions or tasks that need to be undertaken to deliver the outputs and achieve the outcomes. This section of the template provides space to outline the activities required for each output, along with the associated timeframes. By clearly defining the activities and timeframes, the strategy can be effectively planned and implemented;

Resource considerations: the resource considerations section of the template highlights the human and financial resources required to achieve the outcomes and impacts. It provides an overview of the inputs needed for each activity and allows for the estimation of costs. By considering the necessary resources, the strategy can be adequately resourced and budgeted for.

Below is an example of a comprehensive logical framework template that is to be used:

Table 3.3 Comprehensive Logical Framework Template

Narrative Summary	Performance indicators					Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions
	Indicator	**Baseline 2019/20**	**Target 2022/23 (SMART)**	**Target 2023/24 (SMART)**	**Target 2024/25 (SMART)**		
Impact (the development results of achieving specific outcomes)							
A crime-free South Africa where all citizens enjoy a life free from fear	Reduction in crime rates	Crime rates in 2019/20	Projected 5% reduction in crime rates by 2022/23	Projected 10% reduction in crime rates by 2023/24	Projected 15% reduction in crime rates by 2024/25	National crime statistics	Effective law enforcement and crime prevention strategies are in place
Outcome (the medium-term results for specific beneficiaries , *"what we wish to achieve"*)							**Assumptions for outcomes to lead to Impacts**
Effective prosecution of crime, ensuring that those who commit crime are held responsible for their actions	Increase in the number of successful prosecutions and conviction rates	Number of successful prosecutions and conviction rates in 2019/20	Projected 10% increase in the number of successful prosecutions and conviction rates by 2022/23	Projected 20% increase in the number of successful prosecutions and conviction rates by 2023/24	Projected 30% increase in the number of successful prosecutions and conviction rates by 2024/25	Court records, NPA annual reports	The judiciary is independent and functions effectively
Outputs (the main products/services/building blocks towards achieving the outcome)							**Assumptions for outputs to lead to outcomes**
01 Successful prosecutions, increased conviction rates, and improved public confidence in the criminal justice system	Number of cases prosecuted, number of high-profile and complex crimes investigated	Number of cases prosecuted, number of high-profile and complex crimes investigated in 2019/20	Projected 15% increase in the number of cases prosecuted, 20% increase in the number of high-profile and complex crimes investigated by 2022/23	Projected 30% increase in the number of cases prosecuted, 40% increase in the number of high-profile and complex crimes investigated by 2023/24	Projected 45% increase in the number of cases prosecuted, 50% increase in the number of high-profile and complex crimes investigated by 2024/25	NPA case records, investigation reports	Adequate resources and funding are available for the NPA
Activities to achieve the outputs							
01 Daily criminal prosecutions, investigations into high-profile and complex crimes, especially under the Prevention of Organised Crime Act, the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, and the Public Finance Management Act	Number of daily prosecutions, number of investigations initiated	Number of daily prosecutions, number of investigations initiated in 2019/20	Projected 25% increase in the number of daily prosecutions, 30% increase in the number of investigations initiated by 2022/23	Projected 50% increase in the number of daily prosecutions, 60% increase in the number of investigations initiated by 2023/24	Projected 75% increase in the number of daily prosecutions, 80% increase in the number of investigations initiated by 2024/25	Daily prosecution records, investigation logs	There is cooperation from other stakeholders in the criminal justice system

Resource considerations			
• ***Main implementation components***			
Personnel: This includes salaries for prosecutors, investigators, and administrative staff. It also includes costs for training and professional development	*Operations*: This includes costs for office space, utilities, equipment, and supplies. It also includes costs for case management systems and other technology	*Travel*: This includes costs for prosecutors and investigators to travel to crime scenes, courts, and other relevant locations	*Legal*: This includes costs for legal research, expert witnesses, and other legal expenses.
• ***Summary budget for at least 3 years***			
	2022/23	**2023/24**	**2024/25**
Personnel:	R150 million	R165 million (10% increase due to inflation and potential salary increases)	R181.5 million (10% increase due to inflation and potential salary increases)
Operations:	R75 million	R82.5 million (10% increase due to inflation)	R90.75 million (10% increase due to inflation)
Travel:	R15 million	R16.5 million (10% increase due to inflation)	R18.15 million (10% increase due to inflation)
Legal:	R30 million	R33 million (10% increase due to inflation)	R36.3 million (10% increase due to inflation)
Total:	**R270 million**	**R297 million**	**R326.7 million**

(Source: adapted from Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) Guideline 2.2.3, 2014:10)

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the figures in the 'Comprehensive Logical Framework Template' are hypothetical figures, and the specific details may need to be adjusted based on the exact resource needs and budget of the NPA.

IV. Simple Logical Framework Template

Simple Logframe Template entails several essential elements, namely (NSG, 2019:82):

Overview of the template: the simple logical framework template is a condensed version of the comprehensive template. It provides a more streamlined approach to structuring the results chain, focusing on the key elements of impact, outcome, output, activity, and input;

Level of result: this section of the template identifies the different levels of result, including impact, outcome, output, activity, and input. It provides a clear hierarchy of the results chain, ensuring a logical flow from the highest level impact to the specific activities and inputs required;

Indicators: indicators are essential for measuring progress and success. In this section of the template, specific indicators are identified for each level of result. These indicators serve as measurable signs or markers that indicate how progress is being made towards the desired results;

Baseline and target: baseline data and targets are crucial for tracking progress and assessing performance. This section of the template allows for the inclusion of baseline information and specific targets for each indicator. By setting clear targets and monitoring progress against baselines, the strategy can be effectively evaluated;

Assumptions: similar to the comprehensive template, the simple template includes a section for identifying and documenting key assumptions. These assumptions represent factors that are accepted as true and certain to happen without proof. By acknowledging and addressing these assumptions, the strategy can better prepare for potential risks and challenges;

Impact, outcome, output, activity, and input: this section of the template provides space to outline the specific impact, outcome, output, activity, and input for each level of result. By clearly defining these elements, the strategy can be effectively planned and implemented.

Below is an example of a simple logical framework template that is to be used:

Table 3.4 Simple Logical Framework Template

Level of Result	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Assumptions
Impact	Reduction in crime rates and corruption	Current crime and corruption rates	Significant reduction in crime and corruption rates	Successful implementation of the APP, adequate resources, and cooperation from all stakeholders
Outcome	Successful prosecutions and increased access to justice	Current prosecution success rates and access to justice	Higher prosecution success rates and improved access to justice	Effective functioning of the NPA, cooperation from other parts of the justice system
Output	Number of cases prosecuted, amount of assets recovered	Current number of cases prosecuted and assets recovered	Increase in the number of cases prosecuted and assets recovered	Adequate staffing and resources, effective investigations
Activity	Implementation of strategic initiatives (e.g., capacitation of the Investigating Directorate, recruitment of specialist skills)	Current state of strategic initiatives	Successful implementation of all planned strategic initiatives	Adequate funding and resources, cooperation from all parts of the NPA
Input	Resources allocated to the NPA (e.g., funding, staff)	Current level of resources	Adequate resourcing for all NPA activities	Continued government support, availability of skilled staff

(Source: adapted from NSG, 2019:82)

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), this is a simplified example and the actual filling of the 'Simple Logical Framework Template' from the detailed NPA APP 2022/2023 information, which might need to be adjusted based on the specific goals and context of the NPA.

V. Applying the Logical Framework to planning processes

Table 3.5 Application of the Logical Framework to planning process

Planning process	Application of the Logical Framework
SP	the Logframe can be applied to the development of a SP; the SP reflects the organisation's outcomes and contributes to the achievement of overall government priorities; by using the Logframe, the SP can be structured in a clear and logical manner, ensuring alignment with the organisation's goals and objectives (NSG, 2019:88-95)
APP	the APP outlines the outputs towards the realisation of the outcomes and impact statements reflected in the SP; by using the Logframe, the APP can be developed with a clear understanding of the indicators, targets, assumptions, and resource considerations necessary for success (NSG, 2019:95-106)
AOP	the AOP provides a detailed roadmap for the implementation of the APP; by using the Logframe, the AOP can be developed with a clear understanding of the activities, timeframes, and resource requirements needed to achieve the desired outcomes and impacts (NSG, 2019:107-108).

The logical framework approach provides a systematic and logical way to structure a result chain (NSG, 2019:80).

> By using the comprehensive or simple Logframe templates, organisations can effectively plan, implement, manage, monitor, and evaluate their strategies. The templates allow for the identification and documentation of key elements such as indicators, targets, assumptions, and resource considerations, ensuring a comprehensive and well-structured approach to planning in the public sector (Manchidi, 2024).

Once the mission has been translated into strategic goals, the attention is turned to the fourth decision stage of strategy formulation, namely the *choice of appropriate strategies* to achieve the organisation's long-term objectives (UNISA, 2015:26).

3.5.4 Selecting appropriate strategies: strategic choice

This is the ultimate step in strategy formulation; the best course of action is actually chosen after considering organisational goals, organisational strengths, potential and limitations as well as the internal and external strategic audits (Sridharan, Bansal & Daftary, 2023:1). Strategic choice is the selection of specific robust strategies that will lead the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives as effectively as possible (Venter, 2014:4).

3.5.4.1 Evaluating operational level strategies

Once a number of feasible strategy options have been formulated, these strategy options have to be evaluated, and the most appropriate strategy or combination of strategies selected for strategy implementation; strategies can be evaluated in terms of their suitability, acceptability and feasibility as follows (UNISA, 2015:114-115):

Suitability: this is the degree to which an organisation's strategy deploys its core competencies to exploit external opportunities and overcome external challenges and internal weaknesses. Methods that are available to test suitability include SWOC analysis, the five forces sector analysis, and scenario analysis and planning;

Acceptability: this requirement relates to the ability of the strategy to produce the expected results over both the short and the long term in line with stakeholder expectations. It also considers the evaluation of factors such as benefits, risks and stakeholder reactions. Sensitivity analysis, and financial analysis, inter alia, can be used to assess acceptability;

Feasibility: feasibility implies that the organisation is capable of executing the strategy. The following questions need to be answered: (i) can the strategy achieve the set objectives?, (ii) can the strategy be implemented effectively and efficiently?, (iii) are the required resources, capabilities and competencies available for implementation of the strategy effectively?, and (iv) if not (iii), can they be obtained? For the feasibility measure, the organisation's financial and human resources as well as resource integration need to be evaluated.

Once formulated, strategies need to be evaluated according to the above-mentioned measures if they are to be deemed *"fit for purpose"*.

3.5.4.2 Strategic goals and strategic choice

The role of long-term objectives in the choice of strategy is as follows (UNISA, 2015:105):

(a) the primary objective of strategy is to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, based on an optimal fit between organisational competencies and opportunities in the external environment, (b) a well-conceived strategic direction for an organisation in terms of a vision, mission, strategic intent and long-term objectives as a basis for viable strategies should greatly enhance the future success of an organisation, and (c) to achieve long-term objectives, managers and key employees need to make optimal strategic decisions, particularly at operational and tactical or functional levels.

Once the appropriate strategies have been selected, the attention is turned to strategy implementation, the second phase of strategic management.

3.6 STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

In the context of the strategic management process it is crucial to, identify the specific stages at which the 'strategic management documents', namely, the SP, the APP, and the AOP, are developed or used. Each document — serves distinct function(s) at particular stages:

i. The APP is primarily associated with the *strategy implementation phase*.
   The APP is designed to translate the strategic goals outlined in the SP into specific, actionable objectives for the year—detailing the; (i) performance indicators, (ii) targets, and (iii) actions, that will be undertaken to achieve the strategic objectives, essentially serving as a, bridge between strategic planning, and operational execution
ii. The AOP is also conducted during the *strategy implementation phase*.
   Similarly, the AOP focuses on the specific operations required to achieve the targets set forth in both the SP, and the APP; and also provides a detailed breakdown of the resources, timeline, and personnel needed for executing the activities outlined, in the APP, thereby, facilitating the overall strategy implementation.

While the SP sets the long-term direction, the APP, and AOP, operationalise that strategy, by outlining the specific actions, and resources necessary for successful implementation. Thus, understanding the correct stage in which these documents are introduced, or used is essential within the strategic management continuum.

Strategy implementation is defined as the process during which the organisation draws on both human and non-human factors in the organisation to ensure that the strategy is executed in line with plans devised during strategy formulation phase (Venter, 2014:309). Selected strategies are turned into action in order to realise the vision, mission and goals of the organisation during strategy implementation; it is the phase of the strategic management process where management aligns strategic leadership, organisational culture, organisational structures, reward systems, policies and resource allocation with the chosen strategies (UNISA, 2019b:12).

3.6.1 Elements of strategy implementation

While it is the most commonly accepted that most strategies fail because of implementation problems, it is the most under-studied aspect of the strategic management process; strategy implementation consists of the following most important elements (Venter, 2014:4):

(a) *leadership and culture*, involves ensuring that the culture of the organisation is aligned with the strategic choice is a time consuming and complex task, since maintaining culture takes a deliberate effort and changing it does not happen quickly, (b) *competencies*, require the organisation needs to ensure that individuals have the right mix of knowledge, skills and attitudes to support the strategy, (c) *systems*, necessitate the organisation has to put procedures such as reward systems, in place to support strategic direction, (d) *structure*, demands that the organisation needs an appropriate structure to successfully execute the strategy, (e) *cascading*, involves cascading strategic objectives into short-term objectives,

functional strategies and policies, the organisation can ensure that functional objectives and strategies and organisational policies support strategic direction.

3.6.2 Barriers to successful strategy implementation

Strategy implementation is the most difficult part of the strategic management process and that it is much easier to formulate a SP than to implement it – *why it is so difficult to implement strategies (UNISA, 2019b:18)*? cf. Kaplan and Norton (2001:147-160) identified the following four main barriers to successful strategy implementation:

a) *the people barrier*: organisational management does not link incentives to strategy implementation, which is indicated as a *'people barrier'*,
b) *the vision barrier*: organisational management does not ensure that its workforce has a thorough understanding of the strategy that the organisation intends to implement in order to realise its vision, which is indicated as *'the vision barrier'*,
c) *the management barrier*: executive teams do not spend sufficient time managing organisational strategy, which is indicated as *'the management barrier'*, and
d) *the resource barrier*: organisations do not link sufficient resources to strategy execution, which is referred to as *'the resource barrier'*.

3.7 STRATEGY REVIEW AND CONTROL

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

In the context of the strategic management process it is crucial to, identify the specific stages at which the 'strategic management documents', namely, the SP, the APP, and the AOP, are developed or used. Each document — serves distinct function(s) at particular stages:

i. The *strategy review and control phase*, is an ongoing process that *occurs throughout the strategic formulation cycle*. This phase involves, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the *SP, APP*, and *AOP*, to ensure they are (and or remain) on track, making necessary adjustments when needed.

Ultimately the strategy review and control phase allows organisations, to ensure that the SP, APP, and AOP are effectively aligned with the evolving organisational goals, and external conditions, thereby enabling timely interventions to enhance their success. Thus, understanding the correct stage in which these documents are introduced, or used is essential within the strategic management continuum.

Strategy review and control is defined as a process used by organisations to control the formation and implementation of their strategies; (a) strategy review and control focuses on the achievement of future goals, (b) it involves *tracking a strategy as it is being implemented* (UNISA, 2019b:70) , and (c) it *determines whether or not there have been any deviations from the overall plan or key changes in the environment that require corrective measures* (Brevis, 2014:269). Similarly, Davis (2019:61) defines strategy review and control as a process that involves; (a) monitoring the progress of strategy implementation, (b) *identifying problems and instituting any necessary corrective actions*, although given as the third and final stage, (c) it is a continuous process (*as strategies are implemented, the strategy review takes place*), and that, (d) different methods of strategy review and control exist.

There are noticeable similarities—both definitions describe strategy review and control as, a process that monitors and adjusts the implementation of strategies. They emphasise the importance of tracking progress, identifying problems, and making necessary adjustments to achieve future goals.

The researcher supports the argument raised by both sources, emphasising the crucial role of continuous monitoring and adjustment in the strategy review and control process (Manchidi, 2024).

For an in-depth exploration of strategy review and control (see Section 3.7.1 to 3.7.3).

The purpose of strategy review and control is to ensure that the formulated strategy remains valid and that the implementation of strategy remains on track; it provides feedback to the formulation and implementation phases, so that the organisation can adapt its SPs to its changing environment or react to immediate challenges or opportunities (Venter, 2014:5).

3.7.1 Evaluation

Strategic review and control is the process which ensures that the organisation's overall goals or desired outcomes are realised or that the organisation's actual performance ties in with predetermined outcomes; 'Evaluation' entails several essential elements, namely (Brevis, 2014:271-273):

3.7.1.1 Establish performance benchmarks

The first step in the strategic control process is to determine the desired level of performance, and benchmarking provides a tool for comparing the organisation to its best competitors or to the best competitors in other sectors to determine what is possible. Benchmarking is defined as the formal process of comparing the attributes of one organisation to those of another.

A generic benchmarking process consists of three steps: (a) define the attribute to be benchmarked and identify a best-in-class-comparison, (b) document the comparison organisation's process at strategic and operational levels. Compare the best-in-class practices with the organisation's own methods, specifying any and all differences, and (c) develop a strategy for adopting best practices and improving the organisation's own processes and performance.

A benchmarking process such as the one described above should be established. At this stage, a best-in-class measure and superior performance should also be established.

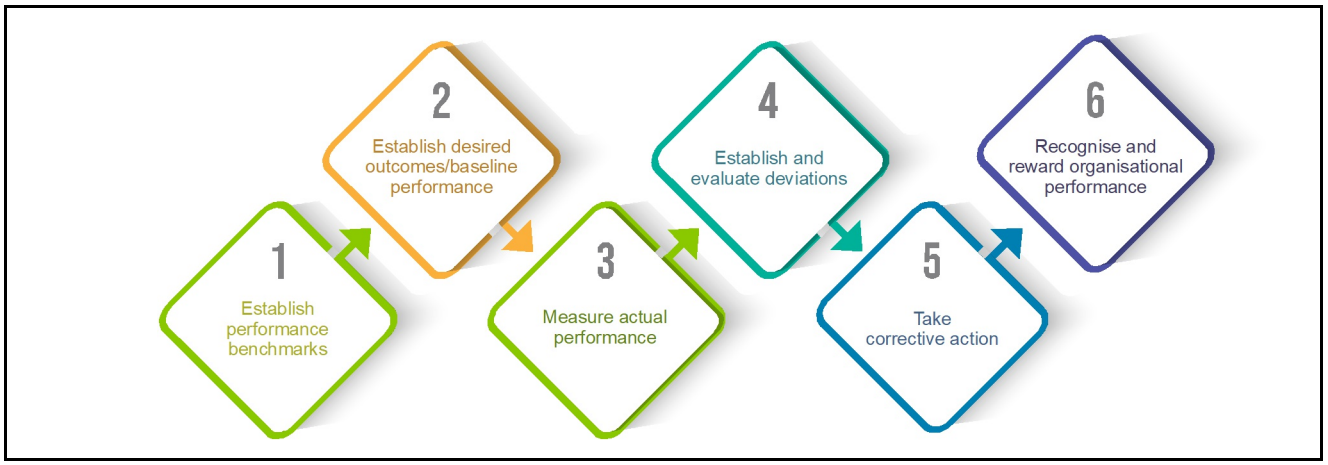


Figure 3.4 The strategic review and control process
(Source: adapted from Brevis, 2014:272)

3.7.1.2 Establish desired outcomes or baseline performance

The second step in the strategic control process is to establish the desired outcomes or baseline performance of the organisation. This is the target against which subsequent organisational performance will be compared, and it should meet the following criteria: (a) it should be expressed in measurable terms, (b) it should be realistic, and (c) it should address the KPIs for the organisation.

The starting point of this process would be the strategic goals of the organisation. Flowing from strategic goals, desired outcomes and baseline performance should be communicated with departments, individuals and all other relevant stakeholders (such as suppliers, labour unions, etc.).

3.7.1.3 Measure actual performance

This step involves collecting information and reporting on actual performance of the organisation. The variables should be reliable and quantifiable to make meaningful comparison possible. Observation and measurement should be in accordance with the control system, i.e. they should occur at the strategic points and according to the desired outcomes and baseline performance as determined by *step 1* of the strategic review and control process. Because of the long-term nature of strategy formulation, this may require the identification of certain key achievements (*'milestones') as* interim measures, and ensuring that these milestones are achieved on time and within required performance parameters.

3.7.1.4 Establish and evaluate deviations

The fourth step in the strategic control process involves (a) comparing measured performance against desired outcomes and baseline performance, and (b) comparing measured performance against best-in-class performance. Actual performance may be higher than, lower than or identical to these measures. If actual performance is higher, it may mean that the desired outcome could have been determined too low and should be higher in future. If actual performance is lower than the desired outcome, the question is how much deviation from the desired outcome to allow before taking remedial action. Strategic managers usually react to exceptional differences between actual and planned performance (this is known as 'control by exception'), whereas subordinates deal with less significant deviations.

3.7.1.5 Take corrective action

The fifth step in the strategic control process is to determine the need for corrective action. This step is aimed at achieving or bettering the overall performance standard and ensuring that differences do not recur in future. This step involves identifying the symptoms of poor performance, identifying the root causes for poor performance and determining and executing the necessary improvements. Lastly, a continuous improvement project should be launched to ensure that incremental improvements become a permanent part of the process.

3.7.1.6 Recognise and reward organisational performance

The purpose of strategic control is not only to identify and rectify poor performance, but also to recognise and reward good and exceptional organisational performance.

3.7.2 Control

The four types of strategy review and control that organisations can use are premise control, implementation control, special alert control, and strategic surveillance; *premise control*, *implementation control*, *special alert control*, and *strategic surveillance* are mainly used to review the content of a strategy; each of these are briefly explained below (UNISA, 2019b:71-72):

3.7.2.1 Premise control

Every strategy is based on certain planning premises and predictions about environmental changes and conditions. Premise control is designed to check methodically and constantly whether these premises on which a strategy is grounded, are still valid. Should a planning premise be no longer valid, the strategy may have to change or needs to be adjusted to reflect a changing reality

3.7.2.2 Implementation control

This type of strategy review and control is exercised as various activities, initiatives and programmes occur over a period when a chosen strategy is implemented. In other words, the chosen strategy is first monitored and, secondly, various milestones are reviewed.

> According to Davis (2019:61), deviations from the plans are identified and addressed as they occur. This implies that corrective measures are taken during the strategy implementation process to ensure that the strategic management process continues successfully.

3.7.2.3 Special alert control

The management environment is often characterised by unforeseen events. Thus, the rigorous and rapid reassessment of the organisation's strategy because of the occurrence of an immediate, unforeseen event may be necessary

3.7.2.4 Strategic surveillance

This type of strategy review and control is designed to observe a wide range of events within and outside an organisation that are likely to affect the track of the organisation's current strategy. Various sources may be consulted, for example journals, conferences, conversations with experts, observations and the internet which may provide important information that may influence the chosen strategy of the organisation. Most important is the feedback from the review that needs to serve as input in the amendment of existing strategies and goals, or the possible total reconsideration of the strategies and goals.

3.7.3 Importance of strategic review and control

Strategic review and control is a vital element in the strategic management process for the following reasons (Botha, 2019:352):

Strategic control *provides a co-ordinating mechanism* that links the strategic formation, implementation and control processes of an organisation. It ensures that the organisation's resources are deployed in such a way that it attains its overall objectives.

Resources, (including machinery and equipment, human resources and finance), *need to be allocated to different managers and functions and then coordinated and controlled to generate synergy*.

Strategic control also ensures that *organisational resources match key success factors*.

Furthermore, strategic control *enables management to cope with environmental change* and uncertainty. Between the time that goals and objectives are formulated and the time they are attained, many things happen in the organisation and its environment to disrupt movement towards the goal – or which may even change the goal itself. A properly designed strategic control system can help managers anticipate, monitor and respond to changing circumstances. An improperly designed strategic control system can result in organisational performance that falls far below acceptable levels, and may even lead to the downfall of the organisation.

Complex organisations need strategic control measures to *ensure that costly mistakes are avoided*.

Lastly, strategic control *ensures a balance between organisational effectiveness and efficiency*. *Effectiveness* is achieved when the organisation formulates, pursues and achieves appropriate goals. Effectiveness, in essence, means *'doing the right things'*. Given the reality of limited resources, effectiveness alone is not enough. An organisation also needs to be efficient. Efficiency enters the picture when the resources required to achieve an objective are weighed against what was actually accomplished. The organisation will be more efficient the more favourable the ratio between benefits (outputs or performance) and costs (inputs or resources) is. Efficiency essentially means *'doing things right'*. *Efficiency* is achieved by using fewest inputs (such as the number of people employed) to generate a maximum amount of output (such as the number of targets met for the particular period).

Strategy review and control can effectively occur at any point (not only at the end of the process) during the entire strategic management process, and apply to both the process and practice approaches to strategic management (UNISA, 2015:27), and is the regulatory task of top management and any individual or group that controls key actions of the organisation; without strategy review and control organisations have no indication of how well they are performing in relation to their ultimate end point and desired outcomes; strategy review and control keeps the organisation moving in its intended direction and ensures ongoing consistency between the organisation and its environment (Brevis, 2014:269).

Participant responses on RQ6: What is the strategic management process?

When the participants of Sample B were asked, *"What is the strategic management process?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (6), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Five participants (SM.3, SM.5, SM.6, SM.12, and SM.13) provided a clear and comprehensive understanding of the strategic management process. They described it as a systematic approach to formulating, implementing, and evaluating strategic decisions that will enable an organisation to achieve its objectives.
- The remaining participants did not explicitly define the strategic management process, but suggested it was the outcome of strategic audits, the alignment of strategies with organisational goals and objectives, or the integration of sustainability into the strategies.
- Their understanding was generally implied and partial.

In summary, out of 13 participants in Sample B, 5 (38.46%) provided a clear definition of the strategic management process, while the remaining 8 (61.54%) implied their understanding of the process. This suggests that while there is a general understanding of the strategic management process among senior and top managers, there is room for improvement in terms of explicitly defining and understanding the process.

3.8 ROLE OF MANAGEMENT IN STRATEGY

> There are usually three levels of management, namely top management, middle management and lower-level management. The top management team (or senior management team) will play a major role in setting the organisation's strategic direction and in requesting strategic audit. The information they gather will then be used to formulate the strategies. It is mostly the middle and lower-level managers who are responsible for the execution of the strategies through the managing of employees. The top managers rely on the middle managers to ensure that their planned strategies are implemented. Top management then becomes more involved once again during the strategy review process (Davis, 2019:62).

3.8.1 **Top management** (Davis, 2019:90-92):

Top managers have traditionally been regarded as the custodians of strategy.
Top management formulate goals and strategies (strategic planning) and have to ensure that these are implemented (organising and leading) and stays on track with the help of middle managers and the rest of the organisation (Venter, 2014:3-4).

The role of the top management team is to set the overall strategic direction of the organisation by formulating the strategy, allocating the resources and reviewing the strategic success. They are responsible for gathering information from both the internal and external strategic audits, and choosing strategies and actions to help the organisation gain a sustainable competitive advantage. They communicate this to middle-level management, explaining the rationale behind their strategic choices so that middle managers can link the strategies and strategic goals to implementation efforts.

The top managers are also responsible for the review of strategies. They reflect upon their decisions and actions and this may lead to changes or new decisions and actions. Sensing or sense-making may also lead to new insights or realisations and may affect current or future decisions. The senior or top management team needs to have sufficient detail of the organisation to ensure that the strategising is sound and to be able to allocate scarce resources to put the strategies in place.

A strategist who is responsible for guiding the strategy formulation in an organisation is often referred to as a Strategic Planning Champion (SPC). An SPC is an expert in strategic thinking with specific analytical and technical skills, including the ability and knowledge to apply strategic management concepts to the organisation and use management tools and planning models for strategic practices. There are three roles that SPCs must perform to work effectively – some strategists may be stronger in a specific role while others may offer a combination of these roles or have these roles fulfilled by members of their management team.

Listed below are the three roles that SPCs must perform:
(a) the *social craftsperson*, integrates different expectations from groups and individuals to ensure buy-in into the overall strategic direction, creating a positive and common ground from which to plan the strategic future of the organisation. He or she deals with tensions and conflicts, and changes a volatile situation into a positive one, (b) the *artful interpreter*, adjusts general strategy formulation practices to align them with the local routines and norms. He or she contextualises the strategy so that others can identify their own roles in it, (c) the *known stranger*, ensures a balance between distance and closeness in the interaction between strategists and other parties to maintain objectivity while at the same time cultivating trust.

3.8.2 Middle management

Middle management is now much closer to the strategic apex and makes a variety of contributions to the formulation, implementation, review and success of strategies (Davis, 2019:94). Four strategic roles of middle managers (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1992:154-155):
(a) *implementing deliberate strategy*, this role is aligned with the traditional role of strategic management, but remains valid in the contemporary organisation, especially in relation to deliberate strategies. It deals with managerial interventions, actions and tasks to align the organisational action with the strategic intention of top management. Middle managers' ability to understand, anticipate and manage processes needed to secure positive and pervasive commitment to strategy is a critical general management implementation skill. Middle managers implement strategy by translating strategy into action plans and individual objectives, (b) *synthesising information*, this is the interpretation and evaluation of information. How middle managers understand and share information influences the success or failure of the organisational strategies. Not only do middle managers provide information concerning internal and

external events to top management, but they are also responsible for passing information down to subordinates, which can reduce uncertainty and resistance to change. Middle managers are considered linking pins, equipped with the ability to combine strategic macro-information and hands-on micro-information, (c) *reshaping the strategic thinking of top management by selling to them strategic initiatives that diverge from their current conception of strategy*, this role links with emergent strategising. Middle managers frequently become organisational champions for initiatives developed at the operating level. It is defined as the persistent and persuasive communication of strategic options to top management. By proposing and defining issues for top managers, middle managers provide important contributions to an organisation's strategic direction and thereby influence organisational effectiveness, (d) *managing change and facilitating adaptability*, middle managers have downward influence and need to support, guide and alleviate the concerns and fears of subordinates. Formulating and implementing strategies go hand in hand with change, and middle managers play an important role in managing these change processes by adapting and amending work practices to align them to the changing environment. Middle managers are also required to deal with conflict. Within their areas of responsibility, middle managers have the authority and responsibility to facilitate change.

Middle managers contribute in various ways to strategising; they should be clear thinkers and be good at identifying what needs to be done and then guiding their subordinates to get it done (Davis, 2019:95).

3.8.3 Lower-level management

Commonly referred to as "operational managers",

> According to UNISA (2019a:7) lower-level management comprises the supervisors or first-line managers of the organisation. They are responsible for even smaller segments of the organisation. Their management activities revolve around the daily activities of their relevant sections and sub-sections. They focus on short-term planning and the implementation of the plans of middle management. Their primary concern is to apply policies, procedures and rules in order to achieve a high level of productivity and efficiency, to motivate subordinates and to accomplish day-to-day objectives.

3.9 SUMMARY

Strategic management is a process that involves defining an organisation's strategy and making decisions on allocating resources to pursue this strategy. It includes reviewing the current environment, setting objectives, crafting a strategic plan, and implementing and monitoring outcomes. This study extends the application of strategic audit to cover the entire strategic management process, rather than limiting it to the strategy formulation phase as is typically done.

Understanding strategic management and the strategic management process serves as a foundation for the concept of strategic audit in Chapter 4. A strategic audit is a systematic process to understand and evaluate the strategic management of an organisation. It involves assessing the organisation's strategy and ability to achieve its objectives.

In strategic management, the strategic audit is a tool to identify and evaluate changes in the organisation environment, assess current strategies, and set a direction for future strategic planning. By understanding strategic management, one can better conduct a strategic audit, as it provides the necessary context and framework. The broadened application of strategic audit across the entire strategic management process, as demonstrated in this study, further enhances its effectiveness and relevance.

CHAPTER FOUR: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STRATEGIC AUDITS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the application of internal and external strategic audits as essential mechanisms for evaluating the strategic management process at the NPA in Pretoria. As the primary case study organisation, the NPA provides the contextual focus for exploring how strategic audits can strengthen alignment between the organisation's capabilities, its strategic objectives, and the dynamic internal and external environments in which it operates.

The chapter underscores the importance of strategic audits for public sector institutions such as the NPA. It highlights key benefits, including evidence-based strategy formulation, enhanced strategic alignment and integration, and the systematic identification of internal resources and capabilities. A comprehensive overview of the strategic audit process is provided, covering critical aspects such as the establishment of a strategic audit unit (or equivalent function), team composition, required qualifications and experience of auditors, the appropriate frequency of audits, and the typical duration of the audit process.

Particular attention is given to the key components of a strategic audit, notably the analysis of the NPA's internal environment (micro-environment) and external environment (macro-environment). These analyses yield vital insights into the factors that influence the NPA's performance and strategic decision-making. The chapter further discusses relevant tools and frameworks for conducting strategic audits and demonstrates the correct application of such tools as recommended by the DPME for public institutions.

4.2 STRATEGIC AUDIT

Strategic audit refers to the activities of the organisation and individual employees to constantly monitor the internal and external environment to identify issues that may impact the organisation's ability to achieve its strategic objectives; strategic audit can be formal and informal (Brevis, 2014:299). Similarly, the AMA (2008: s.v. "situation analysis") describes it as the systematic collection and study of past and present data to identify trends, forces, and conditions that could influence business performance and the choice of appropriate strategies; this process, often referred to by the acronym SWOT, forms the foundation of strategic planning by examining both internal factors (to identify strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (to identify opportunities and threats).

> Similarly, Della-Piana et al. (2005:1-2) define a strategy audit as involving the auditing of the actual direction of an organisation and comparing that course to the direction required to succeed in a changing environment. An organisation's actual direction is the sum of what it does and does not do, how well the organisation is internally aligned to support the strategy, and how viable the strategy is when compared to external market, competitor, and financial realities. These two categories; (a) the internal strategic audit, and (b) the external strategic audit, make up the major elements of a strategy audit.
>
> There are noticeable similarities—these definitions describe strategic audit as, a process of monitoring and evaluating both internal and external factors to ensure alignment with strategic objectives. They emphasise the importance of systematic data collection and analysis to identify trends and conditions influencing organisational performance.
>
> The researcher supports the argument raised by these sources, emphasising the crucial role of strategic audits in ensuring organisational alignment and adaptability in a changing environment (Manchidi, 2024).

For an in-depth exploration of strategic audit (see Section 4.2.1 to 4.8.4).

Participant responses on RQ1: What is strategic audit (analysis)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"What is strategic audit (analysis)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (1), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- MM.1: Defined strategic analysis as a comprehensive evaluation process guiding an organisation in setting long-term objectives, aiming to instil certainty within the organisation.
- MM.2 and MM.3: Described strategic analysis as researching a company and its operating environment to formulate a strategy, including evaluating the work environment.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (1), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- SM.1, SM.2, SM.4, SM.5, SM.6, SM.10, SM.11, and SM.12: Emphasised strategic analysis as a critical component of strategic planning, involving retrospective examination, forward-looking perspectives, and ensuring alignment with vision and mission.
- SM.3 and SM.7: Mentioned strategic analysis involving PESTEL and SWOT analyses to assess internal and external factors.
- SM.9: Linked strategic analysis to monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving the vision.
- SM.13: Referred to strategic analysis as assessing future plans and examining internal and external environments.

In summary, Sample B showed a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of strategic audit (analysis) compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, 13 (81.25%) provided detailed descriptions, while the 3 participants in Sample A gave more concise definitions.

4.2.1 Why should organisations conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

As identified in the researcher's ongoing study (Manchidi, 2024), it is essential for organisations to conduct strategic audits for the following reasons:

Firstly, conducting strategic strategy audits aids organisations in comprehending their internal capabilities and the external factors (or thus *comprehending internal and external factors*) that affect their operations.

In the NPA study, understanding the socio-political, legal, and economic environment is imperative for the NPA to adapt to changes, such as new legislated frameworks, shifts or changes in public expectations, or emerging threats to the rule of law; this situational awareness enhances decision-making, allowing the department to align its resources effectively with national priorities and legal mandates.

Strategic audit equips organisations with a holistic understanding of their operating environment, enabling them to make informed decisions (or thus *informed decision-making*) based on a comprehensive strategic audit; this minimises the risk of flawed decision-making and ensures the optimal allocation of organisational resources.

By auditing their internal capabilities and external environment, organisations can identify areas where they can leverage their strengths to capitalise on opportunities and mitigate potential threats; this enables them to position themselves strategically (or thus *strategic positioning*), ensuring they remain relevant and effective in achieving their public service delivery goals.

Additionally, strategic audits highlight areas needing improvement and emerging challenges (or thus *identifying risks and opportunities*).

In the NPA study, this entails prosecutorial services, new crime patterns, and necessitating innovative strategies. The organisation's effectiveness and relevance require the ability to anticipate and respond to these factors.

Furthermore, regular strategic audits are essential for organisations to align with their strategic objectives and goals (or thus *alignment with strategic objectives*).

In the NPA study, this involves ensuring its focus continues supporting its core mission of delivering justice, adjusting priorities and initiatives to support effective governance, and identifying areas for reform or improvement.

Moreover, insights from strategic audits inform strategic planning processes (or thus *supporting strategic planning*), helping decision-makers develop effective strategies to maintain. Insights gathered from auditing internal and external conditions assist decision-makers in developing more effective strategies, ensuring the organisation's continued relevance in a rapidly changing environment.

Lastly, strategic audits contribute to *continuous improvement* by providing a structured process for regular review; this ongoing reflection enables organisations to adapt to emerging trends and challenges, enhancing sustained performance.

Strategic audits will provide the NPA and other public sector institutions with valuable insights that support informed decision-making, risk management, and continuous improvement; this ultimately enhances their ability to fulfil their strategic objectives and deliver effective service delivery.

Participant responses on RQ2: Why should organisations conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"Why should organisations conduct strategic audit (analysis)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (2), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- One participant (MM.1) stated that strategic audits equip organisations with necessary knowledge and information to make informed decisions.
- Another participant (MM.2) highlighted that strategic audits help organisations focus on their core competencies, align activities to achieve objectives, and minimise risks.
- The third participant (MM.3) mentioned that strategic audits help identify areas where operational tactics need refinement to better align with organisational strategies.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (2), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Participant SM.1 emphasised that strategic audits allow for reflection on whether an organisation's strategy remains relevant in light of internal operations and external environment changes.
- SM.2 noted that these audits help in understanding if the organisation is still aligned with its vision and values while also assessing performance against benchmarks.
- SM.3 through SM.13 provided various insights into how strategic audits contribute to organisational success by ensuring alignment between strategy and operations, identifying areas for improvement, aiding decision-making processes, providing accountability frameworks, and facilitating change management processes.

In summary, Sample B showed a more comprehensive understanding of the importance of strategic audits compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, 13 (81.25%) provided detailed insights into the benefits of strategic audits, while the 3 participants in Sample A (100%) focused on practical aspects such as informed decision-making and alignment with core competencies.

4.2.2 Purpose of the strategic audit

The strategic audit serves several purposes (Venter, 2014:4; Davis 2019:72):
(a) *external strategic audit*, identifies external opportunities that may be exploited and challenges that may impact the organisation's ability to achieve strategic objectives (see Section 4.5.3), (b) *internal strategic audit (internal analysis)*, evaluates the organisation's resources and capabilities to leverage strengths and mitigate weaknesses that could hinder strategic objectives (see Section 4.5.2).
Brevis (2014:300) further outlines the strategic audit's purpose as:
(c) continually evaluating the validity of the assumptions that underpin the SP to reassess them as necessary, (d) pre-empting disastrous events or responding swiftly and appropriately after their occurrence, (e) monitoring for events or trends that could threaten the SP's successful execution, and (f) identifying opportunities that may arise from the environment.

Strategic audits are vital for aligning and capitalising on opportunities and strengths, countering external challenges, and improving internal weaknesses (UNISA, 2015:26), ensuring the successful implementation and execution of SPs (Venter, 2014:3-4).

Participant responses on RQ1, Prompt 1.2: What is the purpose of strategic audit (analysis)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"What is the purpose of strategic audit (analysis)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (1.2), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- All three participants (MM.1, MM.2, and MM.3) concurred that the purpose of strategic analysis is to guide decision-making, inform strategic planning, and assist an organisation in adapting to its environment. They emphasised its role in identifying opportunities and threats, understanding competitive forces, and setting realistic objectives.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (1.2), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- The majority of participants (10 out of 13) stated that the purpose of strategic analysis is to provide a clear understanding of the strategic position of the organisation, inform the formulation and implementation of strategy, and ensure the alignment of the organisation's resources and capabilities with its external environment. They highlighted its role in risk management, performance measurement, and strategic control.
- Three participants (SM.9, SM.11, and SM.13) suggested that the purpose of strategic analysis is to review and improve strategy, identify root causes of strategic issues, and anticipate future changes.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a more comprehensive understanding of the purpose of strategic analysis compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, 13 (81.25%) provided a clear explanation of the purpose of strategic analysis. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, all 3 (100%) explained the purpose of strategic analysis, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, 10 (76.92%) explained the purpose of strategic analysis.

4.2.3 The importance of strategic audit

4.2.3.1 Importance and role of strategic audit

According to Smit et al (2016:74) the strategic audit plays a crucial role in management's knowledge and understanding of its Information Management System (IMS) of potential environmental changes. Its IMS must adequately incorporate strategic auditing. The significance of a strategic audit is demonstrated as follows:

(a) the environment is constantly in flux, necessitating management's proactive efforts to audit and adapt to these changes, (b) strategic audit is essential for identifying environmental factors that may threaten the organisation's current mission, goals, and strategy, and (c) auditing also helps identify environmental factors that present organisational opportunities. The more susceptible an organisation is to change, the more critical a strategic audit becomes.

4.2.3.2 Importance of strategic audit in strategy formulation

Strategic audit is important to strategy formulation for the following reasons (Manchidi, 2024):

(a) strategic audit identifies and evaluates the factors that affect an organisation's goals and objectives; this helps the organisation to define its purpose, scope, and direction and to set realistic and measurable targets, (b) strategic audit helps formulate a strategy aligned with the organisation's vision, mission, values, and capabilities; this ensures that the strategy is relevant, coherent, and consistent with the organisation's identity and aspirations, (c) strategic audit also helps assess the organisation's external and internal environment, such as the opportunities, threats, strengths, and weaknesses; this enables the organisation to identify the key issues, challenges, and risks it faces and to develop appropriate responses and solutions, and (d) strategic audit enables the organisation to make informed decisions, prioritise actions, allocate resources, and monitor progress and performance; this enhances the organisation's efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

The strategic audit is vital in strategy formulation as it provides a comprehensive understanding of an organisation's internal strengths, weaknesses, external opportunities, and threats (SWOT). This knowledge is instrumental in shaping a clear and coherent vision, mission, goals, and objectives that align with the organisation's core values and competitive advantage. The strategic audit also guides the selection and implementation of the most suitable strategies, enabling the organisation to achieve its desired outcomes. Therefore, a strategic audit is indispensable for effective strategy formulation (Manchidi, 2024).

Participant responses on RQ2, Prompt 2.1: Why is strategic audit (analysis) important to strategy formulation (planning)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"Why is strategic audit (analysis) important to strategy formulation (planning)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (2.1), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- All three participants (MM.1, MM.2, and MM.3) emphasised the importance of strategic analysis in strategy formulation, as it provides the organisation with the necessary knowledge and information to make informed decisions, evaluate organisation strategies, maintain a competitive edge, strengthen internal operations, and respond to external factors.
- However, none of them explicitly mentioned strategic audit, which is a process of reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness and suitability of the existing strategy.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (2.1), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- All 13 participants (SM.1, SM.2, SM.3, SM.4, SM.5, SM.6, SM.7, SM.8, SM.9, SM.10, SM.11, SM.12, and SM.13) highlighted the importance of strategic audit in strategy formulation, as it ensures that the strategy is aligned with the organisation's vision, mission, values, and capabilities, as well as the external and internal environment. They also mentioned that strategic audit helps to identify the key issues, challenges, and risks, and to develop appropriate responses and solutions. Moreover, they stated that strategic audit enables the organisation to make informed decisions, prioritise actions, allocate resources, and monitor progress and performance.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a more comprehensive and explicit understanding of the importance of strategic audit in strategy formulation compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, 13 (81.25%) explicitly mentioned strategic audit, while the remaining 3 (18.75%) only mentioned strategic analysis. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, none (0%) explicitly mentioned strategic audit, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, all 13 (100%) explicitly mentioned strategic audit.

4.2.4 The benefits of conducting strategic audit

Strategic audit yields numerous benefits for an organisation, which can be categorised into three primary areas (Venter, 2014:4):

4.2.4.1 Internal strategic audit benefits

Conducting an internal strategic audit can provide numerous advantages, including: (a) *identifying strengths and weaknesses* — strategic audit aids in identifying and valuing the resources and capabilities of the organisation, thereby recognising key strengths and weaknesses that may affect the organisation's ability to achieve its strategic objectives, (b) *improving efficiency and effectiveness* — according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), strategic audit contributes to improving the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability of an organisation. It also enhances the accountability and transparency of performance and service delivery

4.2.4.2 External strategic audit benefits

Conducting an external strategic audit can reveal a range of benefits, such as: (c) *understanding the external environment* — strategic audit helps to identify opportunities and threats outside of the organisation that may influence its ability to achieve its strategic objectives, and (d) *aligning with broader priorities* — according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), it helps to align the organisational plans with

the broader government priorities and the needs of the stakeholders, ensuring coherence and consistency across different levels of planning

4.2.4.3 Benefits in strategy formulation and implementation

Strategic audits can be beneficial during the strategy formulation and implementation processes, with benefits that include: (e) *informing strategic choices* — the insights gained from strategic audit guide the selection of robust strategies that will lead the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives as effectively as possible, and (f) *facilitating effective implementation* — according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), understanding the organisation's SWOT can help ensure that the strategy is executed in line with the devised plans, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of strategy implementation.

> Conducting strategic audits is vital for any organisation. It offers a thorough understanding of the organisation's internal and external factors, aiding in developing effective strategies. Strategic audit; aligns broader priorities, improve efficiency, and drive the organisation toward its strategic goals. Regular audits are essential for maintaining an organisation's relevance in an ever-changing environment (Manchidi, 2024).

Participant responses on RQ2, Prompt 2.2: What are the benefits of conducting strategic audit (analysis)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"What are the benefits of conducting strategic audit (analysis)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (2.2), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- All three participants (MM.1, MM.2, and MM.3) agreed that strategic analysis is crucial for an organisation, as it provides the necessary knowledge and information to make informed decisions, evaluate organisation strategies, maintain a competitive edge, respond to external factors, and identify areas of improvement.
- Their understanding was generally consistent and complete.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (2.2), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- All 13 participants (SM.1, SM.2, SM.3, SM.4, SM.5, SM.6, SM.7, SM.8, SM.9, SM.10, SM.11, SM.12, and SM.13) agreed that strategic analysis is an integral part of the strategic planning process, which typically involves understanding, planning, executing, monitoring, and evaluating. They also mentioned that strategic analysis helps to align the organisation's strategy with its vision, mission, objectives, outcomes, indicators, and targets. Furthermore, they stated that strategic analysis enables the organisation to understand its internal and external environment, assess its strengths and weaknesses, identify opportunities and threats, and formulate responsive and relevant strategies.
- Their understanding was generally comprehensive and explicit.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a more in-depth and detailed understanding of the benefits of conducting strategic analysis compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, all 16 (100%) agreed that strategic analysis is beneficial for an organisation, but the participants in Sample B provided more specific and elaborate explanations than the participants in Sample A. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, all 3 (100%) mentioned the benefits of strategic analysis, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, all 13 (100%) mentioned the benefits of strategic analysis.

4.2.5 The potential risks of not conducting strategic audit

The potential risks of not conducting a strategic audit are; numerous, and can significantly impact an organisation's success, and sustainability. Failing to conduct a strategic audit can lead to, several potential risks, namely (Manchidi, 2024):

4.2.5.1 Lack of evidence-based strategy formulation (planning)

Without the strategic audit, the organisation may lack the necessary data and information to make informed decisions; this lack of evidence can lead to a planning process that may not be based on reliable and relevant data and information about the current situation, the needs and expectations of the stakeholders, and the root causes of the problems; this may result in unrealistic and unachievable goals and objectives (NSG, 2019:40-41).

4.2.5.2 Lack of strategic alignment and integration

Organisations may encounter difficulties aligning their planning process with priorities, mandates, and policies, potentially leading to ineffective service delivery and resource allocation and resulting in strategies that fail to support the organisation's goals and objectives (NSG, 2019:25-26).

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), without strategic audits or an evaluation of internal resources and capabilities, organisations may struggle to align their strengths and weaknesses with the external environment, leading to a misalignment between their strategy and core competencies. Venter (2014:3) emphasises the resource-based view of strategy, which focuses on leveraging internal differences for competitive advantage (see Sections 4.5.2(iii) and 4.8.1.5).

> Furthermore, without strategic audits, organisations may face challenges in aligning and integrating various functions, levels, and areas of management within the organisation. They may also struggle to communicate and coordinate their plans and actions with stakeholders such as employees, customers, suppliers, and investors, leading to inefficiency, conflict, and resource wastage (Manchidi, 2024).

4.2.5.3 Inadequate responsiveness and adaptability

In the absence of a strategic audit, the organisation may not only struggle to respond effectively to changes and challenges in both the internal and external environment, leading to missed opportunities and increased threats and risks (NSG, 2019:42-44) but also risk depending on outdated or inaccurate information about its environment and internal dynamics (Manchidi, 2024). According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), this could result in a rigid and inflexible strategy that fails to adapt to stakeholders' evolving needs and expectations, exemplifying Venter's (2014:5) criticism of the traditional strategic

management perspective as overly rational and sequential, and neglecting the significant influence of human factors and political dynamics in strategy formulation.

4.2.5.4 Risk of missing opportunities and threats

In the absence of a strategic audit, the organisation may not only fail to identify and exploit opportunities that could enhance its performance or threats that could endanger its existence but also risk overlooking pivotal changes such as the global financial crisis of 2008 and 2009, highlighted by Venter (2014:3), which impacted numerous organisations. Such oversights could result in missed opportunities for adaptation and growth or failure to mitigate threats to the organisation's existence (Manchidi, 2024).

4.2.5.5 Lack of learning and innovation (Botha & Venter, 2019:45-46):

In the absence of strategic audits, organisations may miss out on opportunities for innovation, leading to stagnation and a lack of growth. Without these audits, organisations, or their managers, may struggle to monitor and evaluate their performance and progress towards their goals. They may also find it challenging to learn from their successes and failures, and adapt to the changing environment. This can result in stagnation, complacency, and resistance to change.

4.2.5.6 Loss of competitiveness and competitive advantage

The absence of strategic audits can put organisations at risk of losing competitiveness and market share due to a lack of insight into their competitors' strategies; this could lead to a decline in performance, profitability loss, and even pose a threat to survival (NSG, 2019:47-48). Venter (2014:5) emphasises the importance of strategic audits in understanding how to establish and maintain a competitive advantage.

> Organisations may struggle to effectively utilise their unique capabilities or address performance gaps without these audits. The resource-based view of strategy can assist managers in assessing the value of their resources and identifying core competencies. However, without strategic audits, distinguishing themselves from competitors or capitalising on resources and capabilities that create value for customers and stakeholders may prove challenging (Manchidi, 2024).

Furthermore, organisations may fail to respond effectively to external changes and challenges, such as competition, evolving customer needs, technological advancements, and regulatory shifts, potentially resulting in a loss of market share, profitability, and reputation (Manchidi, 2024).

4.2.5.7 Lack of stakeholder engagement

Without a strategic audit, the organisation may fail to understand and meet the needs and expectations of its stakeholders, leading to a loss of support and trust (NSG, 2019:49-50).

4.2.5.8 Lack of accountability

Without a strategic audit, the organisation (or planning process) may struggle to establish clear and measurable indicators, baselines, and targets for outcomes and outputs; this lack of accountability can lead to poor performance monitoring and evaluation, and reduced accountability and transparency (NSG, 2019:31-33).

> Conducting a strategic audit is crucial for organisations to identify and capitalise on opportunities, align their internal resources with the external environment, adapt to change, and maintain a competitive advantage. It helps the organisation to make informed decisions, to be proactive rather than reactive, and to ensure that it is moving in the right direction (Manchidi, 2024).

Participant responses on RQ2, Prompt 2.3: What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic audit (analysis)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic audit (analysis)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (2.3), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- MM.3 implied that not conducting strategic analysis could lead to a lack of understanding of the internal and external factors affecting the organisation, resulting in ineffective strategies and operations. However, this was not clearly stated or elaborated.
- None of the participants explicitly addressed the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis.
- Their responses were either irrelevant or incomplete.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (2.3), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Seven participants (SM.1, SM.2, SM.3, SM.4, SM.6, SM.7, and SM.12) explicitly addressed the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis. Their responses were relevant and comprehensive. They identified various risks, such as misalignment with the changing environment and stakeholders' needs, compromised achievement of strategic objectives, poor strategic decisions and performance, missed opportunities and threats, and loss of competitiveness and market share.
- SM.9 implied that not conducting strategic analysis could lead to irrelevant or ineffective strategies, but this was not clearly stated or elaborated.
- The remaining participants did not explicitly address the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis.
- Their responses were either irrelevant or incomplete.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a more thorough and explicit understanding of the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, only 7 (43.75%) explicitly addressed the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis, while the remaining 9 (56.25%) did not. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, none (0%) explicitly addressed the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, 7 (53.85%) explicitly addressed the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis.

4.2.6 Strategic audit: process steps or key components

> In the pursuit of organisational excellence, the strategic audit serves as a powerful tool for identifying both challenges and opportunities. Each step in this process is critical, providing a comprehensive framework for evaluating the organisation's strategy and pinpointing areas for improvement. The goal of a strategic audit is not just to identify problems but also to propose solutions and strategies for achieving the organisation's objectives (Manchidi, 2024).

The strategic audit process encompasses six comprehensive steps or key components, as delineated by Anas Al Masud (2023:1) and Singh (2014:168), which are outlined below:

4.2.6.1 Defining the audit objectives

The initial step involves clarifying the purpose and scope of the audit. It could include understanding the internal and external factors that affect the business, evaluating the current strategy and its effectiveness, or identifying areas for improvement and growth. The audit objectives should align with the organisation's vision, mission, and goals.

The scope of a strategic audit is influenced by several factors (Smit, Cronje, Brevis & Vrba, 2011:81): (a) The characteristics of the environment in which an organisation operates and the requirements it imposes. An organisation's vulnerability to change increases with the instability of its environment, (b) The fundamental relationship that an organisation maintains with its environment, and (c) The origin and magnitude of change also play a role in determining the depth of a strategic audit. Change rarely impacts only a single aspect or two components of an organisation. Instead, it has a dynamic and interactive effect on various aspects of the organisation.

In the NPA study, the NPA's objective is to ensure that all citizens enjoy a life free from fear and crime (NPA, 2022a:1); and aims to achieve justice in society so that people can live in freedom and security (NPA, 2022b:7). This involves understanding the internal dynamics of the NPA and the external factors affecting it (Manchidi, 2024).

4.2.6.2 Data collection

This step necessitates collecting pertinent and dependable data about the organisation and its market from various sources. The data should encompass quantitative and qualitative aspects, including financial performance, customer feedback, market trends, competitor analysis, and industry reports, and must provide a comprehensive view of the organisation's past, present, and future facets and environment (see Section 4.5.1). Applying scanning techniques can facilitate the early detection of potential environmental changes and emerging trends.

In the NPA study, the NPA gathers information about its performance in prosecuting cases and its financial health, as well as employee feedback and public perception; external data, including legal trends, the political climate, and societal expectations, are also considered (cf. NPA, 2022b:13,15-16,18; 2023b:1-2).

4.2.6.3 Data analysis

This step involves scrutinising the collected data to identify key issues, patterns, and relationships that affect the organisation's strategy and performance. The data analysis should use appropriate tools and techniques, such as SWOT analysis and PESTLE analysis (see Section 4.8). It should also compare the organisation with its competitors and benchmarks, assessing its competitive advantage and market positioning. The monitoring technique is used here to detect meaning through ongoing observations of environmental changes and trends.

In the NPA study, the NPA adopted a more aggressive strategy to ensure success in prosecuting cases (Brooks, 2023:1); this involves auditing the collected data to identify the NPA's strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats (challenges) (Manchidi, 2024).

4.2.6.4 Forecasting and prioritising key opportunities and challenges

Based on the data analysis, this step involves projecting possible scenarios and outcomes of changes and trends in the environment and their impact on the organisation. The forecasting should use realistic and feasible assumptions and methods, such as scenario planning and sensitivity analysis. It should also prioritise the most significant and urgent opportunities and challenges that the organisation faces or may face in the future. The forecasting technique is used here to develop feasible projections of what might happen and how quickly, as a result of the changes and trends identified.

In the NPA study, the NPA prioritised cases to ensure the successful prosecution of corruption and state capture cases; and also reinforced its prosecutorial machinery with forensic companies, financial investigators, and senior counsel (Brooks, 2023:1).

4.2.6.5 Formulating recommendations

This step involves proposing strategies and actions to help the organisation capitalise on the opportunities and overcome the challenges identified in the previous step. The recommendations should align with the audit objectives and the organisation's vision, mission, and goals. They should also be SMART (see Section 3.5.3.2). The assessing technique is used here to determine the timing and importance of environmental changes and trends for the organisation's strategies and management.

4.2.6.6 Reporting findings

This step involves documenting and communicating the results and recommendations of the audit to relevant stakeholders, such as top management, the board of directors, employees, and clients. The report should be clear, concise, and comprehensive, including an executive summary, introduction, methodology, findings, conclusions, recommendations, and appendices. It should also use appropriate formats and visuals, such as tables, charts, and graphs, to enhance readability and understanding.

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), this guide offers a comprehensive overview of internal and external strategic audit processes. It emphasises the importance of ensuring that these audits are thorough, data-driven, and strategically focused.

Participant responses on RQ5, Prompt 5.2: What are the steps in the strategic audit (analysis) process?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"What are the steps in the strategic audit (analysis) process?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (5.2), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- None of the participants provided a clear and detailed outline of the steps in the strategic analysis process.
- Only one participant (MM.1) mentioned three generic steps: planning, implementing, and monitoring and reviewing.
- The remaining participants did not specify any steps, but suggested the use of strategic analysis tools, such as SWOT analysis, and the evaluation of internal and external reports.
- Their understanding was generally vague and incomplete.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (5.2), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Six participants (SM.1, SM.2, SM.3, SM.5, SM.8, and SM.9) provided a clear and comprehensive outline of the steps in the strategic analysis process. They mentioned steps such as reviewing the current strategy and its performance, gathering and analysing data from various sources, forecasting and prioritising key opportunities and challenges, formulating and implementing recommendations, and reporting and communicating findings. They also mentioned the use of various tools and methods, such as PESTEL, SWOT, situational analysis, stakeholder analysis, balanced scorecard, theory of change, and scenario planning.
- The remaining participants did not specify any steps, but suggested the use of specific tools or the involvement of key role players.
- Their understanding was generally implied and partial.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a more comprehensive and explicit understanding of the steps in the strategic analysis process compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, only 6 (37.5%) provided a clear outline of the steps in the strategic analysis process, while the remaining 10 (62.5%) implied their understanding of the steps. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, none (0%) explicitly outlined the steps, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, 6 (46.15%) explicitly outlined the steps.

Participant responses on RQ1, Prompt 1.3: What are the key components of strategic audit (analysis)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"What are the key components of strategic audit (analysis)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (1.3), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- All three participants (MM.1, MM.2, MM.3) provided a clear and comprehensive understanding of the key components of strategic analysis. They all mentioned understanding the environment, planning, implementation, monitoring, review, and enhancement as the key components.
- Their understanding was explicit and complete.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (1.3), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Ten out of thirteen participants (SM.1, SM.2, SM.3, SM.4, SM.5, SM.6, SM.7, SM.8, SM.9, SM.12) provided a clear and comprehensive understanding of the key components of strategic analysis. They mentioned understanding the environment, planning and implementation, monitoring and review, use of analytic methods, and alignment as the key components.
- The remaining three participants (SM.10, SM.11, SM.13) did not provide a clear and comprehensive understanding of the key components of strategic analysis.
- Their understanding was generally implied and partial.

In summary, both Sample A and Sample B demonstrated a comprehensive and explicit understanding of the key components of strategic analysis. Out of 16 participants, 13 (81.25%) provided a clear understanding of the key components of strategic analysis, while the remaining 3 (18.75%) implied their understanding. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, all 3 (100%) explicitly defined the key components of strategic analysis, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, 10 (76.92%) explicitly defined the key components of strategic analysis.

4.2.7 Establishing the strategic audit unit

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), this is a comprehensive guide on the formation of a strategic audit unit within an organisation, encompassing the following aspects:

4.2.7.1 Understanding the relevant industry and the organisation's objectives

The initial step in forming a strategic audit unit involves gaining an in-depth understanding of the industry in which the organisation operates, as well as the organisation's objectives. This understanding forms the foundation for the strategic audit unit's vision, mission, and critical success factors. Some of the questions that should be answered in this step are:

a) what are the current trends and challenges in the industry or sector?
b) what are the organisation's goals and strategies?
c) how does the organisation measure its performance and success?
d) what are the organisation's SWOT?
e) what are the organisation's core values and culture?

4.2.7.2 Developing internal strategic audit policies

The next step involves formulating internal strategic audit policies that will guide the unit's operations. These policies should align with the International Professional Practices Framework Standards and Guidance, which provides a globally recognised framework for conducting internal audits. The policies should delineate the strategic audit process, identify the areas subject to audit, and detail the reporting of audit findings. The following aspects should be considered during this phase:

a) what are the objectives and scope of the strategic audit function?
b) what are the roles and responsibilities of the audit team and other stakeholders?
c) what are the standards and methodologies for conducting the audits?
d) how are the audit results communicated and followed up?

4.2.7.3 Human Resources: the strategic audit team

The staffing of the strategic audit team is a crucial step in the strategic audit process. The team should comprise individuals with the appropriate qualifications, skills, and experience and include diverse expertise and perspectives, ensuring a balanced representation of the organisation's functions and processes. Some of the factors that should be taken into account in this step (Manchidi, 2024), are:

A. Who should conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

The process of conducting strategic audits requires a diverse team of stakeholders who each contribute unique expertise and perspectives; this collaborative approach ensures that the organisation's challenges and opportunities are fully understood — In the NPA study, service delivery is enhanced by this approach.

Strategic planners: are essential for harmonising the audit with the organisational strategic objectives; In the NPA study, this may involve assessing how prosecutorial strategies support the government's fundamental goals of reducing crime rates and improving public safety — by assessing the alignment of these strategies with national priorities, strategic planners should identify gaps and recommend adjustments to address organisational objectives more effectively.

The service delivery teams: are conducting audits to determine the current effectiveness of services and evaluate the societal needs and impacts; whereas In the NPA study, such teams could be examining such aspects as the times taken to resolve cases, as well as the quality of the legal services being offered to the public; they are then able to obtain systematic feedback from the victims and other organisations in the community, and therefore identify the areas that need to be overhauled in a bid to ensuring that the services being offered by the NPA are responsive to societies needs.

Financial professionals: are responsible for auditing the viability of an organisation — they analyse budgetary limitations and resource distribution. In the NPA study, for instance, they may need to analyse the NPA budget to determine whether priority areas, such as the prosecution of serious and violent crimes, should receive appropriate funding; such financial evaluations are crucial as they help direct resources to the areas of greatest need.

Operations managers: are responsible for conducting audits of the internal processes to find ways to improve them. In the NPA study, for instance, the NPA may assess the Case Management System workflows — by recognising the impeding factors in prosecuting processes; this would enable the proposal of streamlined methods to reduce delays and efficiencies improvements of the prosecutorial processes for both victims and defendants.

Human Resources professionals: are responsible, amongst others, for auditing the workforce's capabilities as well as the organisational culture, thereby contributing to the overall operational efficiency; In the NPA study, it may be important to audit whether the training given to the prosecutors is adequate to ascertain whether the prosecutors are well equipped to handle complicated cases because of new technology or new crime trends, as well as, the employee satisfaction levels, employee turnover rates and retention rates to enhance the positive workplace.

Policy analysts: are focused on the regulatory environment and the auditing of the legislation and public policies that impact organisations' operations. In the NPA study, the analysts may conduct auditing of the effects of new legislation on prosecutorial practices and outcomes in order to ensure that the NPA's policies are aligned with the national legal frameworks; such alignments are crucial to in order to ensure or preserve the integrity and efficacy of the prosecutorial process.

Stakeholder engagement specialists: are crucial in the process of taking input or feedback from society and other stakeholders with the purpose of informing decision-making. In the NPA study, this may involve convening consultants, community forums and interviewing victims' advocacy groups to gain a better understanding of the public's perception of the prosecutorial process; such engagements do not only educate or raise awareness of policy changes but also promote transparency and builds trust in order to strengthen the relationship between the NPA and the public.

The collaboration of this diverse array of professionals within the strategic audit framework — enables the organisation to develop a nuanced comprehension of its operational environment to inform decision-making processes; this integrative approach enhances the quality of insights derived from such audits and optimises the service delivery to the communities served by the organisation.

Participant responses on RQ3: Who should conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"Who should conduct strategic audit (analysis)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (3), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- All three participants (MM.1, MM.2, and MM.3) referred to the Strategic Team at the NPA.
- MM.1 emphasised that it is imperative that everyone in the organisation, from management to operational roles, should be involved in the strategic analysis.
- MM.2 and MM.3 highlighted that the Strategic Team, which includes strategic planners, is responsible for conducting the strategic analysis and facilitating the strategic planning sessions.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (3), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Several participants (SM.1, SM.2, SM.4, SM.7) mentioned that it is typically conducted internally by senior management or specialised departments such as the Strategic Management Team or Planning Department.
- SM.2 stated that junior managers should conduct a low-level strategic analysis to assess their performance and identify challenges; this information can then be consolidated and cascaded upwards, as the organisation's strategy must be adopted at all levels.
- SM.3 mentioned that the NPA's Research component team is responsible for conducting strategic analysis.
- SM.6 stated that strategic analysis can be conducted by anyone within an institution who holds a post-qualification, such as a bachelor's degree, diploma, or post-graduate qualification, and has a minimum of three years' experience in strategic planning.
- SM.8 mentioned that strategic analysis should be conducted within an organisation by those involved in strategic management and strategy development, often in collaboration with other business units; this includes researchers within the organisation who conduct situational analyses to gain an overview of the operating environment.

In summary, Sample B showed a more comprehensive and explicit understanding of who should conduct a strategic audit compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, 13 (81.25%) provided detailed responses, with a significant emphasis on internal leadership. All 3 participants in Sample A (100%) referred to the Strategic Team at the NPA, indicating a unified perspective on responsibility allocation.

B. How many people should conduct strategic audit?

The optimal team size and composition for a strategic audit depend on several factors. These include the size and complexity of the organisation, the scope of the audit function, the objectives of the audit, and the resources available.

It is important to note that the optimal team composition is not solely about the number of full-time employees. It also involves ensuring that all internal resources are appropriately and effectively deployed. Larger teams might be necessary for labour-intensive data gathering or auditing large or complex organisations. However, maintaining uniformity and effective communication can become challenging with larger teams. While a smaller team may be more agile and cohesive, a larger team may offer more diverse perspectives and expertise.

A general rule of thumb is to have a team of:

i. *three to five* members for a *small organisation* (less than 50 employees)
ii. *six to ten* members for a *medium-sized organisation* (between 50 and 250 employees)
iii. *eleven to fifteen* members for a *large organisation* (more than 250 employees).

The team composition should reflect the skills, knowledge, and experience required for the audit and the organisation's and its stakeholders' diversity.

Participant responses on RQ3, Prompt 3.2: How many people should conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"How many people should conduct strategic audit (analysis)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (3.2), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- None of the participants provided a specific number of people who should conduct strategic analysis. However, they all emphasised that strategic analysis should be a collaborative and inclusive process that involves everyone in the organisation, from management to operational roles.
- Their understanding was generally broad and vague.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (3.2), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Only one participant (SM.6) provided a range of possible numbers of people who should conduct strategic analysis, depending on the size and mission of the institution.
- The remaining participants did not provide a specific number, but suggested that strategic analysis should be a collaborative and diverse process that involves various organisational stakeholders, such as leadership, specialist, planning, research, monitoring, and implementing roles.
- Their understanding was generally broad and vague.

In summary, both Sample A and Sample B demonstrated a similar and unsatisfactory understanding of the optimal team size and composition for strategic analysis. Out of 16 participants, only 1 (6.25%) provided a range of possible numbers of people who should conduct strategic analysis, while the remaining 15 (93.75%) implied their understanding of the optimal team composition. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, none (0%) provided a specific number, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, 1 (7.69%) provided a range of possible numbers.

C. What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

Required qualifications for conducting strategic audit (analysis)

The technical and risk-oriented certifications required for the team members vary depending on the industry, sector, and domain of the strategic audit. However, some standard qualifications that can enhance the credibility and competence of strategic auditors are relevant diplomas and degrees for their area of speciality. This team should include representatives from various departments, such as marketing, finance, operations, and Information Communication and Technology (ICT).

Essential skills for conducting strategic audit (analysis)

The team members should possess the following essential skills and experience: (i) *analytical and critical thinking* — ability to dissect complex problems and make informed decisions, (ii) *communication and interpersonal skills* — ability to interact effectively with others and facilitate discussions, (iii) *problem-solving and decision-making skills* — ability to identify issues and make strategic decisions, (iv) *project management and organisational skills* — ability to manage tasks, deadlines, and change effectively, (v) *ethical and professional conduct* — adherence to professional standards and ethical guidelines, and (vi) *technical and industry-specific knowledge* — familiarity with the industry, the organisation's products or services, and the specific department or process under review.

Essential experience for conducting strategic audit

In addition, team members should have relevant experience conducting audits, preferably in the same or similar context as the strategic audit. They should understand the organisation's operations, processes, systems, and external factors that may impact its strategy.

The audit team should consist of individuals with diverse skills and experience, including newcomers with experience in other organisations. Understanding the organisation's strategy and direction is essential for aligning the audit work with its strategic objectives. Team members should be allocated audits based on their skills and experience.

Participant responses on RQ3, Prompt 3.1: What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (3.1), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- Only one participant (MM.1) provided a clear and relevant response to the research question, stating that *"everyone should be involved in the strategic analysis process, from the highest-ranking officials to the lowest"*.
- The remaining participants did not directly address the research question, but suggested that strategic analysis required a multidisciplinary team, a holistic approach, and an understanding of the environment.
- Their responses were generally vague and incomplete.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (3.1), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Only one participant (SM.6) provided a clear and specific response to the research question, stating that *"strategic analysis can be conducted by anyone within an institution who holds a post-qualification, such as a bachelor's degree, diploma, or post-graduate qualification, and has a minimum of three years' experience in strategic planning"*.
- The remaining participants did not directly address the research question, but suggested that strategic analysis required trained planners, expertise in the strategic environment, performance management skills, and knowledge of the institution's mandate.
- Their responses were generally implicit and partial.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a slightly better and more consistent understanding of the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, only 2 (12.5%) provided a clear and relevant response to the research question, while the remaining 14 (87.5%) implied their understanding of the research question. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, only 1 (33.33%) explicitly answered the research question, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, only 1 (7.69%) explicitly answered the research question.

D. What is the role and importance of the team leader in the strategic audit process?

The team leader plays a crucial role in the success of the strategic audit. Their responsibilities include: (i) *planning, organising, directing, and controlling the audit project* — this involves scheduling audits, preparing the audit strategy, and assembling the audit team, (ii) *drafting detailed reports* — the team leader must draft detailed reports about audit findings and communicate relevant information to management to inform their decision-making, (iii) *leadership and management* — the team leader should have strong leadership and management skills, as well as the ability to motivate, inspire, and guide the team members, and (iv) *alignment with organisational strategy and goals* — the team leader should have a clear vision of the audit objectives and expectations and ensure they align with the organisation's strategy and goals.

E. What are the training programs and coordination mechanisms for the team members?

The team members' training programs and coordination mechanisms are essential to ensure the quality and consistency of the audit process and outcomes. The training programs should provide the team members with the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools to conduct the strategic audit, such as the audit methodology, standards, criteria, and techniques. The coordination mechanisms should facilitate communication, collaboration, and feedback among the team members, as well as with the management and other stakeholders.

By involving diverse individuals in the strategic audit process, the organisation can benefit from various viewpoints and ideas, leading to more informed and creative strategic decisions. The team can also collaborate to identify potential risks and opportunities and develop strategies to capitalise on the opportunities while mitigating the risks. Ultimately, a cross-functional team approach can help ensure that the organisation's strategy is aligned with its overall goals and objectives and that it is well-positioned to achieve success in the long term.

4.2.7.4 Conducting a comprehensive strategic audit

The fourth step involves conducting a comprehensive strategic audit of the organisation's internal and external environment. This audit should encompass the internal and external strategic and stakeholder audits. The aim is to identify the organisation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, industry trends, challenges, and the competitive landscape. Key questions to address include: (a) what internal factors affect the organisation's performance and success?, (b) what external factors influence the

organisation's opportunities and risks?, (c) who are the organisation's main competitors, and how do they compare?, and (d) how does the organisation's current strategy align with its internal and external environment?

A. How can strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?

The following is a comprehensive list of steps on how to conduct a strategic audit (analysis), according to (Manchidi, 2024):

Establishing a strategic audit team: a team comprising individuals with diverse expertise and perspectives should be assembled, as to ensure an impartial, and comprehensive strategic audit process; this topic has been extensively discussed (see Section 4.2.7.3).

Conducting strategic audit: conducting the strategic audit process has been comprehensively discussed in both the strategic audit process steps or key components (see Section 4.2.6) and conducting a comprehensive strategic audit (see Section 4.2.7.4)

Identifying Key Performance Indicators: involves several critical steps to ensure effective performance measurement; the process begins with *aligning KPIs with strategic goals*, ensuring that each selected KPI, directly relates to the organisation's strategic objectives. Next, *select relevant metrics* that are appropriate (or chosen), based on the organisation's industry, operations, and strategic objectives, including financial, customer, operational, and employee metrics. Following this, clear targets, and benchmarks are established (or *setting targets and benchmarks*), for each KPI to provide specific goals and standards for comparison. *Ensuring measurability and feasibility* is crucial, and so KPIs must be accurately measurable (or quantified) and supported by readily available data. Finally, all KPIs must be regularly reviewed and updated (or *reviewing and updating KPIs*) with reference to the changes in the organisation's strategy, market conditions, or operational priorities, and ensuring they remain relevant and effective. The topic 'Key Performance Indicators' has been outlined (see Section 4.6.2.2)

Conducting stakeholder analysis: engaging with the various stakeholders to gather insights and understand their expectations which can influence, the strategic audit's findings and recommendations; the topic 'conducting the strategic audit: stakeholder analysis' has been comprehensively discussed (see Section 4.4).

Conducting a risk assessment: risk assessment comprises some of the most important steps to safeguard the organisation's strategy and performance: The first step, *identifying risks* involves, evaluating possible risks that may affect the organisation which involves, thoroughly auditing internal and external factors, that might pose threats. Once the risks are identified, the next step is to *assess risks*; this involves evaluating the potential of each emerging risk, and assessing the potential impact it may

have on the organisation; this analysis helps comprehend which risks are most significant. Following the analysis, the risks are ranked and or prioritised (*prioritising risks*) based on their severity, and the urgency of addressing them; this prioritisation, ensures that the most critical risks are managed first. *Developing mitigation strategies* is the next crucial step involving creating detailed plans to mitigate, or manage the most significant risks identified; effective risk management strategies are aimed at reducing how often the risks occur or to minimise loss in case they occur. Finally, the assessment of risks includes; continuously *monitoring the risks*, timely reviewing, and adjusting the strategies as necessary to respond to changes in the risk environment. Continuous monitoring, ensures that the organisation remains proactive in managing risks and is ready to respond (or adapt) when new risks emerge.

Conducting a strategic audit is crucial to identify challenges and opportunities to ensure alignment with strategic objectives, and driving continuous improvement — by systematically auditing the organisation's strategy, performance, and external environment; this audit provides valuable insights and actionable strategies; this process not only reveals the problems (or highlights areas for improvement), but also, proposes practical solutions—ultimately supporting long-term success in a dynamic, and competitive environment.

Participant responses on RQ5: How can strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"How can strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (5), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- MM.1 emphasised understanding the organisation's mandate and conducting an annual situational analysis report to inform planning.
- MM.2, MM.3 suggested using SWOT analysis and internal and external reports to understand the environment, and highlighted the use of various frameworks, including the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation's (DPME) framework.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (5), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- SM.5, SM.8, SM.10 recommended using SWOT and PESTEL analyses.
- SM.1, SM.6 emphasised the need for planning documents and performance reports, and described a process involving annual plans, document reviews, and alignment with initial strategic objectives.
- SM.3 stressed the importance of involving researchers and the Strategic Planning Unit.
- SM.4, SM.13 advocated for using various tools and methodologies each tailored to the specific context and purpose of the analysis, but collectively, these tools provide a comprehensive strategic analysis, aiding in formulating effective strategies and decision-making processes.
- SM.7 highlighted the role of technological modernisation.
- SM.12 suggested conducting analyses in a workshop setting with relevant stakeholders.

In summary, Sample B showed a more detailed and varied approach to conducting strategic analysis compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, 13 (81.25%) provided detailed methods, while the rest 3 (SM.1, SM.6, and SM.7) (18.75%) gave more general responses describing a process, emphasising the need for planning documents, and highlighting the role of technological modernisation. Out of the 3 participants in Sample A, all (100%) provided specific methods for conducting strategic analysis.

B. When should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?

Strategic audits should be conducted in the organisation or public institutions at specific time-intervals in order to ensure alignment with strategic objectives and address emerging or immediate challenges and opportunities. Circumstances dictating (or triggering) the need for a strategic audit include, but are not limited to, according to (Manchidi, 2024):

Periodic review - strategic audits: strategic audits should be conducted at regular or predetermined (scheduled) intervals, such as every 3–5 years or annually — continuous strategic audits assist in auditing the effectiveness of current strategies, enable necessary adjustments to strategic objectives as and when required, and identify emerging challenges.

Leadership changes: the appointment of new leadership in an organisation usually indicates that the organisation requires a change of direction (or reassessment) and strategic realignment. Conducting strategic audits at this juncture (of new leadership), is essential since it enables a comprehensive audit of the organisation's current position through an in-depth SWOT analysis; such structured audit provides new leaders with a robust understanding of the organisation's internal and external environment, enabling them to set informed objectives, determine and prioritise areas that require development, and identify core competencies. In this systematic way, the strategic audit becomes the initial tool for evidence-based decision-making and assists in developing strategies consistent with the organisation's overall mission and long-term goals, as well as enhancing the likelihood of sustained long-term organisational effectiveness.

Policy or Legislative shifts: in the light of ever-changing (or evolving) policy landscapes, legislative amendments, or new regulatory requirements — strategic audit becomes an indispensable tool for organisations seeking to maintain compliance and adaptability; such shifts can have a profound effect on operational practices, resource allocation and strategic priorities (or direction), necessitating a comprehensive strategic audit of how these identified changes influence the internal processes and external environment of the organisation. Strategic audits assess the alignment between current practices and new legislation, regulatory framework, policy standards, identify areas that need modification, and proactively mitigate the potential risk areas. The effectiveness of this approach is not only to ensure compliance with regulatory mandates, but also to enable the organisation to adapt to an evolving regulatory environment, ensuring (or safeguarding its) operational resilience and long-term sustainability.

Significant external changes: major shifts in the external environment such as, economic fluctuations, demographic transformations, or technological advancements, does often introduce complexities that demand a strategic reassessment — under such circumstances, strategic audit in these circumstances allows an organisation to realign its objectives and strategies in response to evolving realities (shifts in the external environment), ensuring it remains adaptable and relevant. Economic changes (or shifts), may alter consumer spending patterns and or impact supply chains necessitating adjustments in resource allocation, or market focus; similarly, changes in demographics could influence (or affect) workforce composition, customer demographics, or societal expectations, all of which, mandates strategic recalibration. Conducting strategic audits enables organisations to, identify emerging trends, adapt and respond to new demands or pressures, and reinforce their core competencies to effectively navigate evolving external environment — this proactive approach, ensures that, an organisation is continuously in alignment with external forces, fostering resilience, and ultimately ensuring that an organisation remains relevant in a dynamic, and complex environment.

Performance evaluation: in the context of significant programmes or initiatives, strategic audit plays a crucial role in (or is essential as a tool for) auditing outcomes and identifying areas for improvement. This process provides a structured approach (or systematic way) of auditing — whether the set strategic objectives were achieved, analysing the efficiency of the strategies employed, and determining the influence of the initiative impact on the overall organisation's strategic goals. Strategic audit provides information on both, strengths and weaknesses; which assists in uncovering best practices and lessons learned that can inform future planning; when the organisation integrates these findings — it may assist it in refining its approaches, enhancing its ability to meet future strategic goals, and ensuring continuous improvement in fulfilling its strategic mission.

Resource allocation and budget planning: in preparation for budgeting cycles — strategic audit is a vital tool that enables an organisation to comprehend and optimise resource allocation. Strategic audit entails the auditing of the current strengths, weaknesses, and operational requirements, and facilitates (or enables) the informed decision-making process on resource allocation to meet organisational needs and achieve strategic goals; this process helps highlight areas where resources may be insufficient, identify opportunities for cost-effective improvements, and promote efficient utilisation (of resources) — based on a clear comprehension of the organisation's strategic objectives. Conducting a strategic audit before budget planning enhances financial control (or oversight) and strengthens the organisation's ability to maximise impact, maintain sustainability and achieve (or support) long-term strategic objectives.

Technological advancements: the emergence of significant technological updates or innovations presents an opportunity—and often a necessity—for organisations to conduct a strategic audit; this process provides an opportunity to examine in detail how new technology can improve service delivery,

streamline operational processes, and improve resource allocation. Strategic audit in response to technological advancements allows organisations to evaluate current systems and processes, identify where technology can be integrated to reduce inefficiencies and explore new capabilities to serve their purpose better. Organisations that proactively adapt to technological shifts not only survive but thrive by improving their operational resilience and securing themselves sustainable relevance and responsiveness to the clients (in the case of the public sector—community) or stakeholder needs.

Strategic audits should be performed at regular intervals and when circumstances substantially impact an organisation; which include periodic reviews, changes in leadership, shifts (or changes) in policies or legislation, drastic environmental changes, assessments following the implementation of major strategies, resource allocation and budgeting processes, and technological innovations. Through addressing such scenarios — strategic audits assist organisations in maintaining alignment with their strategic objectives, responding (or adapting) to environmental changes, and making informed decisions to ensure organisational sustainability and relevance.

Participant responses on RQ4: When should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"When should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (4), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- All three participants (MM.1, MM.2, MM.3) agreed that strategic audits should be conducted regularly.
- MM.1 suggested it should be an ongoing process.
- MM.2 recommended quarterly or annually.
- MM.3 stated it should be done annually.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (4), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Five participants (SM.3, SM.5, SM.10, SM.11, SM.13) recommended annual audits.
- SM.2 stated that junior managers should conduct a low-level strategic analysis to assess their performance and identify challenges; this information can then be consolidated and cascaded upwards, as the organisation's strategy must be adopted at all levels.
- Two participants (SM.2, SM.6) suggested audits should be conducted more frequently, ranging from every six months to as often as needed. SM.6 specifically mentioned conducting audits before, during, and at the end of the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) period.
- Three participants (SM.12, SM.1, SM.9) emphasised the importance of aligning audits with specific organisational timelines, such as the financial year or strategic planning periods. Specifically, SM.1 recommended conducting strategic analysis by the third year of a five-year strategic plan.
- Two participants (SM.4, SM.7) did not directly address the timing of strategic audits but focused on the process and collaboration involved in strategic analysis.
- SM.8 highlighted the importance of collaboration in strategic analysis, involving various business units and researchers to gain an overview of the operating environment.

In summary, Sample A showed unanimous agreement (100%) on the need for regular strategic audits, with varying frequencies suggested. In Sample B, while there was no clear consensus on frequency, all participants (100%) agreed on the necessity of regular strategic audits, though three participants (23.08%) did not specify the timing.

C. How often should strategic audit be conducted?

The frequency of strategic audits depends on various factors, including the industry, organisational goals, and the pace of change in the business environment. Ideally, a strategic audit should align with the organisation's strategic planning cycle and be completed before the start of the next cycle. Generally, strategic audits are conducted at least twice a year or whenever a significant change exists in the organisation's internal or external environment. However, organisations in rapidly changing industries may require more frequent audits.

Participant responses on RQ4, Prompt 4.1: How often should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"How often should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (4.1), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- All three participants (MM.1, MM.2, and MM.3) indicated that strategic analysis is typically conducted annually or biannually in their organisation.
- However, none of them provided a clear rationale for the frequency of strategic analysis, or how it aligns with the organisation's strategic planning cycle and goals.
- Their understanding was generally descriptive and superficial.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (4.1), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Six participants (SM.1, SM.2, SM.3, SM.5, SM.6, and SM.10) indicated that strategic analysis should ideally be conducted at least annually, or more frequently depending on the changes in the internal and external environment. They also explained the importance of regular strategic analysis for ensuring relevance, alignment, and responsiveness of the organisation's strategy.
- The remaining seven participants (SM.4, SM.7, SM.8, SM.9, SM.11, SM.12, and SM.13) did not provide a specific frequency for conducting strategic analysis, but suggested it was a continuous or ongoing process that requires constant review and update.
- Their understanding was generally implicit and vague.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a more in-depth and explicit understanding of the frequency of strategic analysis compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, only 9 (56.25%) provided a specific frequency for conducting strategic analysis, while the remaining 7 (43.75%) implied their understanding of the frequency of strategic analysis. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, all 3 (100%) provided a specific frequency for conducting strategic analysis, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, 6 (46.15%) provided a specific frequency for conducting strategic analysis.

D. How long should it take to complete the strategic audit (analysis) process?

The duration of the strategic audit process may vary depending on the organisation's size, complexity, needs, and the internal audit function's scope, methodology, and resources. The audit project plan should outline specific timelines and milestones to ensure efficient completion. Regular progress updates and reviews can help keep the audit on track and allow for adjustments as needed.

On average, the audit process may take several months to complete, including planning, data gathering, audit, interpretation, and reporting.

g) a rough estimate of the duration for conducting a strategic audit could take:
   i. *three to six months* for a *small organisation* (less than 50 employees)
   ii. *six to nine months* for a *medium-sized organisation* (between 50 and 250 employees)
   iii. *nine to twelve months* for a *large organisation* (more than 250 employees).

These are only indicative figures, and actual durations may vary depending on each organisation's specific circumstances and requirements. The strategic audit process should be flexible and adaptable to meet each organisation's unique needs and challenges.

Participant responses on RQ4, Prompt 4.2: How long should it take to complete the strategic audit (analysis) process?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"How long should it take to complete the strategic audit (analysis) process?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (4.2), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- Only one participant (MM.2) provided a specific timeframe for the strategic analysis process, stating that it is conducted during the last quarter of the financial year, from January to April.
- The remaining participants did not provide any details about the duration of the strategic analysis process, but suggested it may vary depending on the term (short-term, medium-term, or long-term) or the factors (internal and external) influencing the analysis.
- Their understanding was generally vague and incomplete.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (4.2), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Three participants (SM.10, SM.13, and SM.12) provided specific timeframes for the strategic analysis process, ranging from one month to six months, depending on the requirements, the project plan, and the alignment with the government processes.
- The remaining participants did not provide any details about the duration of the strategic analysis process, but emphasised the importance of regular, ongoing, and collaborative analysis that aligns with the organisation's vision, mission, and strategic priorities.
- Their understanding was generally implied and partial.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a more detailed and specific understanding of the duration of the strategic analysis process compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, only 4 (25%) provided a specific timeframe for the strategic analysis process, while the remaining 12 (75%) did not address the question explicitly or at all. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, only 1 (33.33%) provided a specific timeframe, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, 3 (23.08%) provided a specific timeframe.

4.2.7.5 Developing actionable strategies

The fifth step involves formulating actionable strategies based on the audits conducted. These strategies should align with the organisation's goals and objectives and address the identified opportunities and threats. The strategies should also include specific actions, timelines, and responsibilities for implementation. During this phase, several aspects should be considered. Firstly, what are the strategic options and alternatives for the organisation? Secondly, what are the criteria and methods for evaluating and selecting the best strategies? Thirdly, what are the expected outcomes and benefits of the chosen strategies? Finally, how are the strategies implemented and monitored?

4.2.7.6 Monitoring and evaluating the implementation

The sixth step involves monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the developed strategies. This step involves collecting and analysing data to measure the progress and outcomes of the actions taken. It also involves identifying any issues and making necessary adjustments to ensure the strategies are effective and efficient. The following questions should be addressed during this phase: (a) what are the KPIs and metrics for the strategies?, (b) how are the data collected and analysed?
(c) what are the results and impacts of the strategies?, (d) what are the challenges and risks encountered in the implementation?, and (e) what are the lessons learned and best practices identified?

4.2.7.7 Reporting the strategic audit findings

The final step involves reporting the strategic audit findings to relevant stakeholders. This step involves clearly and concisely communicating the audit results, including the audit, the strategies, and the implementation. It also involves providing recommendations and suggestions for improvement and follow-up actions. The following aspects should be considered during this phase: (a) who are the target audience and the key stakeholders for the audit report?, (b) what are the main messages and conclusions of the audit report?, (c) what are the format and style of the audit report?, (d) how is the audit report delivered and disseminated?, and (e) how are the feedback and responses from the stakeholders collected and addressed?. Organisations derive their means of survival from the environment, and it is through the strategy that they establish a connection with this environment (Nieuwenhuizen, 2019:146; Singh, 2014:137).

4.3 THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT OF STRATEGIC AUDIT

Structurally, the strategic audit environment can be divided into the micro-environment, the market-environment (industry) and the macro(remote)-environment (Botha, 2019:17).

4.3.1 Internal environment: The micro environment

> The internal environment includes the organisation's functions, policies, strategies, goals, objectives, and available resources, and also designates the area over which the manager has total or full control. Top or strategic managers play a profound role in the establishment of the micro-environment of the organisation (Botha, 2019:17).

The organisational context encompasses all the internal factors that impact the sustainable planning process; the organisation requires certain resources and capabilities to execute its strategy, must utilise its key strengths and address its significant weaknesses to achieve success; certain unique elements within an organisation also influence its capacity to formulate and implement sustainable strategies (Van Zyl, 2014:52). The concept of organisational architecture aids in comprehending the fundamental components (building blocks) of organisations and the manner in which these components interact with each other (Brevis, 2014:223).

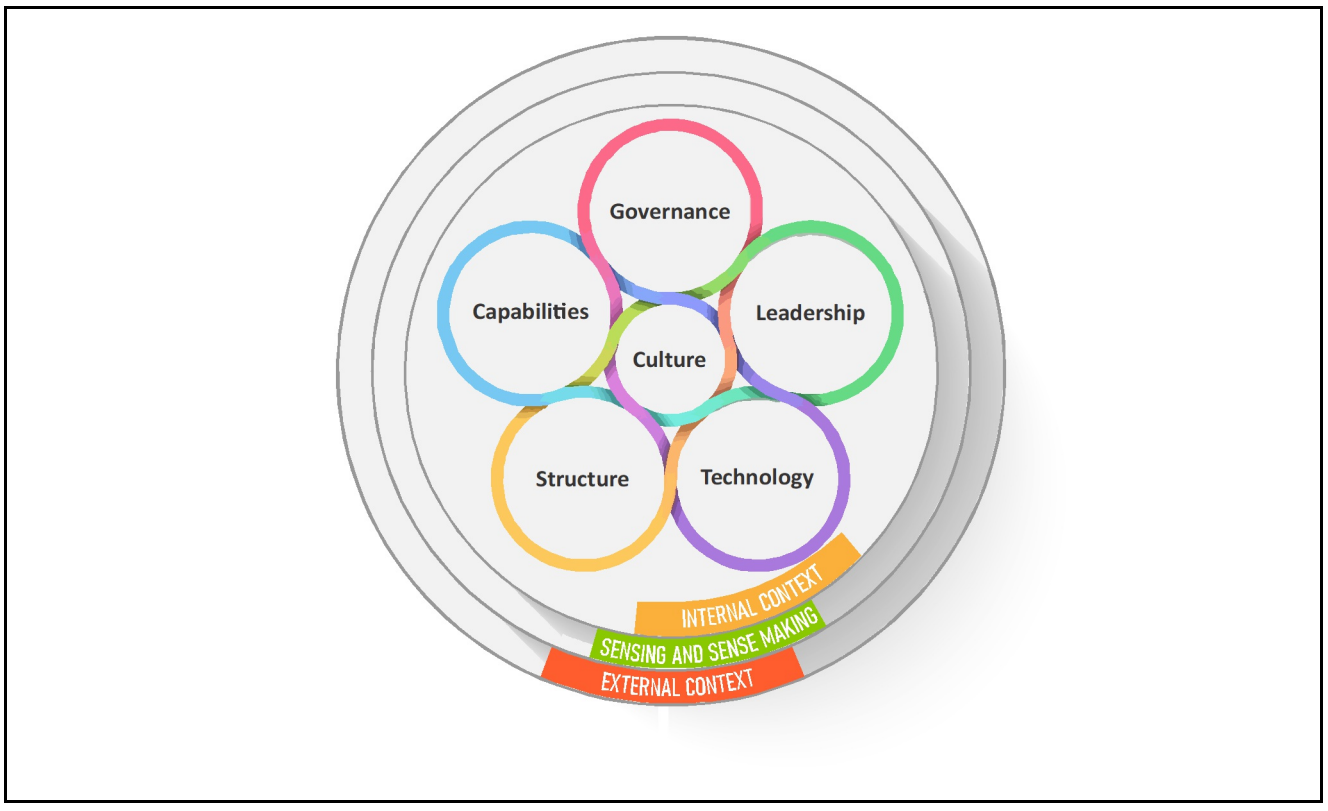


Figure 4.1 A model of organisational architecture
(Source: adapted from Brevis, 2014:222)

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), numerous organisational architecture models exist, such as the renowned McKinsey 7S model. Despite their differences, these models share certain fundamental components (common elements), as illustrated in Figure 4.1. Each component interacts with and influences the others, creating a dynamic and interconnected system.

The researcher will first discuss the six specific elements (culture, leadership, governance, structure, technology, and capabilities) of the internal factors of the organisational architecture in the micro environment that fall under the McKinsey 7S model; each of these elements is discussed in detail below (Manchidi, 2024):

4.3.1.1 Organisational culture

In an organisational context, culture refers to the shared values and mindset of employees, and to a large degree determines an organisation's capacity to change and adapt to its external environment; culture is often described as the way things are done in an organisation (Brevis, 2014:223).
This element encompasses the shared values, beliefs, norms, and behaviours that define the organisation's identity. It influences how employees interact, make decisions, and work towards common goals. A strong and positive culture can foster employee engagement, teamwork, and innovation.

In the NPA study, the NPA's organisational culture is underpinned by five fundamental values, namely, integrity, accountability, service excellence, professionalism, and credibility (see Section 3.5.1.5); these values shape employee interactions and decision-making processes, promoting engagement, teamwork, and innovation.

4.3.1.2 Leadership

Leadership and management are pivotal in moulding an organisation's culture, forming an integral part of its architecture. Effective leaders are instrumental in shaping the internal environment. They provide direction, inspire and motivate employees, fostering a positive work culture. These leaders set goals, make strategic decisions, and ensure the efficient utilisation of the organisation's resources. Therefore, leadership styles have a significant impact on the overall operation and success of an organisation.

In the NPA study, Adv. Shamila Batohi, the National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP), provides strategic direction, ensuring justice for crime victims and unbiased prosecution (NPA, 2022b:7). Under her leadership, the NPA has implemented several strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing internal accountability, capacitating the organisation, increasing the use of information technology, and institutionalising innovation and policy support (NPA, 2022b:7). These initiatives are designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the NPA's operations and ensure that it remains a modern and cutting-edge prosecuting authority (NPA, 2022b:13). Her Deputy Directors support her in these efforts and ensure the effective functioning of their respective divisions (NPA, 2022b:8).

The leadership within the NPA, guided by values of integrity, accountability, service excellence, professionalism, and

credibility (see Section 3.5.1.5) (NPA, 2022b:7), plays a crucial role in shaping the organisation's culture. Adv. Shamila Batohi provides strategic direction and ensures efficient resource utilisation, and she is supported in these efforts by her deputy directors, who also significantly influence the NPA's operation and success.

4.3.1.3 Governance structures

> Governance structures are the rules, procedures, processes and structures that ensure that the organisation is managed in a sustainable way. Processes like operational risk management and enterprise risk management will form part of this element. Corporate accountability (being answerable to the stakeholders of an organisation) is an important element of governance (Van Zyl, 2014:53).

Governance structures are more about oversight and accountability.

4.3.1.4 Organisational structure

Structure refers to the extent to which different elements of the organisation are suited to the strategy selected and that positions are filled with people with the competencies required (Van Zyl, 2014:53); and to the way an organisation is organised hierarchically, including the division of tasks, reporting relationships, and decision-making processes. It determines how information flows, authority is distributed, and work is coordinated. Common structures include functional, divisional, matrix, and flat structures.

4.3.1.5 Technology

In the sense of organisational architecture, technology refers to the technical elements that facilitate day-to-day functioning and service delivery to clients (Brevis, 2014:224). Technological capabilities within an organisation encompass several key areas:

(a) *infrastructure* — this refers to the technological resources that an organisation possesses, which can include hardware, software, networks, and data centers. A strong infrastructure is the backbone of an organisation's technological capabilities, enabling efficient operations and communication, (b) *skills and knowledge* — the abilities and expertise of an organisation's workforce constitute a significant part of its technological capabilities. This includes technical skills such as programming and data analysis, as well as the ability to use and adapt to new technologies, (c) *innovation* — technological capabilities are closely tied to an organisation's capacity for innovation. This involves using technology to create new products or services, improve processes, and find novel solutions to problems, (d) *investment in technology* — an organisation's commitment to investing in new technologies also reflects its technological capabilities. This can involve funding research and development, purchasing new equipment or software, or investing in training for employees, and (e) *adaptability* — the rate at which an organisation can adapt to new technologies also forms a part of its technological capabilities. Rapid technological change is a feature of many sectors, and organisations must be able to keep pace in order to maintain their competitive edge.

Each of these components plays a crucial role in defining an organisation's technological capabilities. By focusing on these areas, organisations can enhance their use of technology and leverage it as a strategic asset, since technological change can be both creative and disruptive.

In the NPA study, the NPA encountered challenges due to malware attack on the IT systems of the DoJ&CD (see Section 4.3.3.4). Despite these challenges, the following ICT programmes were delivered (NPA, 2022b:56):

i) revamped NPA Intranet and website
ii) a NPS Business Intelligence Solution that includes dashboard reporting for HR, remand detainees and performance
iii) implementation of Evolve (electronic publication platform for law reports, legislation, legal dictionary, etc.)
iv) ICT connectivity for the new ID building prior to occupation and general connectivity for remote working
v) system upgrade and enhancement for Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU) case management that allows for capturing, storage and classification of any case-related documentation
vi) system upgrade and enhancement of Contract Management system for Supply Chain Management
vii) End User Equipment Refresh project, which provided new user workstations and printers to replace ageing ones and focused on procuring laptops for prosecutors.

This demonstrates the NPA's efforts to leverage technology for better communication and transparency.

4.3.1.6 Capabilities (Organisational resources)

Organisational capabilities, a fusion of human and technological elements, are processes that foster the development of areas where the organisation excels; the effective utilisation and availability of these capabilities or resources are crucial in facilitating strategic decisions and establishing a competitive edge (Brevis, 2014:224). It is these organisational resources or capabilities that an organisation possesses (encompass a broad range of assets; this includes financial resources, physical assets, technology, intellectual property, and organisational knowledge) which ultimately define its potential for success.

These resources are crucial for facilitating strategic decisions and establishing a competitive edge within the public sector. They define the NPA's potential for success in fulfilling its mandate to ensure justice in SA. The researcher will now discuss the remaining internal factors of the organisational architecture in the micro environment:

4.3.1.7 Organisational ethics and values

These are the core principles and standards that guide the behaviour of individuals within an organisation. They are crucial as they set the tone for the organisational culture and influence decision-making processes. Ethics and values shape the ethical climate within an organisation. They define what is considered right and wrong, and guide employees' behaviour and decision-making. A strong ethical foundation promotes integrity, trustworthiness, and ethical decision-making.

In the NPA study, the NPA emphasises ethics and values, guided by the Constitution to ensure justice for crime victims. It has launched an Office for Complaints and Ethics to monitor and address unethical behaviour. The NPA adheres to a Code of Conduct promoting ethical conduct, honesty, and zero tolerance for bribery; it prioritises transparency, accountability, and service excellence in line with *Batho*

Pele principles (see Section 3.5.1.5). This focus on ethics and values demonstrates the NPA commitment to internal accountability, integrity, and high-quality public service (NPA, 2022b:7).

4.3.1.8 Organisational goals and strategy

The goals and strategy of an organisation serve as a compass, providing clear direction and purpose. They align the efforts of all members towards a common objective, fostering organisational growth and development. These guiding principles inform decision-making, resource allocation, and performance evaluation. When clearly communicated, they unify employees' efforts towards realising the shared vision.

In the NPA study, the strategic outcomes of the NPA for 2020-2025 were outlined with the aim to enhance safety, investor confidence, and access to services. To achieve these outcomes, the NPA launched initiatives focusing on internal accountability, capacity building, digitisation, innovation, and community engagement. These efforts are intended to foster public trust in the criminal justice system and deliver justice effectively (NPA, 2022b:7).

4.3.1.9 Human Resources

The employees within an organisation constitute its most valuable asset. The effective management of these human resources is crucial in ensuring that the organisation is equipped with the right individuals possessing the necessary skills and occupying the appropriate roles. These employees form a critical component of the micro or internal environment, bringing with them a range of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities.

Human resource management practices, encompassing recruitment, training, performance management, and compensation, play a significant role in shaping this environment. These practices directly influence employee satisfaction and productivity, thereby impacting the overall performance of the organisation. Therefore, it is imperative that these human resources are managed effectively to optimise organisational performance.

In the NPA study, the NPA's human resources management has been focused on capacity building, improving staff morale, and wellness (NPA, 2022b:17-18). During the reporting period (2021/22), the NPA achieved several key Human Resources Management (HRM) milestones (NPA, 2022b:55):

a) the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit (SCCU) and the Investigating Directorate (ID) were expanded to address corruption and prepare for the Zondo Commission reports, resulting in a total permanent establishment growth of 467, with 299 being prosecutorial positions
b) recruitment processes were streamlined for efficiency, and gender representation in senior management was balanced with 41% female and 59% male. However, key management positions showed a more balanced gender breakdown with 65% female and 35% male

c) training initiatives were prioritised, with 3,684 employees attending various programs, including 2,482 prosecutors, of which 442 received training on the prosecution of complex commercial crimes.
d) an organisation-wide cultural enhancement initiative was developed, including a harassment policy, demonstrating NPA's commitment to a safe and inclusive work environment.
e) constructive discussions were held regarding the salary dispensation of Deputy Directors of Public Prosecutions (DDPPs) and Chief Prosecutors, with a proposal submitted to the Minister.

Overall, the NPA's efforts were aimed at capacity building, promoting gender diversity, training and development, and fostering a positive work environment.

4.3.1.10 Organisational systems and processes

Organisational systems and processes are the fundamental structures and procedures that enable an organisation to function efficiently and effectively. They are integral to the implementation of strategy and the achievement of consistent performance. These systems and processes encompass both the day-to-day operations of the organisation and the formal and informal procedures, policies, and routines that guide how work is conducted within the organisation.

Examples of these include communication systems, decision-making processes, performance evaluation systems, and quality control processes. The efficiency and effectiveness of these systems and processes are pivotal to organisational effectiveness. Thus, Organisational Systems and Processes play a critical role in shaping the operational landscape of an organisation, influencing its capacity to deliver on its strategic objectives while maintaining a high level of performance.

In the NPA study, the NPA's organisational systems and processes are crucial for its effective functioning; key systems include the Office for Complaints and Ethics, which ensures internal integrity and service delivery, and the Community Prosecution Initiative, which partners with local stakeholders to address specific crimes (NPA, 2022b:7).

The NPA has established a task force, as noted in their 2022 report (NPA, 2022b:12), to coordinate responses to high-level corruption matters. This task force prioritises these seminal cases for prosecution and asset recovery. Furthermore, the NPA recognises the importance of information technology in enhancing access to services and improving process efficiency. It also places emphasis on capacity building and skills development across all regions and business units.

Performance is evaluated through the Organisational Performance Monitoring Initiative, which includes regular reviews of performance, priority areas, and strategic initiatives; overall, these systems and processes aim to ensure accountability, professionalism, and credibility in the NPA's operations (NPA, 2022b:18).

4.3.1.11 Organisational communication

Effective communication within an organisation is not only vital for ensuring alignment with organisational goals and strategies, but it also clarifies each individual's role in achieving these objectives. This form of communication is essential for fostering a healthy internal environment as it facilitates the exchange of information, ideas, and feedback among employees, teams, and departments. By promoting open and transparent dialogue, it encourages collaboration, trust, and understanding, thereby strengthening the organisational fabric. Therefore, effective communication serves as a cornerstone for organisational success.

In the NPA study, the NPA underscored the significance of organisational communication in the following areas:

a) rebuilding the institution's credibility and strengthening the rule of law in SA (NPA, 2022b:15)
b) the NPA (2022b:15) has implemented proactive communication initiatives, particularly focusing on anti-corruption and asset recovery. A comprehensive communications strategy has been developed and implemented, incorporating innovative communication platforms and regular internal updates to keep staff informed on strategic and operational developments (NPA, 2022b:56)
c) the organisation's digital communications infrastructure has been significantly upgraded, including a revamped NPA website and a dynamic intranet based on Microsoft Teams; the NPA brand has been revitalised with new corporate identity assets (NPA, 2022b:56)
d) key stakeholder engagements have been coordinated to enhance public trust and understanding of the organisation's strategy; the visibility of national and regional spokespersons has been increased on traditional and social media platforms, focusing on the NPA's mandate and case outcomes (NPA, 2022b:57)
e) a dedicated initiative for communicating about state capture and high-level corruption cases has been implemented; this includes op-eds per province that document successes in dealing with municipal fraud and corruption (NPA, 2022b:57)
f) a social media awareness campaign on TCCs (*#KnowYourThuthuzela*) has also launched, along with support for numerous outreach activities to improve access to justice (NPA, 2022b:57). This commitment to effective communication supports the NPA's goals of combating corruption and upholding the rule of law in SA (NPA, 2022b:15).

4.3.1.12 Organisational climate

The climate refers to the prevailing atmosphere or mood within the organisation. It is influenced by factors such as leadership style, communication patterns, organisational culture, and employee relationships. A positive climate fosters employee satisfaction, productivity, and well-being.

It is important for organisations to regularly assess and manage their micro/internal environment to ensure alignment with their goals and strategies. By understanding and leveraging these internal factors, organisations can create a positive and supportive environment that fosters employee engagement, innovation, and overall success.

In the NPA study, the NPA's AR (2021/2022) reveals the importance of organisational climate, influenced by leadership style, communication patterns, organisational culture, and employee relationships:

a) *leadership style* — Adv. Shamila Batohi's leadership has been pivotal in shaping the NPA, with a focus on accountability, capacity building, and innovation (NPA, 2022b:7)
b) *communication patterns* — the NPA has improved internal communication and implemented proactive external communication initiatives, reflecting a commitment to transparency (NPA, 2022b:15)
c) *organisational culture* — the NPA's culture is underpinned by values such as integrity and professionalism, which are fundamental to creating a positive climate (see Section 3.5.1.5). The focus on addressing crimes like Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) reflects an inclusive culture (NPA, 2022b:12)
d) *employee relationships* — the NPA (2022b:16) has prioritised staff morale and well-being through interventions (NPA, 2022b:16) addressing racial inclusion, cultural change (NPA, 2022b:18), and health initiatives.

In summary, the NPA's organisational climate is shaped by leadership, communication, culture, and employee relationships, contributing to employee satisfaction and productivity.

The subsequent sections delve into another aspect of the strategic formulation process: the external environment in which the strategic audit is conducted; this environment encompasses the market environment, which is specific to the industry in which the organisation operates, and the macro-environment, referring to the larger societal forces that affect all actors.

4.3.2 External environment: The market environment

Commonly referred to as "task", *"meso"* or "intermediate environment", **this research study will not focus on the *"market environment"***, which includes the following sub-environments (Smit et al, 2016:67-68):

(1) customers (clients), their needs, purchasing power, behaviour, and bargaining power; (2) suppliers of capital, materials, and labour, along with the bargaining power of suppliers; (3) the population from which the organisation recruits its labour force and the unions representing it; and (4) competitors, including new entrants, existing competitors, the availability of substitute products or services, and complementary products or services; these elements are typically sources of opportunities and threats to an organisation.

However, for a public sector or government entity like the NPA, these elements are less relevant as such entities do not engage in competition or profit generation (Manchidi, 2024). Moreover, this environment contains variables centered around competition that can pose threats or create opportunities for organisations within the same industry (Smit et al 2016:68); due to the unique nature of public sector entities like the NPA, these competitive variables may not be applicable (Manchidi, 2024).

4.3.3 External environment: The macro environment (UNISA, 2015:38-41):

Commonly referred to as “broad” or “remote environment”, the relevant factors in the macro environment are beyond the control and boundaries of the organisation (Venter, 2014:306). Similarly, Botha (2019:17) asserts that, the external environment represents the area outside the organisation over which the manager has no control.

Macro environmental analysis is based on the PESTLE approach, an acronym for the following broad categories of macro environmental factors: Political-legal, Economic, Sociocultural, Technological, Legal, linked to political, Environmental (ecological or the natural environment). The purpose of this section is to provide the relevant background to and explain the strategic value of external environmental analysis – macro environmental analysis – and its implications for strategy formulation in organisations.

For the analysis of the external environment to be meaningful for strategy formulation, the following critical issues need to be considered:
(a) identifying and analysing relevant environmental forces (as opposed to those that are not relevant to the organisation), and (b) assessing and attempting to predict the expected changes that could emanate from these forces, as well as predicting the potential strategic impact that these identified changes could have on an organisation.

In systematically analysing the external (macro) environment, several sub-environments can be distinguished within the environment in terms of PESTLE/G (the Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental and Global (International) environments); each of these sub-environments of the macro environment are discussed below in more detail:

4.3.3.1 Political (Legislative) environment

The state's role in an organisation's macro environment is crucial, primarily serving as a regulatory body, it imposes laws that shape the operations of organisations (Botha, 2019:19). No organisation is fully exempted from government legislation and regulations (Singh, 2014:141). *The most important legal considerations from the organisation perspective are the appropriateness of a country's legal system, the effectiveness of law enforcement and whether the country adheres to the rule of law*.

In the NPA study, the NPA operates under the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ&CD) (Govnet, n.d.:1), and is subject to political influences such as changes in government, policy shifts, and public sector reforms.
For example, the government's commitment to fight corruption has led to an increased focus on high-profile corruption cases within the NPA (2022b:12); and changes in laws related to cybercrime or money laundering impacts the NPA's approach to prosecuting these offences (NPA, 2022b:21;34-35).

Legal factors include changes in legislation, court rulings, and legal frameworks that impact the NPA's work. Moreover, through its prosecutions, the NPA contributes to the development of legal precedents. The NPA (2022b:33) is participating in a legislative working group to draft amendments that address the shortcomings, not only pertaining to chrome, but other pieces of legislation related to illegal mining.

4.3.3.2 Economic environment (Botha, 2019:20):

The economic environment significantly impacts organisations, necessitating strategic management to stay updated with economic changes and trends. Influential factors include business cycles, interest rates, inflation, unemployment, gross national product (GNP) trends, economic growth rate, monetary and fiscal policy, balance of payments trends, and the current and projected state of the economy in terms of recession and depression. The economy is also influenced by technology, politics, ecology, social trends, and the international environment. These interdependencies cause constant fluctuations in the economy, affecting organisations and all levels of management. Consequently, strategic managers must regularly review the organisation's vision, mission statement, goals and strategies in response to these economic changes.

In the NPA study, the NPA's operations are significantly influenced by economic factors; these factors influence the resources available to the NPA and its ability to effectively carry out its mandate — factors such as the budget allocated to the NPA by the government determines its capacity to (a) hire and train staff, (b) invest in technology, and (c) carry out prosecutions (NPA, 2022b:55). Economic conditions in the country can also impact crime rates, which in turn affect the workload of the NPA (NPA, 2022b:30-31).

4.3.3.3 Social environment

Stakeholder groups are products of society, and are shaped by societal values, morals, beliefs, behaviours, and lifestyles; therefore, organisations can benefit if managers can identify and assess the impacts and opportunities arising from sociocultural forces, as well as manage and maintain their relationships and reputation with stakeholder groups (Singh, 2014:142). Recognising the importance of cultural diversity can enhance strategic and managerial effectiveness and efficiency by fostering a deeper understanding of international partners; additionally, demographic factors within the social environment, such as age distribution, population growth rate, safety emphasis, and career attitudes, also play a significant role (Botha, 2019:21).

In the NPA study, the NPA plays a vital role in maintaining social order by prosecuting criminal cases (NPA, 2022b:7); the NPA's focus areas reflect societal issues (NPA, 2022b:16-17). For example, the NPA (2022b:17) has prioritised addressing serious violent crimes and GBVF, both of which are significant societal issues in the country. However, the rise in drug abuse (NPA, 2022b:22) and gang violence (NPA, 2022b:59) may necessitate the allocation of additional resources by the NPA to effectively tackle these problems.

The social environment, including public attitudes towards crime, trust in the criminal justice system, and social issues driving criminal activity, significantly impacts the legitimacy and effectiveness of the NPA. The public's perception of the NPA significantly impacts its operations.

4.3.3.4 Technological environment

Technological change has emerged as a primary catalyst in the contemporary global economy, persisting in its momentum; it is incumbent upon managers to be cognisant of these shifts and comprehend their potential implications on their organisation's operations. Strategic responses are necessitated to ensure alignment with the latest technological advancements, thereby maintaining a competitive edge. Technological change can be both creative and disruptive.

In the NPA study, technological advancements pose a dual-edged sword for the NPA (2022b:56); while they offer opportunities to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in case management and prosecution, they also, according to the NPA (2022b:34), introduce new challenges such as cybercrime that demand specialised skills for prosecution (NPA, 2022b:34). The NPA (2022b:7) has initiated several strategic initiatives, including the enhancement of information technology use and digitisation. The malware attack on the DoJ&CD IT systems in September 2021 significantly affected prosecutors in the lower courts; this impact was primarily due to disruptions in email communication and data entry into the integrated Electronic Case Management System (ECMS) (NPA, 2022b:21).

4.3.3.5 Environmental environment (Botha, 2019:21-22):

Commonly referred to as the “physical environment” or the “ecological environment”, which encompasses both the natural and human-made infrastructure, plays a crucial role in organisational operations. The *natural environment* includes geographical features, weather and climate conditions, availability and use of natural resources like raw materials and water, and conservation agreements. The *human-made environment* comprises infrastructure such as roads, railways, airports, harbours, communication networks, and energy supplies, all of which significantly impact organisations. Managers must proactively ensure their organisation's actions do not harm the environment, with a focus on sustainability in areas like green industries, buildings, and transport becoming vital for strategic management.

In the NPA study, while environmental factors may not directly impact the NPA's core mandate, it does prosecute environmental crimes; this requires an understanding of environmental laws and regulations, as well as technical knowledge about environmental issues (NPA, 2022b:34).

4.3.3.6 Global environment

> Globalisation and organisations conducting business across the borders of a country is a reality. The international environment poses threats, as well as opportunities for organisations. Strategic managers need to consider these for successful strategic management in contemporary organisations (Botha, 2019:22).

In the NPA study, the NPA has been actively participating in *international organisations* such as the International Association of Prosecutors (IAP) and the Africa Prosecutors Association (APA), with the aim of strengthening global stakeholder relations; the NDPP, an executive member of the IAP, attended the 52nd ExCo Meeting virtually in 2021 (NPA, 2022b:18).

Within the external environment, all managers, but strategic managers, in particular, need to be aware of the various stakeholders in this environment, which is the focus of the following Section 4.4 ‘Stakeholder analysis’.

4.4 CONDUCTING THE STRATEGIC AUDIT: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

A Stakeholder is any person, group, organisation or government department that have an interest in the achievement of the results; this can include individuals or groups that will participate in the planning or implementation process, or individuals and groups that have an interest in using the evaluation results (NSG, 2019:36).

4.4.1 Distinguishing between stakeholders and target group

It is important to distinguish between stakeholders and target groups (NSG, 2019:36):
(a) *stakeholder* is any party that has an interest in an organisation and can either affect or be affected by their business. Primary stakeholders may include investors, employees, customers, government, unions and suppliers, and (b) the *target group* is the group of individuals that benefits from the results of the organisation. Conducting a stakeholder analysis is one way to identify who may be interested; the analysis facilitates the consolidation of information about various audiences into a single table, which can also aid in the organisation of deliverables. Stakeholders can include various groups, and can be divided into internal and external stakeholders.

4.4.2 Different groups of potential stakeholders

There are different groups of potential stakeholders including (NSG, 2019:36):
(a) the public as *'users'* and *'citizen'*, (b) *'specific groups of the population'* (disabled, young people, elderly, women and ethnic groups), (c) *'experts'* – people with evidence-based knowledge and experience of the issue in hand, (d) *'civil society groups'* (employers' groups, community leaders, pressure groups), and (e) *'employees or staff'* (front line staff, management) who will implement and deliver the policy, programme or intervention. Stakeholders have relationships with each other, and this can influence how they view an intervention.

4.4.3 Identification of stakeholder for planning towards change

In the NPA study, the NPA collaborates with various internal and external stakeholders to fulfil its mission of upholding justice and prosecuting criminal cases; Table 4.1 identifies all the stakeholders who are (or will) be affected by the results or are interested in the successful execution of the strategy (Manchidi, 2024):

Table 4.1 Identification of stakeholders for planning towards change

Internal stakeholders:				
Stakeholder	**Characteristics?**	**Influence?**	**Interest?**	**Linkages with other stakeholders**
1. Employees	Skilled professionals engaged in legal processes and administration	High. Their expertise directly impacts the effectiveness of legal proceedings	Career development, job security	Interact closely with the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, and other government bodies
2. Management	Leadership team overseeing NPA operations and strategy implementation	High. Their decisions shape organisational performance and policy execution	Organisational effectiveness, policy implementation	Linked to government bodies, regulatory agencies, and other relevant entities
External stakeholders:				
Stakeholder	**Characteristics?**	**Influence?**	**Interest?**	**Linkages with other stakeholders**
1. Government	Policy-making and regulatory body	High. Government policies directly impact NPA's operations	Ensuring effective policy implementation	Interacts with all sectors of society, including NPA
2. Public	Recipients of NPA's services	Medium. They observe and benefit from NPA's work	Justice delivery	Connected to media, civil society organisations, and other justice-related entities

(Source: adapted from NSG, 2019:37)

Collectively, these stakeholders contribute to the NPA's mission and play essential roles in shaping its impact on South African society (Manchidi, 2024).

4.4.4 Aspects to consider when conducting stakeholder analysis

Aspects to consider when conducting a stakeholder analysis are the characteristics, influence, interest of the stakeholders as well as their linkages with other stakeholders (NSG, 2019:37):
(a) *stakeholder characteristics* — the analysis includes such stakeholder characteristics such as knowledge of the organisations mandate, related policies and legislation. This can also include their attitude to the organisation, possible support, collaboration, experience and culture, (b) *stakeholder influence* — stakeholder influence indicates the power that a stakeholder has over and within the organisation, and (c) *linkages with other stakeholders* — it is important to understand the linkages with other stakeholders as well as potential alliances with other stakeholders. Internal stakeholders are stakeholders internal to the organisation and external stakeholders are external to the organisation.

Stakeholders are also a valuable means of identifying and controlling external risks, enhancing open government and accountability, improving trust in government and policy making, and avoiding policy and strategy failure; it is important, therefore to initiate and sustain constructive external relationships with appropriate stakeholders over time (NSG, 2019:38).

When deciding which stakeholders to involve in the strategy formulation process, it is important to make the stakeholder group as representative and inclusive as possible. This avoids involving only 'the usual suspects' and narrowing the range of ideas and suggestions. It is also important to involve stakeholders early in the planning process, and to keep them involved throughout the process (NSG, 2019:38).

4.4.5 Power/Interest Grid tool for stakeholder identification and engagement

A frequently used tool for identifying who to involve as stakeholders, and how they might be involved, is the Power/Interest Grid (Figure 4.2) (NSG, 2019:38):

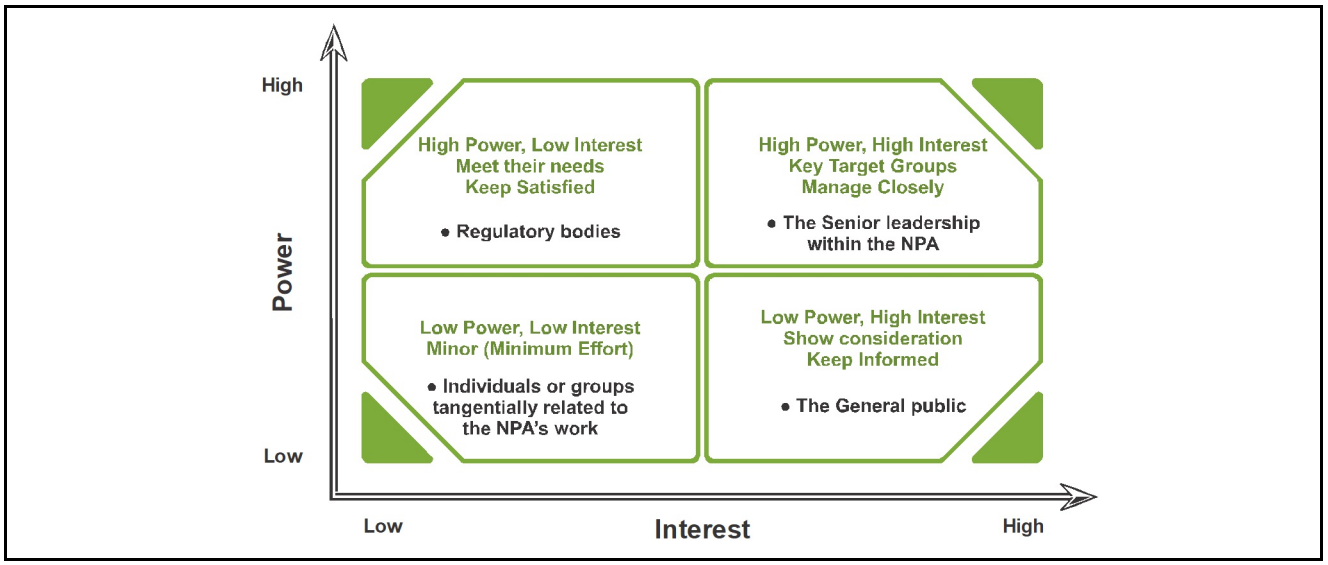


Figure 4.2 Power/Interest Grid (Target Group Prioritisation Matrix)
(Source: adapted from Thompson, 2017:1)

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

In the NPA study, the researcher identified four key stakeholders, categorised according to the Power/Interest Grid:

High Power, High Interest ('Key Target Groups', 'Manage Closely'):

- The **Senior leadership within the NPA**, including individuals such as Adv Shamila Batohi, Adv Rodney De Kock, Adv Ouma Rabaji-Rasethaba, and Adv Anton du Plessis. They hold a high degree of power and interest as they are responsible for the strategic direction and operational management of the NPA.

High Power, Low Interest ('Meet Their Needs', 'Keep Satisfied'):

- **Regulatory bodies** have the power to enforce laws, regulations, and standards that the NPA must adhere to. While they may not have a direct interest in the daily operations of the NPA, they have a vested interest in ensuring that the NPA complies with all relevant regulations.

Low Power, High Interest ('Show Consideration', 'Keep Informed'):

- The **General public** has a high interest in the work of the NPA, particularly concerning the enforcement of justice.

However, they have low power in terms of directly influencing the operations of the NPA.

Low Power, Low Interest ('Minor', 'Minimum Effort'):

- **Individuals or groups tangentially related to the NPA's work** could include academic researchers, journalists, or international observers who have an interest in the justice system but do not directly influence or are influenced by the NPA's operations.

The above is a simplified version of the Power/Interest Grid analysis. For a comprehensive analysis, more detailed knowledge of all the NPA's stakeholders, their relationships with the NPA, and their interest and power levels would be required; this information might be available in internal NPA documents, interviews with stakeholders, or other in-depth research.

The Power/Interest Grid places potential stakeholders along the two dimension of the interest they have in the planning process, and the power and influence they carry; it also helps to prioritise stakeholders and their role; this can be determined by asking questions such as (NSG, 2019:38-39):
(a) who shows interest in the planning process?, (b) who could show interest?, (c) for whom is the strategy useful?, (d) who can contribute or support the strategy materially or non-materially?, (e) who is against this strategy?, and (f) who has influence on the implementation process?

The position of target groups in the matrix indicates actions to be taken with them (NSG, 2019:39):
(a) *high power interested target groups* must be fully engaged in the planning process and the greatest effort must be made to satisfy their needs, (b) *high power less interested people* should receive attention to cater for their needs but not as much as with the first group, (c) *low power interested people* should be kept adequately informed to ensure that no major issues related to the planning process arise, and (d) according to Thompson (2017:1) *low power, less interested people* should be monitored but may not have a direct influence on or be directly influenced by the strategy.

4.4.6 Exploring the multifaceted approaches to stakeholder engagement

There are number of ways of involving stakeholders including (NSG, 2019:39):
(a) in-depth interviews with key individuals for their views, opinions and expertise, (b) focus groups with the key groups of stakeholders, in which the dynamics of groups interaction and argument reveal differences of approach and potential sources of consensus, (c) *Nominal Group technique* — seeks 'insider perspectives' and consensus from experts by group discussion (similar to using focus groups), (d) *Critical Incidence Analysis* — seeks ' insider perspectives' and consensus from experts about how to respond to critical incidences (e.g., a hurricane or earthquake), (e) *community meetings* — presents policy proposals to the general public and seeks their views, opinions and responses in an open meeting context, and (f) *e-consultation* — a means of consultation with public individuals or on groups using social media and other digital means.

It is useful to compare and contrast the ideas and suggestions that come from different ways on involving stakeholders, and to see where they concur and where they do not; this is referred to as 'data triangulation' (NSG, 2018:6).

4.4.7 Stakeholder responsibilities

It is important to identify and define the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders involved in planning within and outside of the organisation; a participatory approach with all key stakeholders to identify roles and responsibilities should be followed.

Through using a participatory process, organisations will ensure that all stakeholders involved will obtain better understanding of the organisation's purpose, results to be achieved and what is expected from them. Participation will ensure better ownership and buy-in to the SP. Through the process of consultation, discussions and decision-making, stakeholders' roles and responsibilities in the planning process should be clarified (NSG, 2019:39).

4.4.8 Stakeholder Involvement worksheet for ability, roles and responsibilities

Based on input and feedback by various stakeholders, a stakeholder worksheet can be used to identify key information about the roles, responsibilities and ability of stakeholder (NSG, 2019:40).

In the NPA study, the NPA collaborates with various stakeholders to uphold justice and prosecute criminal cases. Effective stakeholder involvement contributes to the NPA's mission of ensuring justice in South African society. The following outlines how key stakeholders contribute to the NPA's mission and address challenges in their involvement (Manchidi, 2024):

Table 4.2 Stakeholder Involvement Template

Stakeholder	Roles related to the strategy	Responsibilities within the strategy	Duplications/ Possible Links /Contractions related to roles & responsibilities (1)	Funding availability (2)	Inside/outside Mandate (3)	Capability Availability (4)
Internal Stakeholders:						
1. Government	Policy guidance and oversight	Implementing legal frameworks and ensuring alignment with national policies	Potential duplications with other government bodies involved in policy implementation	Funded through the state budget	Inside mandate, as a key regulatory authority	Adequate capacity to engage in policy formulation and implementation
2. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)	Advocacy and watchdog functions	Monitoring NPA's performance and ensuring transparency	Possible contradictions in expectations and outcomes due to diverse stakeholder interests	Donor-funded may face challenges due to dependency on external funding	Outside mandate, representing public interests	Varies across different CSOs; some have robust capacity, while others may struggle
3. Legal community	Collaboration and support	Providing legal expertise and assisting in legal processes	Linkages with NPA's legal processes; potential duplications in roles	Self-funded by legal practitioners	As legal professionals, both inside and outside mandate	Moderate capacity; legal professionals contribute essential skills
Addressing Challenges:						
1. Explanation of duplications of roles and responsibilities and how these will be addressed (Role duplications and contradictions):						
• Regular consultations and meetings among stakeholders to clarify roles, reduce overlaps, and enhance synergy • Clear guidelines on responsibilities to avoid contradictions.						
2. Suggestions to address unfunded mandates (Funding constraints), (if applicable):						
• Engage donors and international partners to support civil society organisations involved in monitoring roles • Explore innovative funding models to ensure sustained stakeholder involvement.						
3. Explanation of how roles and responsibilities outside mandate will be dealt with (Outside mandate alignment):						
• Establish clear guidelines outlining each stakeholder's scope of work • Ensure alignment with NPA's objectives and legal framework.						
4. Explanation on how capacity constraints will be addressed (Capacity enhancement):						
• Conduct capacity-building initiatives, including training programs for stakeholders • Empower stakeholders to actively participate in their respective roles.						
Keynote: Information related to numbers 1-4 is only to be included and expanded on in cases where this key information relates and is applicable to a stakeholder:						

(Source: adapted from NSG, 2019:40)

4.5 STRATEGIC AUDIT – IN THE STRATEGIC FORMULATION

There should be consistency between the external environment of the organisation with its opportunities and challenges, and its internal environment (including its mission, goals, values, resources and capabilities, structure and systems) with its strengths and weaknesses (Grant & Jordan, 2012:36)

Nieuwenhuizen (2019:146) posits that the alignment of resources and capabilities with environmental opportunities is fundamental to the success of a strategy. Within the context of public sector or governmental entities, resources and capabilities are the primary drivers for strategy formulation. These resources and capabilities enable such entities to differentiate themselves in terms of service delivery, thereby facilitating the development of strategies to enhance it.

In the NPA study, Nieuwenhuizen (2019:146) also identifies resources such as skilled personnel and legal expertise, along with capabilities like effective legal procedures and efficient case management, as enabling factors for the NPA to fulfil its mandate. The recognition of opportunities for improvement and their alignment with these resources and capabilities can bolster the NPA's performance and service delivery. Consequently, strategic formulation remains a critical aspect, even for public sector entities (Manchidi, 2024).

4.5.1 The information required for conducting strategic audit

According to the NSG (2019:90-98), the strategic audit presents broad information regarding the internal and external environment of an organisation based on the detailed information gathered in the strategy formulation process, and the strategic focus.

During the first year of the five-year planning cycle the strategic audit reflected in the APP must be the same as the strategic audit in the SP. Information provided in the SP at the beginning of the planning cycle must be updated annually in the APP from the second year of the five-year planning cycle.

Information on or changes to the internal and external environment within which an organisation operates must guide the development of the SP, or of the APP. Relevant research including analysis of emerging trends, the status of women, children, youth, and people with disabilities (where applicable), evaluation reports, and the performance information gathered during the previous financial years must be referenced, or considered when reviewing the strategic audit. The updated for the APP, strategic audit must provide the context for the implementation of planned initiatives over the five-year planning period, or for the APP the medium-term period.

The strategic audit should also be informed by the discussions and decisions taken through the use of planning tools such as the Scenario Planning, SWOT and PESTLE, Fishbone, Problem, and Solution Tree Analysis.

4.5.1.1 Core elements of the organisation's environment for the strategic audit

The following core elements of the organisation's environment should be reflected in the strategic audit , or the APP (NSG, 2019:90-91;97):

(a) the strategic focus of the organisation over the five-year planning period, and for the APP, the financial year, (b) recent statistics relevant to the organisation and sector, (c) reference to the medium- and long-term policy environment, (d) evidence-based analysis of the strategic context and priorities relating to women, children, youth, and people with disabilities, (e) where appropriate, demographic data, (f) where appropriate, background information on the demand for services, (g) where appropriate, use of spatial information to guide planning, (h) challenges experienced by the organisation (department) in the performance environment and mechanisms to address the challenges over the planning period, and for the APP, medium-term period, (i) emerging priorities and opportunities which will be implemented during the planning period, (j) information on the capacity of the organisation to deliver on its mandate; and (k) relevant stakeholders which contribute to the organisation's achievement of its outcomes.

4.5.1.2 Information (core elements) of the organisation's environment for the external strategic audit

Key issues in the delivery environment; information (core elements) in this section should include (NSG, 2019:91;97):

(a) background information on factors contributing to the performance of policy and regulatory organisations, (b) where applicable, background information on demand for services and other factors which informs the development of the SP; and the APP, (c) identify challenges to be addressed and provide interventions; and for the APP, challenges experienced by the organisation in the performance environment and mechanisms to address the challenges over the medium-term period, (d) demographic or other data that will be used to inform planning for the five-year period, and for the APP, the medium-term period, (e) trend analysis based on ARs or end-term reports, and other reports that will inform the strategy going forward, (f) findings of internal or external research that will be used to inform the strategy of the department, (g) findings of internal or external evaluation that will be used to inform the strategy of the department, (h) information from the political environment which may impact on the implementation of the SP; and the APP, and lastly (i) diagnostic and analysis of the relevant environmental factors, data, trends, barriers, research, and evaluations, relating to women, children, youth, and people with disabilities that will inform the strategy of the organisation.

4.5.1.3 Information (core elements) of the organisation's environment for the internal strategic audit

The structure of the organisation and its configuration to deliver on the mandate of the organisation. Other internal organisational factors which may impact on the achievement of the organisation's outcomes must be reflected; information (core elements) should include (NSG, 2019:91;98):

(a) the capacity of the organisation to deliver on the mandate. This should include the Human Resources, ICT, financial resources, among others, (b) the status of the organisation regarding compliance with the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Amendment Act 46 of 2013 (cf. Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, SA, 2013:1-26), and (c) the status of the organisation regarding women, children, youth and people with disabilities.

Participant responses on RQ5, Prompt 5.1: What information is required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"What information is required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (5.1), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- Two participants (MM.1 and MM.2) provided some information required to conduct strategic analysis, such as the organisation's mandate, performance evaluation, internal and external reports, and environmental factors.
- The remaining participant (MM.3) did not specify any information required to conduct strategic analysis, but mentioned some frameworks and methods used for strategic analysis, such as SWOT analysis.
- Their understanding was generally vague and incomplete.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (5.1), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Nine participants (SM.1, SM.2, SM.3, SM.4, SM.5, SM.6, SM.8, SM.9, and SM.13) provided some information required to conduct strategic analysis, such as annual plans, frameworks, policies, legislation, political factors, operational changes, staffing, budgeting, demand for services, situational analysis report, crime statistics, SWOT analysis, PESTEL analysis, stakeholder analysis, balanced scorecard, theory of change, and customer satisfaction surveys.
- The remaining four participants (SM.7, SM.10, SM.11, and SM.12) did not specify any information required to conduct strategic analysis, but mentioned some aspects related to strategic analysis, such as having a digitised system, involving key role players, coordinating a session with the management team, and considering the challenges faced by the workforce.
- Their understanding was generally detailed and comprehensive.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a more extensive and explicit understanding of the information required to conduct strategic analysis compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, 11 (68.75%) provided some information required to conduct strategic analysis, while the remaining 5 (31.25%) did not specify any information required to conduct strategic analysis. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, 2 (66.67%) provided some information required to conduct strategic analysis, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, 9 (69.23%) provided some information required to conduct strategic analysis.

In the next section, the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), discusses a further input into the strategy formulation process, namely conducting the internal strategic audit.

4.5.2 Conducting the internal strategic audit

The focus of internal strategic audit is to identify and value the resources and capabilities of the organisation to identify key strengths and weaknesses that may affect the ability of the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives (Venter, 2014:4).

> The vision represents management's idealised future for the organisation, while the mission statement articulates what the organisation must become to progress towards this vision; to ensure the mission statement is grounded in reality, management must conduct the internal strategic audit, which involves: (a) assessing the organisation's internal capabilities, and (b) identifying opportunities and threats in the evolving external environment.
>
> The strategic audit of the **internal capabilities** (strengths and weaknesses) of an organisation gives management a clear picture of unique strengths that the organisation may possess that they can use in order to achieve desired results. The internal strategic audit also highlights the weaknesses that the organisation may have existing gaps in capabilities or resources. The end result of an internal environmental strategic audit is called the *organisational profile*. This profile should depict the strategically important strengths and weaknesses on which the organisation should base its strategy (Smit et al, 2016:94).

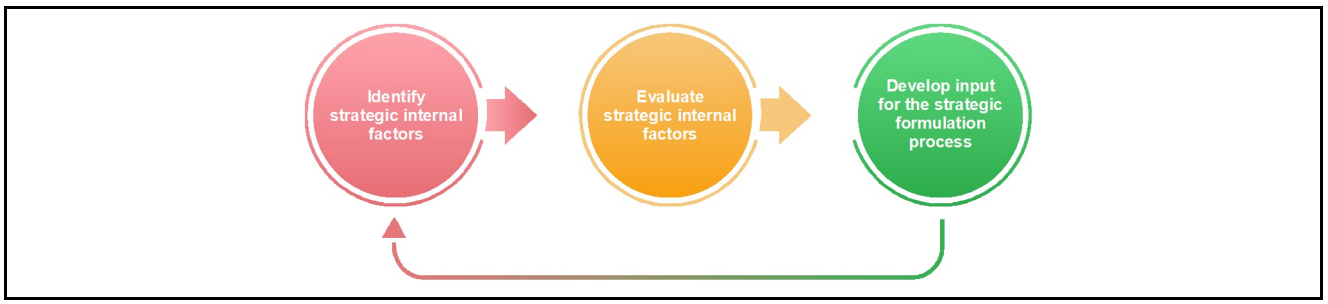


Figure 4.3 Steps in the development of an organisational profile
(Source: adapted from Smit at al, 2016:94)

Figure 4.3 illustrates internal strategic audit as a three-step process; by following these steps, management is able to identify those factors that (Smit et al, 2016:94):
(a) give the organisation a competitive advantage, (b) meet the basic organisation requirements, and (c) make it vulnerable to the realities of the volatile organisation environment.

Step 1: Identify strategic internal factors (Smit et al, 2016:95-100):
In Step 1, managers identify and examine key aspects of the organisation's basic capabilities, limitations, and characteristics — those internal capabilities that are most critical to success in its particular area of operation.

In the NPA study, factors strategic to the NPA would be the effectiveness and efficiency of their prosecution process, the expertise and integrity of their staff, and their ability to uphold the rule of law and protect citizens' rights (Manchidi, 2024).

Strategic internal factors can also vary between organisations in the same sector.

For example, the strategies of a large public hospital and a small community health clinic would be based on different internal strengths: the large public hospital on its strength in handling a large volume of patients, extensive medical facilities, and specialised medical skills; the small community health clinic on relationship building, personalised care, community trust, and patient loyalty (Manchidi, 2024).

But how do managers decide which factors are truly strategic for the survival of their specific organisation? To help managers with this challenging task, the following approaches have been identified:

I. The strategic auditing of functional segments

The functional approach to internal strategic audit concentrates on auditing the capabilities of the functional departments in an organisation. This would mean making a thorough analysis of its marketing, financial, operations, human resources, research and development, and external relations functions. In Table 4.3, the focus is on general management as one of the key internal factors in an organisation, and the factors listed have been identified as potential strengths or weaknesses. This table serves as an illustration of how one of the segments of the organisation has been audited in terms of those factors critical to its success.

According to Table 4.3, the major strengths of this organisation are its clear and realistic mission statement, its policies and procedures, its integration with other systems, and its reaction to external changes. Weaknesses in the general management function are the organisational structure and planning systems.

II. The value-chain approach

A second approach to identifying an organisation's strengths and weaknesses audit is called the value-chain approach. The value-chain approach can be used in any type of organisation to audit its strengths and weaknesses. The value-chain looks at an organisation as a chain of activities that transforms inputs into outputs that public-sector-client value. The value-chain distinguishes between two types of activity in an organisation: (a) primary activities, and (b) secondary activities.

Table 4.3 The development of an organisational profile

Key internal factor	Potential strengths and weaknesses			
	++	+	–	—
1. Clear and realistic mission statement	++			
2. Organisation's image		+		
3. Planning systems			–	
4. Organisational structure				—
5. Policies and procedures		+		
6. Effectiveness and utilisation of control systems			–	
7. Alignment with organisational culture			–	
8. Innovative decision-making				—
9. Integration with other systems		+		
10. Reaction to external changes			–	

(Source: adapted from Smit et al, 2016:96)

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

In the NPA study, Table 4.3 presents the evolution of the NPA's organisational profile; below are some explanations for the given ratings (Manchidi, 2024):

1. *Clear and realistic mission statement* — the NPA has a clear and realistic mission statement that reflects its core mandate of prosecuting crimes on behalf of the state and upholding the rule of law
2. *Organisation's image* — the NPA's image is positive in terms of its independence, professionalism, and integrity, but it also faces some challenges such as public perception, political interference, and media scrutiny
3. *Planning systems* — the NPA's planning systems are weak in terms of setting clear goals, objectives, and strategies, as well as monitoring and evaluating its performance and outcomes
4. *Organisational structure* — the NPA's organisational structure is too hierarchical, rigid, and centralised, which hampers its efficiency, flexibility, and responsiveness to the needs of different regions and stakeholders
5. *Policies and procedures* — the NPA's policies and procedures are generally sound and consistent, but they also need to be updated, reviewed, and communicated more effectively to ensure compliance and accountability
6. *Effectiveness and utilisation of control systems* — the NPA's control systems are ineffective in terms of ensuring quality, consistency, and fairness of prosecutions, as well as preventing and detecting corruption, misconduct, and maladministration
7. *Alignment with organisational culture* — the NPA's alignment with organisational culture is poor, as there is a lack of shared vision, values, and norms among its staff, as well as low levels of trust, morale, and motivation
8. *Innovative decision-making* — the NPA's innovative decision-making is very low, as it is constrained by its risk-averse, bureaucratic, and conservative culture, which discourages creativity, experimentation, and learning
9. *Integration with other systems* — the NPA's integration with other systems is good, as it has established good relationships and cooperation with other entities in the justice system, such as the police, the courts, and the correctional services
10. *Reaction to external changes* — the NPA's reaction to external changes is slow, as it is unable to adapt quickly and effectively to the changing demands and expectations of the society, the government, and the international community.

Figure 4.4 depicts a typical value-chain. The **primary activities** are those involved in the physical delivery of the service (or benefits).

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

In the NPA study, these 'primary activities' will relate to all activities involved in the actual offering of the services to public-sector-clients. The value-chain, a concept from business management, can indeed be applied to the NPA, even though it operates in the public sector and doesn't have traditional *"competitors"* as a business would. The NPA is the agency of the South African Government responsible for state prosecutions. Listed below is how the NPA's capabilities relate to the primary activities of the value-chain:

a) *inbound logistics* — the NPA's core work is prosecutions . The intake of new cases and gathering evidence and information
b) *operations* — the NPA has the power to institute criminal proceedings on behalf of the state and to carry out any necessary functions incidental to organisation of criminal proceedings
c) *outbound logistics* — the results of the NPA's work, such as court rulings and legal precedents, can be seen as its outbound logistics
d) *the NPA's Communication Unit (marketing and sales)* — the NPA's activities serve as a form of marketing by promoting justice and rule of law; this could also include the NPA's efforts to communicate its role and value to the public, or its cooperation with other entities in the justice system
e) *service* — the NPA is accountable to Parliament, and final responsibility over it lies with the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services . This accountability can be seen as a form of service in the value-chain; this could also include any follow-up actions after a case is closed, such as appeals or managing the records of past cases.

The NPA has also expanded its approach to include strategic case coordination and prioritisation of impactful cases, enlisting the services of leading senior counsel and other local and international experts to support prosecutors and investigators in their work; this expansion can be seen as an enhancement of its capabilities across all primary activities of the value-chain.

The **secondary (or support) activities** provide the platform that allows the primary activities to take place. While these activities are framed here in terms of capabilities, they also represent areas where the NPA can strive for improvement or innovation. Even without traditional *"competitors,"* continuous improvement is key for any organisation's success.

In the NPA study according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), these include:

a) *administration and organisation infrastructure* — the ability to manage the organisation effectively, including strategy formulation, legal support, quality control, and general administrative tasks,
b) *human resource management* — the ability to recruit, train, and retain skilled prosecutors and support staff. This includes understanding the skills needed for different roles, creating effective training programs, and maintaining a positive work environment,
c) *research and development* — the NPA, while not a Research and Development (R&D) body, can still align its activities with the principles of South Africa's National Research and Development Strategy as follows;
    (i) *human resource development*: the NPA could invest in training programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of its staff in areas such as data analysis, legal research, and emerging technologies,
    (ii) *mastery of modern technologies*: the NPA could adopt modern technologies for data management, case tracking, and communication; this would not only improve efficiency but also ensure transparency,
    (iii) *scientific and technological research and development*: while the NPA's primary function is not R&D, it could collaborate with academic institutions or research bodies to research topics like crime patterns, effectiveness of prosecution strategies, etc, and
    (iv) *innovation*: the NPA could foster a culture of innovation by encouraging new ideas and approaches to improve

the prosecution process,

d) *technology and systems*— the ability to identify and implement new systems or tools that can improve efficiency and effectiveness. This could include data analysis tools, case management systems, or communication platforms, and

e) *procurement* — the ability to acquire necessary resources for prosecutions, such as legal expertise or technological tools. This includes contract negotiation skills and an understanding of the market for these resources.

The value-chain approach surveys the costs across the series of activities that the organisation performs in order to determine where the organisation has low-cost advantages or high-cost disadvantages.

In the NPA study, the NPA may have a high-cost disadvantage in terms of maintaining a large workforce of prosecutors and other staff. However, it may have a low-cost advantage in terms of public relations and awareness campaigns, as most of their publicity is through news media and public announcements (Manchidi, 2024).

Low cost does not have to be the only yardstick that can be used to determine an organisation's strengths and weaknesses if the value-chain approach is used. Differentiation and response time can also be used as yardsticks.

In the NPA study, the NPA could differentiate itself through its effectiveness in prosecuting cases and its response time could be measured by how quickly it is able to bring cases to trial (Manchidi, 2024).

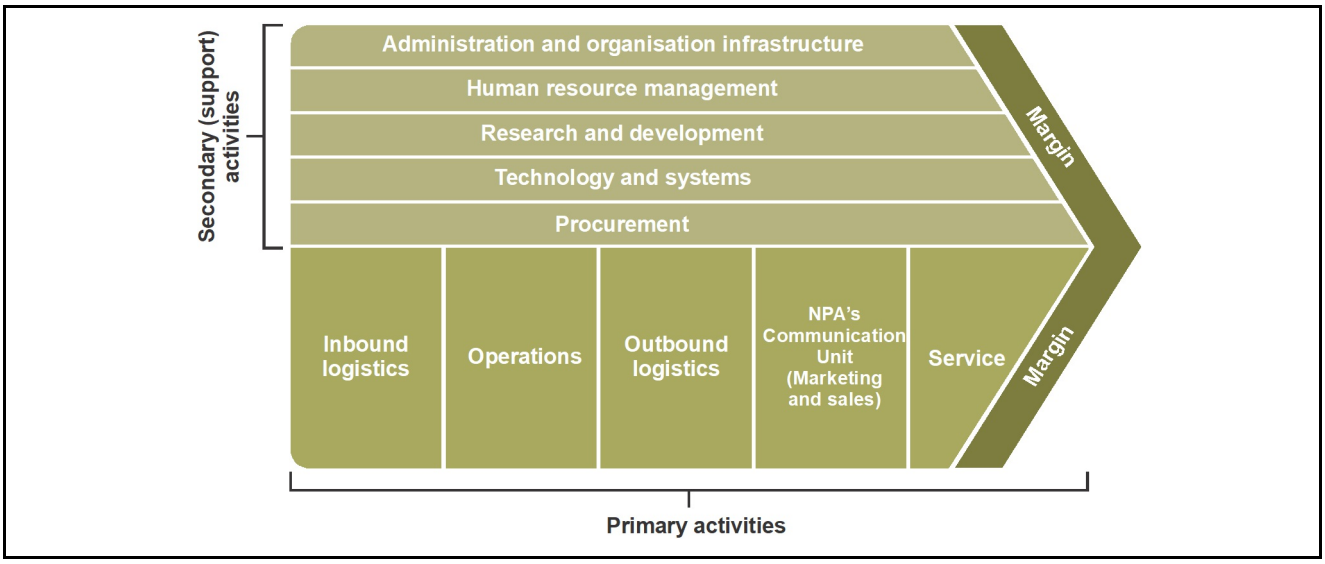


Figure 4.4 The value-chain approach to internal strategic audit

(Source: adapted from Smit et al, 2016:97)

III. Resource-based view (RBV)

Commonly referred to as “resource-based theory”, a third approach to auditing an organisation’s strengths and weaknesses is called the Resource-Based View (RBV) of an organisation (see Section 4.8.1.5). The underlying assumption in this approach to internal strategic audit is that organisations differ in fundamental ways because each organisation possesses a unique mixture of resources.

In the NPA study, the NPA, like any other organisation, possesses a unique mixture of resources. For example, the NPA is known for its legal expertise and its mandate to combat crime by ensuring that justice is served in SA. The NPA's purpose is to provide a coordinated prosecuting service that ensures justice and fairness. Legal knowledge and experience are at the heart of fulfilling the NPA's purpose. It has vast resources that can be used to conduct thorough investigations and prosecutions (Manchidi, 2024),

Similarly, also in the public sector is the South African Revenue Service (SARS), a government entity responsible for collecting revenue and ensuring compliance with tax law. SARS's resources are profoundly different from those that give the NPA its unique advantage. SARS's unique resources include its tax collection capabilities and its extensive database of taxpayers. However, it does not have major legal prosecution capabilities as it primarily focuses on tax matters (Manchidi, 2024).

According to the resource-based view of an organisation, it is much more feasible to exploit external opportunities using existing resources in a new way rather than trying to acquire new skills for each different opportunity or threat.

There are three types of resources according to the resource-based view of an organisation:

a) *tangible assets* — are those resources found on an organisation’s balance sheet (In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); such as property and offices)
b) *intangible assets* — are assets that one cannot see or touch but are critical to creating unique advantage to an organisation (In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); such as legal expertise, knowledge of the law), and
c) *organisational capabilities* — refer to the ability of an organisation to turn inputs into outputs (In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); such as the NPA's capability to transform legal knowledge into successful prosecutions more effectively than other similar entities).

For a resource to be valuable to an organisation – therefore a strength – it must be:
(a) superior to the resources of similar entities (In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); for example, a more experienced legal team), (b) scarce so that similar entities struggle to get hold of the resource (In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); an example would be access to specific legal expertise or knowledge), (c) difficult to imitate (In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); the NPA's reputation and authority are unique and

cannot be replicated)), (d) under the control of management, (e) slow to depreciate, and (f) difficult to substitute (In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); the mandate and authority of the NPA, for example, have no substitute).

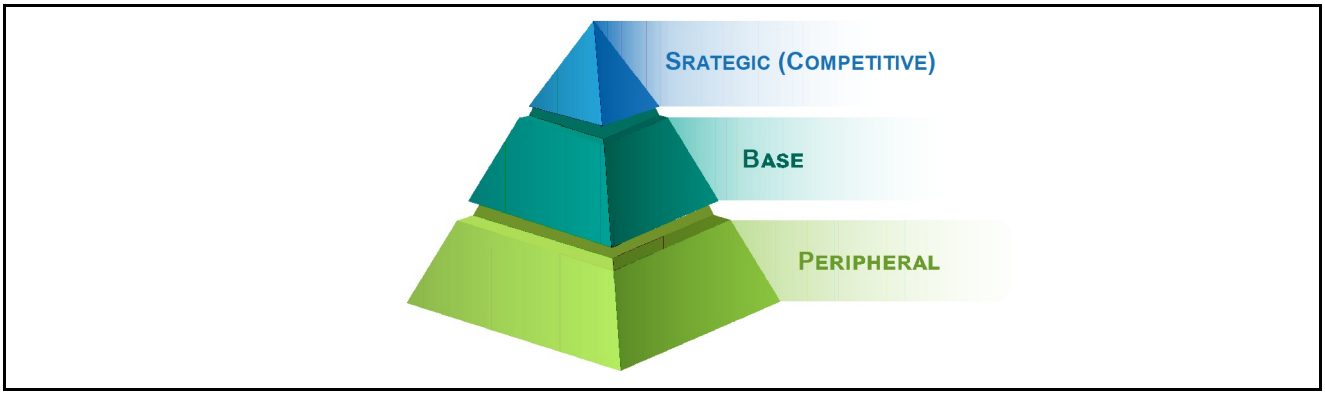


Figure 4.5 The hierarchy of resources
(Source: adapted from Smit et al, 2016:98)

Figure 4.5 depicts as a hierarchy the types of resources (tangible and intangible) or capabilities that an organisation possesses. Strategic resources or capabilities are the unique resources or capabilities of an organisation that cannot be easily emulated by other entities in the same sector.

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

The three most important resources to organisations

Three resources are consistently ranked above all others:

a) *access to markets* — In the NPA study, this could be interpreted as access to legal jurisdictions or areas of operation
b) *the supply of human capital* — this is crucial for the NPA, as it relies on skilled prosecutors and other legal professionals to carry out its work
c) *access to funding* — as a public sector entity, the NPA is funded by the government and therefore this resource is vital for its operations.

Strategic resources or capabilities should be nurtured and continuously improved to ensure that they remain strategic. Base resources are those resources that an organisation cannot operate without.

In the NPA study, these would be its legal authority and its team of prosecutors. Peripheral resources are necessary resources but can easily be outsourced. The NPA can easily outsource resources involved in the recruitment of employees, the selection of the best applicant for a job, infrastructure as a service, website design and administration and many more (Manchidi, 2024).

IV. The service or public engagement (product or market) evolution

A fourth approach to internal strategic audit is the service or public engagement evolution approach. The requirements for success in an organisation's service or public engagement relationship change over time. Management can therefore apply the framework of a product life cycle to identify strengths and weaknesses in the internal environment as an ongoing exercise.

In the NPA study, the product or market evolution approach can be applied to the NPA, albeit with some modifications due to the unique nature of public sector entities. The *"product"* would be the services it provides to the public, and the *"market"* would be the citizens it serves. The NPA's services also go through four phases: introduction, growth, maturity, and decline (Manchidi, 2024).

During the ***introductory phase***, this is when the organisation launches a new service or initiative. The key success during this phase would revolve around creating awareness of new services or initiatives among the public and relevant stakeholders; this could involve public outreach programs, press releases, or informational campaigns. The goal is to ensure that the public is aware of the new service, understands its purpose (benefits), and knows how to access it.

In the ***growth phase***, once the service has been successfully introduced and awareness has been created.

In the NPA study, the NPA would aim to increase engagement with the service; this could involve expanding the service to more regions, making it more accessible, or improving its effectiveness based on initial feedback. The success of this phase is typically measured by an increase in public engagement or utilisation of the service (Manchidi, 2024).

The ***maturity phase*** involves dealing with challenges from other factors while maintaining a strong presence because, at this stage, the service is well-established and widely used.

In the NPA study, the NPA's focus would shift towards maintaining its effectiveness and dealing with any challenges that may arise; this could involve adapting to changes in societal norms, legal frameworks, or technological advancements. Continuous improvement and adaptation are key in this phase (Manchidi, 2024).

Finally, in the ***decline phase***, certain services may become less relevant or effective over time due to various factors, such as changes in societal needs, legal frameworks, or technology. When a service enters this phase,

In the NPA study, the NPA would need to identify this trend and decide whether to phase out the service, replace it with a more effective one, or revamp it to meet current needs better; these phases are not about competition or surplus profit as in a traditional business context; instead, they are about effectively serving the public and fulfilling the NPA's mandate (Manchidi, 2024).

V. Using financial analysis

Financial analysis is a fifth approach to auditing the strengths and weaknesses of an organisation. However, it should be kept in mind that financial analysis provides an organisation with a picture of its strengths and weaknesses that is based on past data.

Organisations often use the balance sheet and income statement in their financial analyses to determine their strengths and weaknesses. The key financial ratios that are used are:
(a) *liquidity ratios* — liquidity ratios refer to an organisation's ability to meet its short-term obligations. The optimum ratio differs from sector to sector, (b) *leverage ratios* — leverage ratios look at the source of the organisation's capital, such as government funding or other sources. It could measure the percentage of total funds provided by creditors against the percentage provided by owners, (c) *activity ratios* — activity ratios measure how well the organisation is using its resources. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); how efficiently the NPA uses its budget to prosecute cases, and (d) *surplus (profitability) ratios* — surplus ratios measure how well an organisation is managed. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); this would be more about auditing its efficiency rather than surplus; the NPA could look at its surplus margin (the total surplus after expenses have been deducted from revenue).

An organisation can measure its gross surplus margin, that is, the total surplus margin after the expenditure has been deducted from the revenue (income) they have received (generated).

For example, the gross surplus percentage of 36% is realistic for the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC); for the Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) a gross surplus percentage of 57 per cent is achievable. Organisations in these sectors (Chapter 9 organisations) can measure themselves against these yardsticks to determine whether its revenue and expenditure are weaknesses or strengths (Manchidi, 2024).

Five approaches to determining an organisation's strengths and weaknesses (internal strategic audit):

a) functional approach
b) value-chain approach
c) resource-based view
d) The service/public engagement (product/market) evolution
e) financial ratios.

In the NPA study, these approaches can help the NPA identify areas where it is doing well and areas where there is room for improvement (Manchidi, 2024).

Step 2: Evaluate strategic internal factors (Smit et al, 2016:100-101):
Once the strategic internal factors have been identified, the next issue that arises is what are the potential strengths and weaknesses of the organisation? A factor is considered a strength if it is a competency or an advantage for an organisation.

In the NPA study, for example, the NPA's (a) reputation for integrity and its commitment to justice, or (b) legal expertise and public trust, could be two distinct competencies, and these competencies should be exploited to the full. A weakness, on the other hand, is something that an organisation does poorly. Examples of weaknesses for the NPA may include a lack of resources, public criticism, inefficiencies in processes, slow case processing times, or a high rate of case dismissals (Manchidi, 2024).

Classifying something as a strength or weakness is not a subjective exercise. Management can use one, or a combination, of the following to identify their organisation's strengths and weaknesses:
(a) a comparison with the organisation's performance in the past, (b) a comparison with other similar entities' performance, (c) a comparison with sector ratios, and (d) benchmarking.

These comparisons should be used to identify areas where the organisation is performing well *strengths* and areas where it could improve *weaknesses*. The goal is not just to compare but to understand what makes the organisation successful and how those strategies can be adapted to improve the organisation's own processes.

I. A comparison with the organisation's performance in the past

Many managers start their planning efforts by comparing their current results with the organisation's previous years' results. A major problem of this very popular approach, however, is that managers *may compare their current performance to their own very poor results of the past*; *any improvement on the poor results may then wrongly be considered a strength*. However, *if the factor was to be compared with a sector standard or yardstick*, it *might in fact be a weakness*.

II. A comparison with [other similar entities'] performance

Comparing the organisation's capabilities with those of major other similar entities' is a second approach that managers might use to evaluate the organisation's strategic internal factors.

In the NPA study, for example, the NPA can compare its internal factors to that of other prosecution authorities to determine its strengths and weaknesses. The NPA will compare itself in terms of factors such as case resolution rate, public satisfaction ratings and number of successful prosecutions (Manchidi, 2024).

III. A comparison with sector ratios

Determinants of success differ from sector to sector. Each sector has its own ratios that measure success in that sector. In the public sector, key determinants of success include efficiency, transparency, accountability and public satisfaction.

In the NPA study, the NPA can now use these yardsticks to determine whether these strategic factors are strengths or weaknesses to the organisation. In other words, is the NPA performing better (strength) or worse (weakness) than other similar entities' in terms of these factors? (Manchidi, 2024).

IV. Benchmarking

Benchmarking is another approach that can be used to identify an organisation's strengths and weaknesses. Benchmarking is the process of measuring an organisation's internal processes and identifying, understanding and adapting it to be best in its class. Benchmarks do not necessarily come from organisations in the same sector; it can be set by organisations in other sectors.

In the NPA study, the NPA might want to improve its efficiency in handling cases. It could look to benchmark against a similar entity in another jurisdiction that is known for its swift and efficient case handling procedures; this entity doesn't necessarily have to be in the same sector; it could be any organisation that has a reputation for efficient process management (Manchidi, 2024).

For example, emergency services are known for their rapid response times.

In the NPA study, the NPA could study their process management strategies and adapt relevant practices to improve its own case handling times; this way, the NPA can set a benchmark based on best practices from another sector, aiming to reduce case processing times and increase overall efficiency (Manchidi, 2024).

Determining the strengths and weaknesses of an organisation is not a subjective exercise. These yardsticks are: (a) the organisation itself (its previous performance), (b) other similar entities' performance comparison, (c) sector ratios, and (d) benchmarks; should be used to identify the organisation's capabilities. Although the identification (Step 1) and the evaluation (Step 2) of key internal factors have been discussed as two separate steps, it should be stressed that, in practice, they are not differentiated.

Step 3: Develop input for the strategy formulation process (Smit et al, 2016:101-102):

The results of the second step could be applied to determine those internal factors that:

(a) provide the organisation with an edge in its role — factors around which to build the organisation's strategy. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); this could be its nationwide jurisdiction, legislative backing, or its dedicated and skilled workforce, (b) are important capabilities for the organisation to have but are typical of every other similar entities' in the sector; In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); (expected of a prosecuting authority); this could include legal expertise, adherence to due process, and commitment to justice, and (c) are currently weaknesses in the organisation — managers should avoid strategies that rely on those key vulnerabilities.

The results obtained in this final step in the internal strategic audit process serve as inputs into the strategy formulation process. In the next section, the researcher (Manchidi, 2024) discusses a further input into the strategy formulation process, namely conducting the external strategic audit.

4.5.3 Conducting the external strategic audit

The purpose of the external strategic audit is to identify *opportunities* and *challenges* outside of the organisation that may influence the ability of the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives (Venter, 2014:4).

4.5.3.1 Techniques for external (macro) strategic audit

There are four important techniques which can be employed when conducting external (macro) strategic audit (Hoskisson, Hitt, Ireland & Harrison, 2020:41-43):

a) *auditing* — early signals of environmental changes and trends are identified. It entails studying all segments in the broad environment and often reveals ambiguous, incomplete and or unconnected data. Strategic audits will enable managers to forecast changes and to adjust their strategies accordingly
b) *monitoring* — meaning of environmental changes and trends is detected through ongoing observation. Analysts observe environmental changes when monitoring to see if an important trend is emerging from among those spotted through auditing (scanning). Auditing and monitoring are particularly important in sectors with high technological uncertainty
c) *forecasting* — based on monitoring changes and trends, projections of anticipated outcomes are developed. Forecasting events and outcomes accurately is nevertheless a challenging task for most organisations
d) auditing (assessing) — timing and importance of environmental changes and trends for organisations strategies and their management are determined. Through auditing (scanning), monitoring, and forecasting, analysts are able to understand the general environment and assess the implications of trends and changes. Without strategic audits, the organisation is left with data that may be interesting but of unknown relevance. In other words, although the gathering and ordering of the information is important, the appropriate interpretation of that intelligence to determine if the identified trend, change, or event in the external environment is an opportunity or a threat should be paramount.

4.6 STRATEGIC AUDIT – IN THE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The strategy implementation process is not a one-off event but rather a continuous cycle that requires or necessitates constant monitoring (vigilance) and adjustment; this is where the concepts of 'internal and external strategic audits' become crucial and integral to this process (Manchidi, 2024).

While beneficial during the strategy formulation phase, some scholars argue that the strategic audit is even more critical during the strategy implementation phase (Manchidi, 2024). cf. Hrebiniak (2006:12-31), cf. Mintzberg and Waters (1985:257-272), and Noble (1999:119) all agree on this point, each bringing their unique perspective to the discussion.

Hrebiniak (2006:12) emphasises the challenges of strategy implementation, stating that *"making strategy work is more difficult than strategy making"* and asserting that *"without effective implementation, no organisation's strategy can succeed"*; this perspective underscores the importance of the strategic audit in monitoring the progress and effectiveness of the chosen strategy and in detecting any changes or challenges that may require adjustments or corrections. Mintzberg and Waters (1985:257), on the other hand, suggest that *"strategies are often emergent rather than deliberate"* and that *"strategic management must cope with strategies as they happen as well as plan them"*; this viewpoint highlights the dynamic nature of strategies and the need for strategic audits to adapt and respond to these changes. Noble (1999:132) further asserts that *"strategy implementation is a key determinant of organisational performance"* and that *"the ability to implement strategies effectively can be a source of competitive advantage"*; this reinforces the role of strategic audits in ensuring the successful implementation of strategies and in enhancing organisational performance.

> Collectively, these scholars highlight the pivotal role of strategic audits during the strategy implementation phase, each contributing a unique angle to the discourse. Their views, when integrated, provide a comprehensive understanding of the importance and benefits of strategic audits in strategy implementation (Manchidi, 2024).

In this study, the researcher will discuss why and how to conduct strategic audits during the strategy implementation phase and what benefits it can bring to the organisation (Manchidi, 2024).

4.6.1 Why conduct strategic audit during strategy implementation

> Strategy implementation is the process of putting the chosen strategy into action by allocating resources, assigning responsibilities, setting objectives and timelines, and executing the planned activities. It is often considered the most complex and challenging part of strategic management, as it involves many uncertainties, complexities, and risks (Manchidi, 2024).

Therefore, conducting a strategic audit during strategy implementation can assist an organisation in the following ways (Manchidi, 2024):
(a) tracking the performance and outcomes of the strategy against the expected results and targets, (b) evaluating the suitability and feasibility of the strategy in light of the current and emerging conditions of the internal and external environment, (c) identifying any gaps, deviations, or problems that may hinder or compromise the execution of the strategy or achievement of goals, (d) assessing the need and scope for any modifications or improvements to the strategy or its implementation process, and (e) enhancing learning and feedback mechanisms to improve strategic decision-making and adaptation capabilities.

4.6.2 How to conduct strategic audit during strategy implementation

> Conducting the strategic audit during the strategy implementation phase is crucial for continuously evaluating the strategy's effectiveness. The audit can be conducted using various methods, tools, and techniques, which are chosen based on the nature and scope of the strategy, the data and information available, and the specific objectives of the audit. Below are some of the most commonly employed and effective tools and techniques (Manchidi, 2024):

4.6.2.1 Balanced scorecard

The framework facilitates measuring and monitoring strategy performance from four perspectives: financial, customer, internal process, and learning and growth. It aids in aligning the organisation's vision, mission, goals, and objectives with strategy execution and communicating them to stakeholders.

4.6.2.2 Key Performance Indicators

These are quantitative or qualitative measures that facilitate the evaluation of the achievement of strategic objectives and targets. They assist in tracking progress, identifying areas for improvement, and motivating team members. The topic 'identifying Key Performance Indicators' has been outlined (see Section 4.2.7.4 (A)).

In the NPA study, the National Treasury (NT) (2007:9) posits that once suitable indicators have been identified and a baseline established, and the subsequent step involves determining targets. These targets represent the desired results we aim to achieve within a specific timeframe; they are values or conditions that delineate what needs to be accomplished over a given period.

> Including targets is crucial as they signify the planned level of performance or the milestones that an institution sets for each identified indicator. A target might refer to the desired level of service delivery or indicate progress achieved within a specific timeframe (NSG, 2019:83).

> Setting targets is a common theme in management-for-results. Five-year targets should be set in the SP for each outcome indicator. Within the APP context, annual and quarterly targets are established for each output, thereby creating a link between the budget and indicators. The setting of targets is influenced by the budget and other resources (NSG, 2019:83-84).

> NT (2011:43-44) asserts that meaningful target setting necessitates that the level and standard of performance aimed for must be affordable. Target setting should be undertaken with the concept of 'incremental achievement' in mind, which involves making small steps each year (using multi-year targets) towards achieving a result over time. Targets should also adhere to the SMART criteria.

4.6.2.3 Benchmarking

The process involves comparing an organisation's performance, processes, or practices with those of other organisations deemed best in class or industry leaders. This comparison aids in identifying best practices, learning from the experiences of others, and setting realistic and achievable performance standards (see Sections 3.7.1.1 and 4.5.2 Step 2 (IV)).

4.6.2.4 SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis tool analyses an organisation's internal environment; strengths, weaknesses, and external environment; opportunities, and threats. It assists in identifying core competencies, competitive advantages, areas of improvement, and potential risks that may affect strategy execution or goals (see Section 4.8.3.1).

4.6.2.5 PESTLE analysis

PESTLE analysis tool analyses the political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors affecting an organisation's external environment. It aids in identifying opportunities and threats that may arise from changes or trends in these factors and their potential impact on strategy execution or goals (see Section 4.8.2.2).

4.6.3 Benefits of conducting strategic audit during strategy implementation

Conducting a strategic audit during strategy implementation can bring many benefits to an organisation, such as (Manchidi, 2024):

(a) improving the quality and efficiency of strategy execution by ensuring alignment, coordination, and integration of activities and resources, (b) enhancing the effectiveness and impact of the strategy by ensuring its relevance, suitability, and feasibility in light of the current and emerging conditions of the environment, (c) increasing the flexibility and agility of the strategy by enabling timely detection and response to changes or challenges that may require adjustments or corrections to the strategy or its implementation process, and (d) strengthening the learning and innovation of the strategy by fostering a culture of continuous improvement, feedback, and adaptation in the organisation.

> Strategic audit is a vital part of strategic management that should not be neglected or overlooked during the strategy implementation phase. By conducting regular and systematic strategic audits, organisations can ensure that their chosen strategy is executed successfully and achieves its intended results and goals, thereby enhancing the organisation's strategic capabilities and competitiveness in a dynamic and uncertain environment. This continuous audit monitors the organisation's progress effectively and facilitates making necessary adjustments, thereby ensuring that the strategy remains effective, is aligned with the organisation's objectives, and is responsive to changes in the external environment (Manchidi, 2024).

4.7 STRATEGIC AUDIT – IN THE STRATEGIC REVIEW AND CONTROL

Strategic review and control processes cannot always be reactive and measure performance after the fact, and in addition they are always relatively narrow, focusing on a few KPIs. Continuous strategic audits can be considered a review method as it provides feedback on changes in the environment that may impact strategic choices and their execution (Davis, 2019:61). For a strategic review and control system to be effective, it should also have a broader forward-looking element, and strategic audit is a mechanism to achieve this (Brevis, 2014:299-300).

4.7.1 **Elements of strategic audit** (in the strategic review and control)

Strategic audit in the strategic review and control consists of two elements (Brevis, 2014:303-304):

a) *internal control elements* — which consist of all the functions and other departments or individuals (most likely all managers in the organisation) that play a role in measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation in its operations and especially, from a strategic control perspective, in its execution of strategic initiatives

In the NPA study, this involves the execution of strategic initiatives such as prosecuting corruption cases, implementing justice reform, or improving internal processes. *The internal control functions are mostly backward looking*, in other words they consider the results and then take corrective action. In the NPA study, for example, if a particular strategy for prosecuting cases is not yielding the desired results, the internal control elements should identify the issue and implement necessary changes (Manchidi, 2024)

b) *external control elements* — which are those functions that monitor the external environment formally or informally with a view to identifying key environmental changes that may offer opportunities or challenges to the organisation;

In the NPA study, these could include changes in legislation, shifts in public opinion, or developments in legal technology. These are *mostly forward looking* as they try to pre-empt environmental events that may affect the organisation in future; In the NPA study, for example, if there is a proposed change in legislation that could impact how the NPA operates, the external control elements would identify this potential threat or opportunity early on and prepare accordingly. Ultimately the best type of control is the prevention of mistakes. In both cases, strategic control is crucial for ensuring that the NPA can effectively carry out its mandate within SA's justice system (Manchidi, 2024).

4.8 TOOLS FOR STRATEGIC AUDIT

The strategic audit's aim in the planning process is to identify challenges through a systematic analysis of the organisation's historical background; this involves examining signs or symptoms of potential issues, evaluating research findings, and investigating probable causes of problems that may be related to the current strategic environment (NSG, 2019:40). A strategic audit is crucial for understanding the environment in which an organisation and its programmes operate, it scrutinises the organisation's interaction with its environment to enhance efficiency and effectiveness; this is achieved by intelligently increasing the capacity to deploy or redeploy resources (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, 2007:3).

I. Auditing the current situation

Before deciding to navigate towards a desired destination, a clear understanding of the current position is needed; this implies that prior to making significant strategic decisions, an evaluation of the existing situation (status quo) should be conducted, and when auditing the current situation all documents within and related to the organisation should be consulted.

Several tools, including Scenario Planning, PESTLE, and SWOT, are commonly used within the government for auditing the status quo; other popular tools include a 'combined SWOT and PESTLE analysis', 5 Why's, and Fishbone diagrams (NSG, 2019:40-41).

4.8.1 Tools for internal strategic audit

Below is a brief overview of these tools and their respective purposes (NSG, 2019:41-50):

4.8.1.1 5 WHY'S

The 5 Whys is an iterative interrogative technique used to explore the cause-and-effect relationships underlying a particular problem. This method involves asking 'Why' repeatedly until the root cause of a problem is identified. It is often used in conjunction with other tools, such as Fishbone diagrams and Problem Trees. The 5 Whys can be used individually or as part of the Fishbone (also known as the cause and effect or Ishikawa) diagram. The use of a Fishbone diagram allows for the exploration of all potential or actual causes that result in a single defect or failure. Once all inputs are established on the Fishbone, the 5 Whys technique can be employed to drill down to the root causes.

The 5 Whys tool is simple yet powerful for problem-solving and root cause analysis. It is commonly used in areas such as organisational process improvement and quality management. The tool involves asking 'why' up to five times (or more if necessary) to drill down to the root cause of a problem.

Traditionally, the 5 Whys tool is used for internal strategic audits. However, it could potentially be adapted for external environmental analysis. For example, it could be used to identify and analyse the potential causes of an external issue or trend impacting an organisation, although this is not its conventional application.

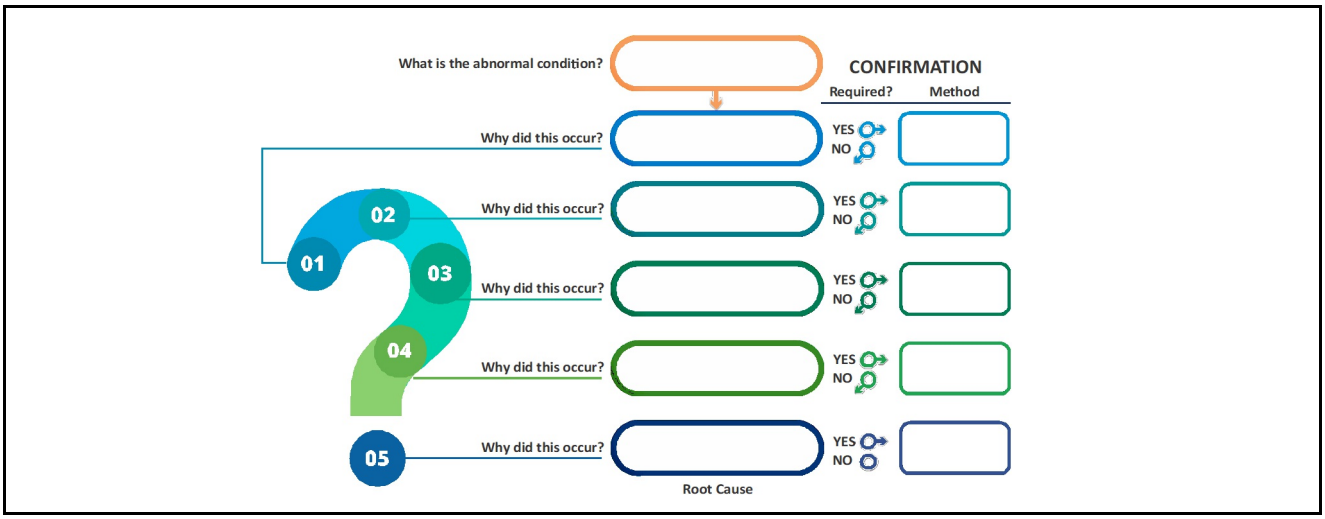


Figure 4.6 The 5 Whys worksheet
(Source: adapted from NSG, 2019:44)

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

In the NPA study, the NPA is a constitutional institution that prosecutes criminal cases for the state and faces various challenges that affect its credibility, effectiveness, and independence. The 5 whys technique is presented below for each of the 10 points to identify and address the root causes of these challenges and involves asking 'why' five times, with each question delving deeper into the cause of the problem:

POINT 1: OPAQUE DECISION-MAKING

Why did this occur (1)?	The process of deciding not to prosecute is often shrouded in secrecy.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Examine the cases and reasons for the NPA's decisions not to prosecute and compare them with the Prosecution Policy and the Code of Conduct.
Why did this occur (2)?	The criteria for prosecution decisions are not clear to the public.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Conduct a survey or a focus group to measure the public understanding and awareness of the NPA's prosecution decisions and criteria.
Why did this occur (3)?	There is no mandatory transparency protocol in place.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Review and implement the best practices and standards for transparency and accountability in prosecution decisions, such as the Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors and the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct.
Why did this occur (4)?	Concerns about sensitive information being misused or misunderstood.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Identify and assess the risks and challenges of disclosing sensitive information, such as

	confidentiality, security, and privacy.
Root Cause:	Inadequate communication and engagement with the public.
POINT 2: PRIVATE FUNDING DILEMMA	
Why did this occur (1)?	The NPA's desire to receive private sector funding raises concerns about potential conflicts of interest, as it may have to prosecute its donors, thereby compromising its objectivity.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Investigate and disclose the sources and amounts of private sector funding received by the NPA and the potential or actual conflicts of interest arising from them.
Why did this occur (2)?	The NPA seeks additional funding from the private sector.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Compare the NPA's budget and expenditure with similar organisations or countries, and justify the need for additional funding.
Why did this occur (3)?	Government funding is insufficient to cover operational costs.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Calculate and report the operational costs and funding gaps of the NPA and the impact of funding shortfalls on the NPA's performance and service delivery.
Why did this occur (4)?	Budget allocation processes are not prioritising NPA's needs adequately.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Review and improve the budget allocation processes and criteria and ensure the participation and representation of the NPA in the budget formulation and approval stages.
Root Cause:	Inadequate government funding and budget allocation.
POINT 3: PERFORMANCE DECLINE	
Why did this occur (1)?	Conviction rates are dropping.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Compare the conviction rates of the NPA over the past five years.
Why did this occur (2)?	Insufficient resources and training for prosecutors.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Assess the availability and quality of resources and training for prosecutors.
Why did this occur (3)?	Increased complexity in cases being prosecuted, requiring specialised skills.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Analyse the types and characteristics of cases the NPA prosecutes.
Why did this occur (4)?	Lack of collaboration with other law enforcement agencies.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Review the communication and coordination mechanisms of the NPA with other law enforcement agencies.
Root Cause:	Resource constraints and lack of advanced training.
POINT 4: POLITICAL INTERFERENCE AND INDEPENDENCE	
Why did this occur (1)?	The NPA's independence is compromised until it becomes a fully autonomous entity controlling its budget and administrative services.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Examine the legal and institutional framework of the NPA and its relationship with the executive

	branch.
Why did this occur (2)?	The Minister's "final responsibility" over the NPA is seen as a threat to its independence.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Evaluate the extent and impact of the Minister's involvement in the NPA's affairs.
Why did this occur (3)?	The appointment and removal of the NDPP is subject to political influence.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Review the history and criteria of the NDPP's appointment and removal processes.
Why did this occur (4)?	The NDPP has the power to intervene in any prosecution decision, which may be abused for political reasons.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Investigate the cases and outcomes of the NDPP's interventions.
Root Cause:	Lack of clear and consistent legal safeguards for the NPA's independence.
POINT 5: HIGH-LEVEL CORRUPTION PROSECUTION CHALLENGES	
Why did this occur (1)?	The NPA has struggled to deliver results in high-level corruption cases.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Compare the number and success rate of high-level corruption cases prosecuted by the NPA with other countries or regions.
Why did this occur (2)?	The NPA faces political pressure and interference in pursuing high-level corruption cases.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Identify the sources and forms of political pressure and interference in the NPA's work.
Why did this occur (3)?	The NPA lacks sufficient capacity and expertise to handle complex and sophisticated high-level corruption cases.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Assess the skills and resources of the NPA's specialised units, such as the AFU and the SCCU.
Why did this occur (4)?	The NPA has a low level of cooperation and coordination with other law enforcement agencies, international actors, and institutions.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Review the communication and collaboration mechanisms of the NPA with other law enforcement agencies and international actors and institutions.
Root Cause:	Political interference and resource constraints.
POINT 6: IMPACT OF STATE CAPTURE	
Why did this occur (1)?	The devastating effects of state capture have significantly impacted the NPA.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Analyse the findings and recommendations of the Zondo Commission of Inquiry into State Capture.
Why did this occur (2)?	State capture has eroded the integrity and credibility of the NPA and its leadership.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Examine the allegations and evidence of corruption and maladministration within the NPA and its leadership.
Why did this occur (3)?	State capture has undermined the NPA's ability to perform its constitutional mandate and uphold the rule of law.
Confirmation Required?	Yes

Method:	Evaluate the impact of state capture on the NPA's prosecution decisions and outcomes.
Why did this occur (4)?	State capture has damaged the public trust and confidence in the NPA and the criminal justice system.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Conduct a survey or a focus group to measure the public perception and satisfaction of the NPA and the criminal justice system.
Root Cause:	State capture and corruption.
POINT 7: RAMPANT VIOLENT AND ORGANISED CRIME	
Why did this occur (1)?	The NPA is dealing with widespread violent and organised crime.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Collect and analyse the statistics and trends of violent and organised crime in South Africa.
Why did this occur (2)?	The NPA faces challenges securing convictions and sentences for violent and organised crime offenders.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Examine the factors and challenges that affect the NPA's prosecution of violent and organised crime cases, such as witness intimidation, evidence tampering, and plea bargaining.
Why did this occur (3)?	The NPA has limited resources and capacity to deal with the high volume and complexity of violent and organised crime cases.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Assess the availability and quality of resources and capacity for the NPA's specialised units, such as the Directorate of Priority Crime Investigation and the Organised Crime Unit.
Why did this occur (4)?	The NPA has insufficient cooperation and coordination with other law enforcement agencies, international actors, and institutions in combating violent and organised crime.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Review the communication and collaboration mechanisms of the NPA with other law enforcement agencies and international actors and institutions in combating violent and organised crime.
Root Cause:	Resource constraints and lack of cooperation.
POINT 8: ELECTRICITY SUPPLY ISSUES (LOAD-SHEDDING)	
Why did this occur (1)?	The NPA has been challenged by electricity supply constraints.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Monitor and record the frequency and duration of power outages affecting the NPA's offices and facilities.
Why did this occur (2)?	Electricity supply constraints disrupt the NPA's operations and productivity.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Measure and report the impact of power outages on the NPA's operations and productivity, such as delays, cancellations, and losses.
Why did this occur (3)?	Electricity supply constraints affect the NPA's ability to provide quality services and ensure justice.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Evaluate the effect of power outages on the NPA's service delivery and justice outcomes, such as customer satisfaction, case backlog, and conviction rate.

Why did this occur (4)?	Electricity supply constraints are caused by the poor performance and mismanagement of Eskom, the state-owned power utility.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Investigate the causes and consequences of Eskom's poor performance and mismanagement, such as ageing infrastructure, maintenance issues, corruption, and debt.
Root Cause:	Eskom's poor performance and mismanagement.

POINT 9: WORKFORCE INSTABILITY AND MORALE ISSUES

Why did this occur (1)?	The NPA has faced labour volatility, numerous vacancies, and low staff morale.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Collect and analyse the data and indicators of the NPA's workforce stability and morale, such as turnover rate, vacancy rate, absenteeism rate, and employee satisfaction survey.
Why did this occur (2)?	The NPA has experienced a loss of skilled and experienced prosecutors due to resignations, retirements, and transfers.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Identify and examine the reasons and factors influencing the NPA's prosecutors to leave the organisation, such as career opportunities, working conditions, remuneration, and recognition.
Why did this occur (3)?	The NPA has difficulty attracting and retaining qualified and competent prosecutors due to a lack of incentives and support.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Assess the availability and effectiveness of the NPA's incentives and support for its prosecutors, such as training, mentoring, performance appraisal, and feedback.
Why did this occur (4)?	The NPA has a low level of organisational culture and climate that fosters motivation, engagement, and commitment among its prosecutors.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Evaluate the quality and characteristics of the NPA's organisational culture and climate, such as vision, values, leadership, communication, and teamwork.
Root Cause:	Lack of incentives and support for prosecutors.

POINT 10: PUBLIC CONFIDENCE EROSION

Why did this occur (1)?	The NPA's credibility and effectiveness are threatened by declining public confidence.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Conduct a survey or a focus group to measure the public perception and trust of the NPA and its performance.
Why did this occur (2)?	The public confidence in the NPA is eroded by the negative media coverage and public opinion of the NPA and its actions.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Monitor and analyse the media coverage and public opinion of the NPA and its actions, such as tone, sentiment, and accuracy.
Why did this occur (3)?	The negative media coverage and public opinion of the NPA are influenced by the allegations and evidence of corruption and maladministration within the NPA and its leadership.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Investigate and verify the allegations and evidence of corruption and maladministration within

	the NPA and its leadership and take appropriate actions to address them.
Why did this occur (4)?	The allegations and evidence of corruption and maladministration within the NPA and its leadership are caused by the lack of accountability and oversight mechanisms for the NPA and its leadership.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Review and strengthen the accountability and oversight mechanisms for the NPA and its leadership, such as the Code of Conduct, the Ethics Committee, the Disciplinary Committee, and the Inspectorate of Prosecutions.
Why did this occur (5)?	The lack of accountability and oversight mechanisms for the NPA and its leadership is caused by the weak and ambiguous legal and institutional framework governing the NPA and its leadership.
Confirmation Required?	Yes
Method:	Review and amend the legal and institutional framework governing the NPA and its leadership, such as the Constitution, the NPA Act, and the Prosecution Policy.
Root Cause:	Weak and ambiguous legal and institutional framework.

4.8.1.2 Fishbone diagram

Commonly referred to as "Fish Bone", "Ishikawa", "Fishikawa", "Herringbone", or "Cause-and-Effect diagram", the Fishbone diagram is a tool for analysing process dispersion. Kaoru Ishikawa developed it, hence the name "Ishikawa Diagram". The term "Fishbone Diagram" is derived from the visual resemblance of the diagram to a fish skeleton. This diagram is instrumental in illustrating the primary and secondary causes leading to an effect or symptom (American Society for Quality (ASQ), 2023a:1).

The fishbone diagram is a visual tool for cause-and-effect analysis, commonly used to identify and analyse the potential root causes of a specific event or problem; it facilitates the structuring of brainstorming sessions by categorising ideas into functional groups (Tague, 2005:247).

The Fishbone diagram has numerous variations that integrate additional elements; these variations encompass (Manchidi, 2024):

***Cause Enumeration diagram*:**	The 'Cause Enumeration Diagram' is a specific type of the conventional fishbone diagram, with its primary emphasis on identifying potential causes of a problem. This instrument is utilised for a systematic examination of various elements within a system that could potentially lead to a problem. The distinctive value of the 'Cause Enumeration Diagram' is found in its usefulness in problem-solving initiatives. It assists in the detection and correction of issues related to system components, interactions, and efficiency, thus serving as an essential tool in improving system performance. The goal is not just to fix the symptoms of the problem but to address the root causes to prevent it from happening again.
***Process Fishbone*:**	The 'Process Fishbone' is a specialised variant of the traditional fishbone diagram, with its primary focus being on processes. This tool is employed to carry out a systematic analysis of various factors within a process that could

	potentially contribute to a problem. The unique value of the 'Process Fishbone' lies in its utility in process improvement initiatives. It aids in the identification and rectification of issues pertaining to process flow, sequence, and efficiency, thereby serving as an indispensable tool in enhancing process performance.
***Time-delay Fishbone*:**	The 'Time-delay Fishbone' is a specific type of the conventional fishbone diagram, with its primary emphasis on time delays. This instrument is utilised for a systematic examination of various elements within a process that could potentially lead to time delays. The distinctive value of the 'Time-delay Fishbone' is found in its usefulness in process enhancement initiatives. It assists in the detection and correction of issues related to process flow, sequence, and efficiency that cause time delays, thus serving as an essential tool in improving process performance and reducing the time taken for a process to complete. It can benefit industries where time efficiency is crucial, such as manufacturing, logistics, and service. By identifying and addressing the root causes of time delays, organisations can streamline their processes, improve productivity, and ultimately deliver better value to their customers or stakeholders; this makes the 'Time-delay Fishbone' an invaluable tool for any organisation looking to optimise their operations and reduce waste.
***CEDAC*:**	The 'CEDAC (Cause-and-Effect Diagram with the Addition of Cards)' is a specific type of the conventional fishbone diagram, with its primary emphasis on identifying and analysing causes and effects. This tool is utilised for a systematic examination of various elements within a process that could potentially lead to a problem. The distinctive value of the 'CEDAC' is found in its usefulness in problem-solving initiatives. It assists in the detection and correction of issues related to cause-and-effect relationships, thus serving as an essential tool in improving process performance. The 'CEDAC' uses a fishbone diagram where each 'bone' signifies a cause category, with cards noting specific causes. The fishbone's head represents the problem. This method promotes in-depth root cause analysis and visualises cause-problem relationships, enhancing its effectiveness with methodologies like Lean or Six Sigma.
***Desired-result Fishbone*:**	Instead of stating a problem, state a desired result. Then brainstorm ways to achieve the result. Or, state the desired result as a question, such as "How can we achieve our goal?" (Tague, 2005:250)
***Reverse Fishbone diagram*:**	The Reverse Fishbone Diagram, also referred to as the 'Backward Fishbone', 'Action and Effect', 'Solution Impact' or 'Solution Effect Diagrams', is a cause analysis tool that focuses on analysing the impacts of a change or identifying the potential causes of a desired outcome. While the conventional fishbone diagram identifies the causes of a problem, the Reverse Fishbone Diagram helps in understanding the effects or causes of a solution or change. The Reverse Fishbone Diagram is a valuable tool in various fields, including process enhancement initiatives, as it assists in the detection and correction of issues related to process flow, sequence, and efficiency, thus serving as an essential tool in improving process performance. The diagram consists of the following elements: (a) Proposed change: this is represented at the head of the fishbone diagram, and it could be a solution, improvement, or change being considered (b) Potential impact areas: these are the bones of the fishbone diagram and could be the usual People, Methods, Materials, Measurement, Machines, and Environment. Brainstorming is done to identify how the proposed change impacts these areas The Reverse Fishbone Diagram is a valuable tool for understanding the potential impacts of a change and can be used in various industries, including healthcare, manufacturing, and service sectors.

The development of a Fishbone diagram involves the following procedure or steps (ASQ, 2023b:1):
Required Materials: Marking pens and a flipchart or whiteboard.

Step 1: Establish a consensus on the problem statement (effect)
This statement should be written at the center-right of the flipchart or whiteboard, enclosed in a box, with a horizontal arrow pointing towards it.

Step 2: Brainstorm the major categories of causes for the problem
If this proves challenging, generic headings such as; Methods, Equipment (Machines), People (Manpower), Materials, Measurement, and Environment could be considered.

Step 3: Categorising causes — branching from the main arrow
Write the categories of causes as branches from the main arrow.

Step 4: Brainstorm all the possible causes of the problem
For each idea, the question “Why does this happen?” should be asked. The facilitator is advised to write each cause as a branch from its corresponding category. Causes can be written in multiple places if they relate to several categories.

Step 5: Again ask *"Why does this happen?"* about each cause
Sub-causes should be written, branching off from each cause. The question “Why?” should continue to be asked to generate more profound levels of causes. Multiple layers of branches can indicate causal relationships.

Step 6: Shifting focus — addressing sparse areas after idea exhaustion

Once all ideas have been exhausted by the group, the focus should shift to areas on the chart where ideas are sparse. The diagram starts with a problem, which is represented as the *"head"* of the fish. The *"bones"* branching off from the *"backbone"* represent the potential causes of the problem. These causes are often grouped into categories to help structure the analysis.

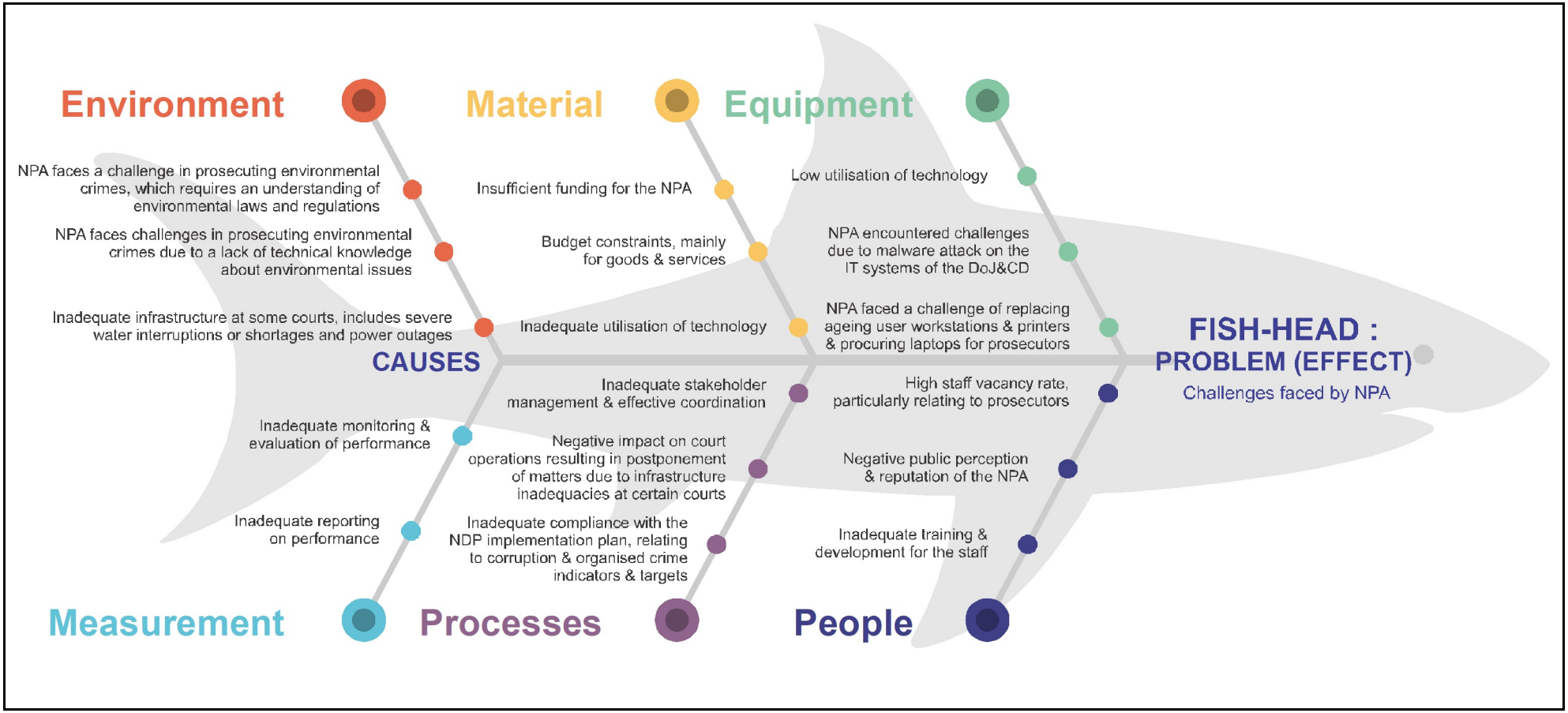


Figure 4.7 The Fishbone diagram

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

In the NPA study, drawing upon various NPA reports, namely the AR (2021/2022), APP (2022/2023), and the SP (2020-2025), a consolidated Fishbone diagram has been constructed; this diagram encapsulates some of the key challenges faced by the NPA:

Problem or Effect

(Fish head):

a) challenges faced by NPA of SA

People

(Backbone branch 1 - potential causes for an effect or problem):

b) there is a high staff vacancy rate, particularly relating to prosecutors, which is a recurring issue (NPA, 2022b:46; 2023b:38)
c) the NPA suffers from a negative public perception and reputation (NPA, 2020:18,37)
d) there is inadequate training and development for the staff (NPA, 2020:36; 2023b:2)

Processes

(Backbone branch 2 - potential causes for an effect or problem):

e) the NPA struggles with inadequate stakeholder management and effective coordination (NPA, 2020:33-34,36)
f) negative impact on court operations resulting in postponement of matters due to inadequacies of the existing infrastructure, including severe water interruptions or shortages and power outages at some courts (NPA, 2022b:21)
g) inadequate compliance with the National Development Plan (NDP) implementation plan, particularly concerning corruption and organised crime indicators and targets (NPA, 2022b:23-26; 2023b:12,19)

Measurement

(Backbone branch 3 - potential causes for an effect or problem) (NPA, 2023b:2):

h) monitoring and evaluation of performance within the NPA is inadequate
i) reporting on performance is also inadequate

Equipment

(Backbone branch 4 - potential causes for an effect or problem):

j) the utilisation of technology within the NPA is significantly inadequate (NPA, 2020:36,50)
k) the NPA encountered challenges due to malware attack on the IT systems of the DoJ&CD (see Section 4.3.3.4)
l) the NPA faced a challenge of replacing ageing user workstations and printers and procuring laptops for prosecutors (see Section 4.3.1.5 (vii))

Material

(Backbone branch 5 - potential causes for an effect or problem):

m) the NPA faces insufficient funding (NPA, 2020:36; 2022b:13)
n) budget constraints, mainly for goods and services, are a significant issue (NPA, 2022b:55)
o) the utilisation of technology within the NPA is significantly inadequate (NPA, 2020:50)

Environment

(Backbone branch 6 - potential causes for an effect or problem):

p) the NPA faces a challenge in prosecuting environmental crimes, which requires an understanding of environmental laws

and regulations

q) the NPA faces challenges in prosecuting environmental crimes due to a lack of technical knowledge about environmental issues

r) the existing infrastructure at some courts is inadequate, which includes severe water interruptions or shortages and power outages (NPA, 2022b:21).

The NPA grapples with challenges impacting its operations and image; operational issues arise from infrastructural inadequacies, non-compliance with the NDP, and poor performance monitoring. Technological difficulties, budget constraints, and insufficient funding exacerbate these problems. The NPA's prosecution of environmental crimes is hindered by a lack of technical knowledge and inadequate infrastructure (NPA, 2020:7-8,20; 2022b:13,17,21; 2023b:1-2).

In summary, the NPA's efficacy is compromised by issues across personnel, processes, performance measurement, equipment, funding, and environmental factors.

Through the identification of potential causes across various Fishbone categories, the NPA can formulate strategies to address these issues and enhance its overall performance; this information also enables the NPA to prioritise its efforts effectively and allocate resources optimally, thereby driving improvement in its operations and public perception.

Traditionally, the Fishbone diagram is used for internal strategic audits. However, it could potentially be adapted for external environmental analysis. The Fishbone diagram is commonly used in fields like quality management, product development, nursing, and healthcare, and even as a brainstorming and mind-mapping technique. For example, it could identify and analyse the potential causes of an external issue or trend impacting an organisation, although this is not its conventional application (Manchidi, 2024).

4.8.1.3 Root cause analysis: Problem Tree analysis (Identifying root causes) (NSG, 2019:46-47):

Analytical tools such as Problem Tree analysis can be used to create a clear understanding of problem areas related to the status quo. The Problem Tree analysis allows for a visual representation of relevant problems and their potential effects (Bright Hub, 2017:1). The principle of using this tool is that because problems are complex and usually encompass a range of causes, they should be thoroughly investigated and analysed so that all factors related to and impacting on a problem can be analysed. All factors related to a problem must be identified to determine the most appropriate possible solutions.

Developing the ToC comes from understanding root causes and helps to understand the issue being addressed. The key to identifying the outcome to which a contribution is being made, lies in understanding the core issue that is being addressed. The basis of the intervention logic and the ToC is an understanding of the issue. This is also called a diagnostic analysis. It determines the main causes of a problem and helps to find solutions. Problem Trees are a good tool to use in this instance to determine the root causes of a problem, and helps to find solutions when turned into a Solution Tree. This creates a visual image of the problem and creates pathways of change for possible solutions.

This process should be conducted in the following manner:

a) make use of small focus groups
b) ensure that there is adequate flip chart paper, coloured paper, Prestik and markers
c) the trunk presents the problem
d) the roots present the causes
e) the branches present consequences
f) there can be sub-roots and sub-branches
g) make use of strings to link causes and consequences
h) ensure that a rapporteur capture the process to enable the writing of a narrative
i) there will be a lot of discussion and debate.

It is important to be very specific in developing the Problem Tree. There are three basic steps to follow when developing the Problem Tree (NSG, 2019:47):

Step 1: Decide on the core problem (trunk of the tree)

The first step is to identify the problem that should be overcome. It may worth debating the core problem through a brainstorming exercise. A vague or broad problem will have too many causes, so it is important to identify the core problem.

Once the core problem has been identified, it should be written down in the middle of a flip chart so that there is sufficient space to identify causes and effects of this problem. In this way, *the problem becomes the 'trunk' of the tree*. If more than one core problem is identified, it may be best to develop a Problem Tree for each one.

Step 2: Identify causes and effects (roots and branches of the tree)

a) Identify the causes of the problem (roots of the tree)

Once the core problem has been identified, the next step is to consider what the direct causes of the problem are. These *causes become the roots of the tree*. Ask "Why does this happen?" to identify all possible causes. Continue to ask "Why?" to generate deeper levels of causes on an immediate and secondary level.

b) Identify the consequences (effects) of the causes (branches of the tree)

Consequences (effects) of the causes become the branches of the tree. Try and determine the effect of each cause by asking the question: What is the consequence/s of a cause? Again, delve deeper to determine immediate and secondary effects.

Step 3: Link the causes and effects

Once completed, it is important to review the sequence of causes and effects to make sure that they are clear and make logical sense. Causes and effects can be created on post-it notes or cards so that they can arranged logically. If there is more than one cause to an effect, these can be placed side by side.

Once the order or placements of causes and effects have been agreed to, they can be linked with vertical lines. Horizontal lines can be used to join related causes or effects. The result is a Problem Tree that outlines the cause and effect relationship between different levels.

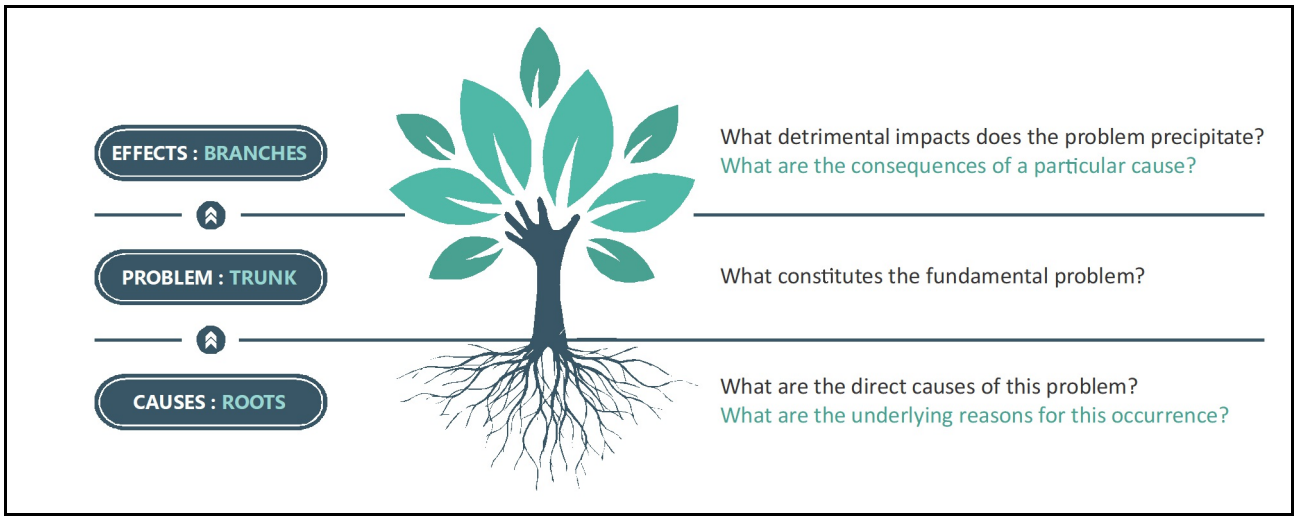


Figure 4.8 The Problem Tree Analysis

Traditionally, the 'Problem Tree Analysis' tool is used for internal strategic audits. However, it could potentially be adapted for external environmental analysis. For example, it could potentially be used in that context if the 'problem' being analysed pertains to an external issue impacting an organisation, although this is not its conventional application (Manchidi, 2024).

The Problem Tree Analysis allows for a comprehensive breakdown of a problem, its causes, and its effects, thereby enhancing its analysis. It facilitates a better understanding of the problem by disaggregating it into causes and consequences. It is also linked to other research and analysis tools like the Vester matrix or Solution Tree. 'Problem and Solution Trees' are similar to mind maps (Manchidi, 2024).

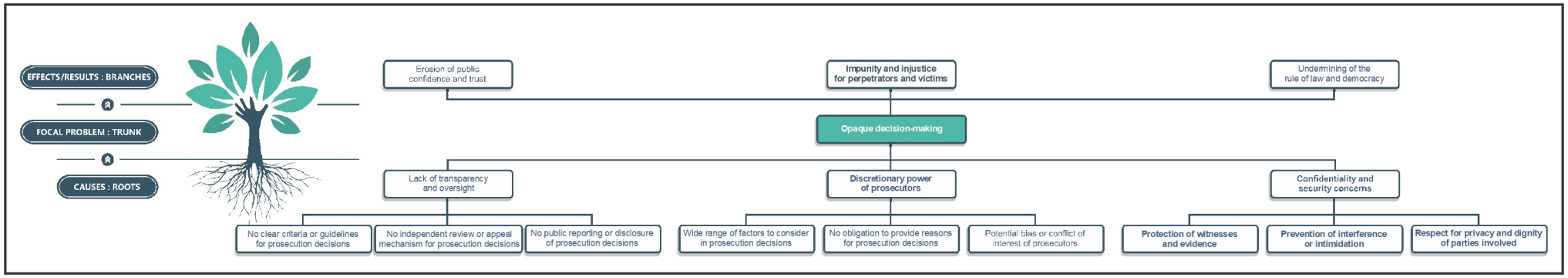
According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

The problem tree uses the '5 whys' technique to explore the root causes of each focal problem by asking 'why' five times, with each question delving deeper into the cause of the problem.

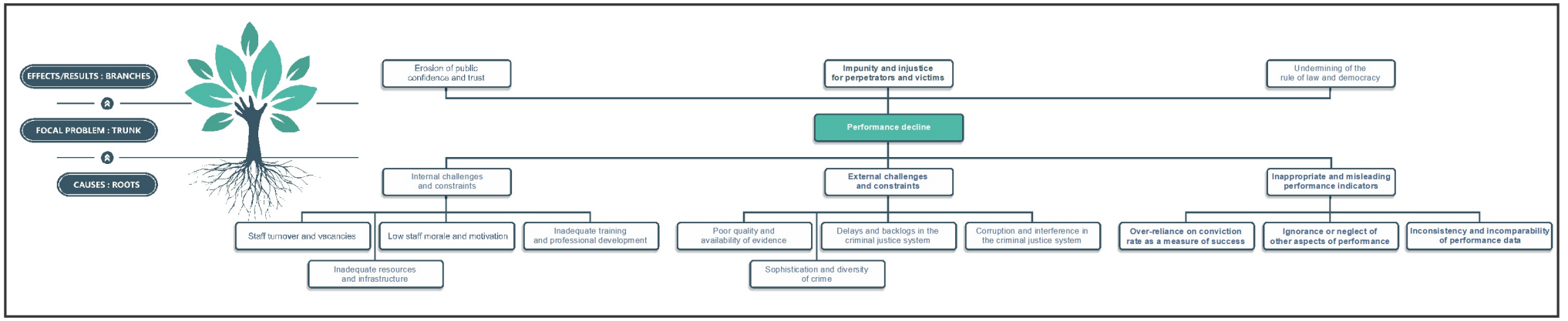
The problem tree can help understand the current situation and the future scenarios of the NPA and develop appropriate and meaningful objectives and strategies.

The problem tree for the NPA is presented below, based on the 5 focal problems identified:

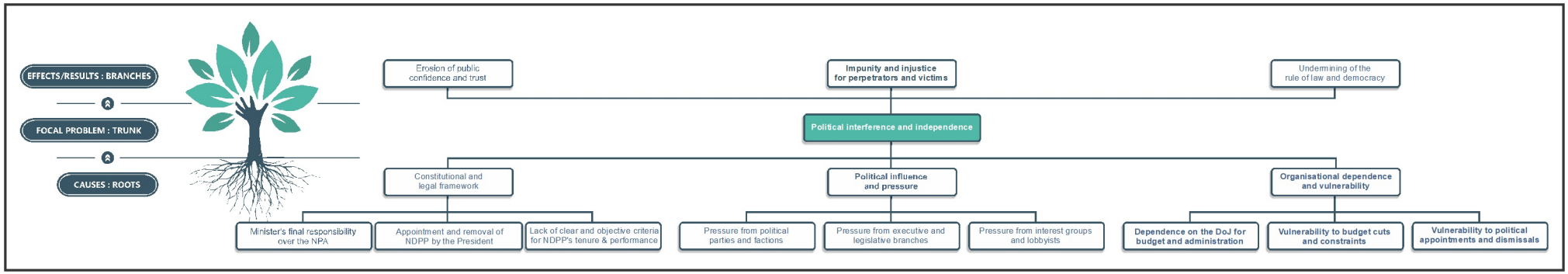
1. **Opaque decision-making**: The process of deciding not to prosecute is often shrouded in secrecy.



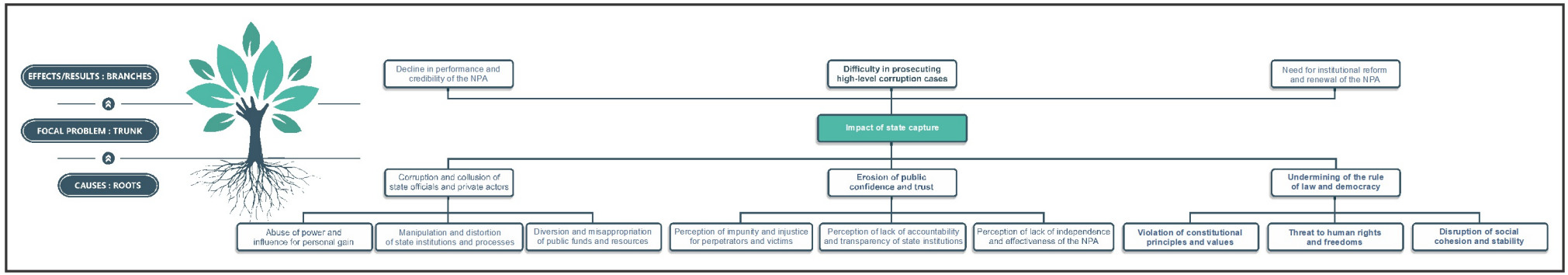
2. **Performance decline**: The NPA's performance, as measured by its conviction rate, has been on a downward trend, leading to questions about its efficiency and effectiveness.



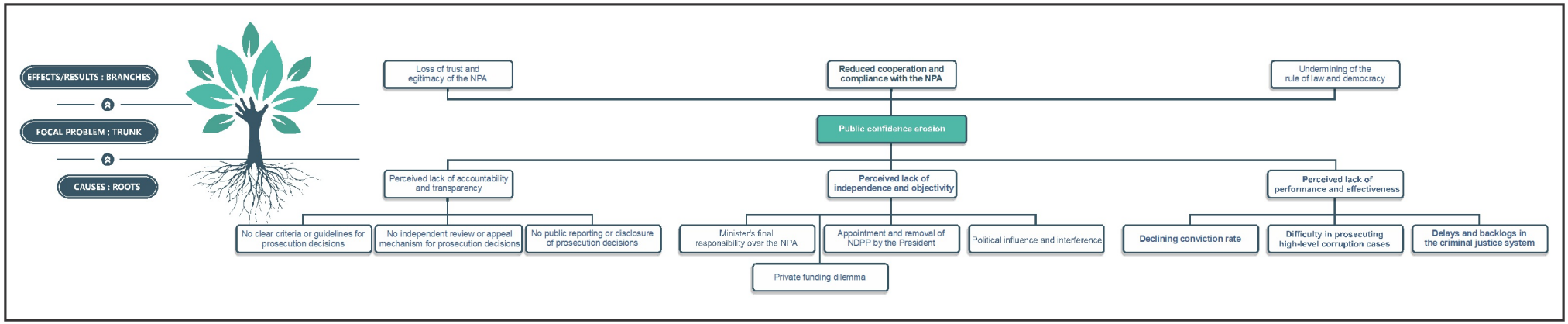
3. **Political interference and independence**: The NPA's independence is compromised until it becomes a fully autonomous entity controlling its own budget and administrative services. The Minister's "final responsibility" over the NPA is seen as a threat to its independence.



4. **Impact of state capture**: The devastating effects of state capture have significantly impacted the NPA.



5. **Public confidence erosion**: The NPA's credibility and effectiveness are threatened by declining public confidence. It is crucial for the NPA to address this issue to regain public trust and ensure justice in SA.



4.8.1.4 Root cause audit: Solution (Objective) Tree tool

'Solution Tree' tool provides a practical method for understanding a problem's structure by investigating its causes and effects. This approach often highlights the interconnected nature of a problem's causes, making it an essential first step in discovering mutually beneficial solutions. Therefore, the 'Solution Tree' tool not only assists in mapping out a problem's structure but also facilitates the identification of comprehensive solutions. These solutions address critical challenges and identify opportunities that can deliver multiple social, environmental, and economic benefits (Manchidi, 2024).

The Solution Tree tool aims to propose solutions that address the problems identified through the Problem Tree analysis. The development of a Solution Tree involves the following steps (NSG, 2019:49):

Step 1: Revise negative statements

Transform the negative statements from the Problem Tree into positive ones, indicating that the problem has been resolved; this should be done for the core problem, causes, and effects (consequences). In this way, the root problem is converted into an impact and/or ultimate outcome, and negative causes and effects are turned into positive causes and consequences.

Step 2: Convert positive causes into potential solutions

Transform positive causes into potential solutions that can be used to achieve the outcomes identified. These positive causes offer several separate or interconnected suggestions for addressing the problem.

Step 3: Identify effective solutions

Brainstorm solutions and review available information to determine the most influential solutions. This step is necessary as not all selected solutions may be feasible due to financial or other resource constraints. The goal is to stimulate discussion to identify potential solutions that may lead to the selection of interventions to resolve the identified problem.

There is no magic in developing a Solution Tree; it is simply a method of mapping out how one thing leads to another - from problems to solutions.

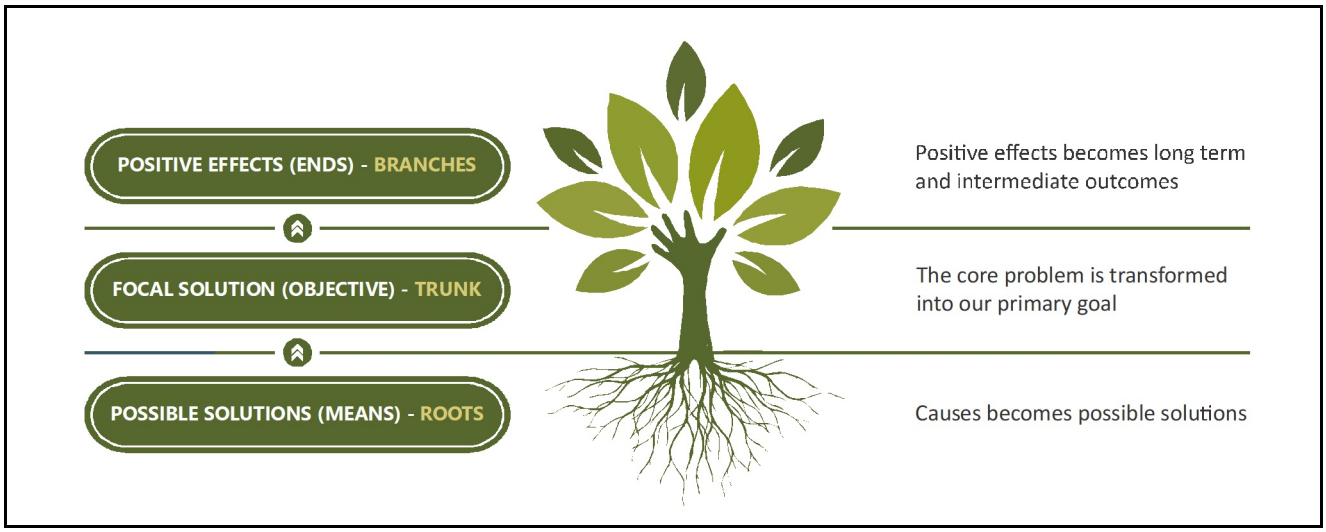


Figure 4.9 The Solution (Objective) Tree tool

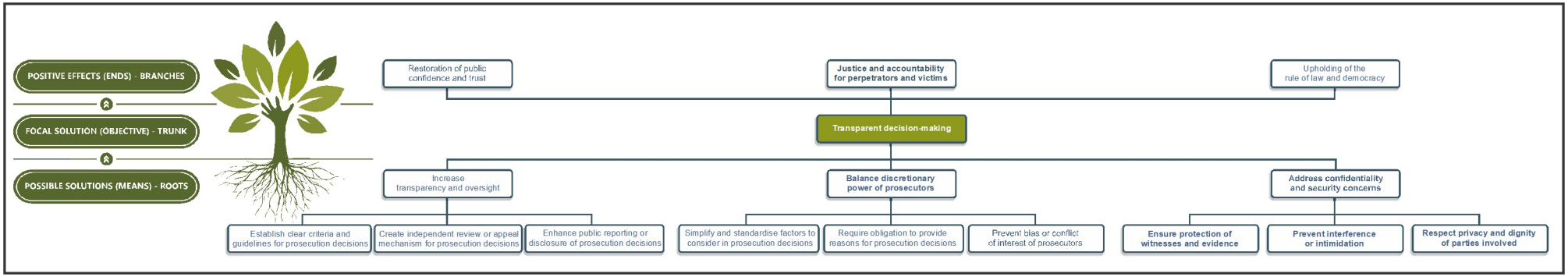
Traditionally, the 'Solution Tree' tool is used for internal strategic audits. However, it could potentially be adapted for external environmental analysis. For example, it could potentially be used in that context if the 'problem' being analysed pertains to an external issue impacting an organisation, although this is not its conventional application (Manchidi, 2024).

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

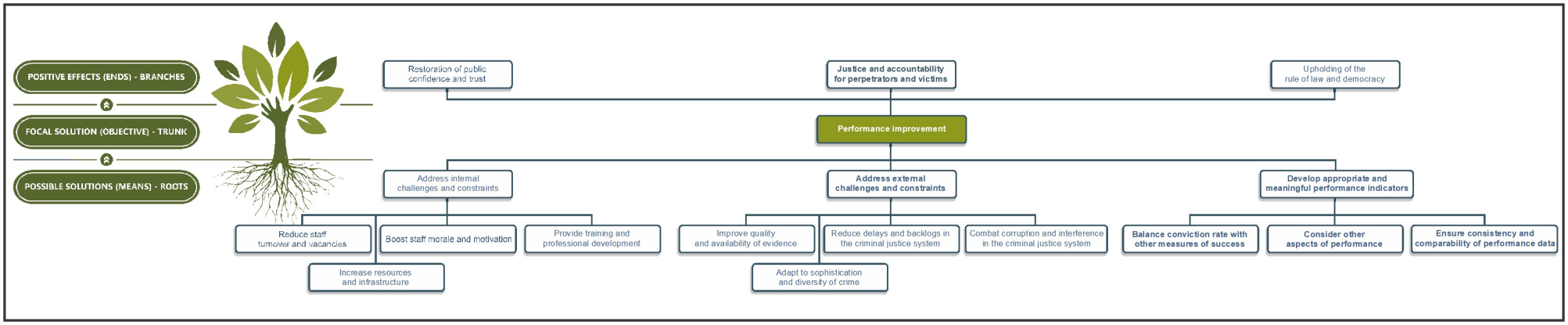
A solution tree can be derived from a problem tree by reversing the logic and transforming the negative statements into positive ones. The solution tree shows the clear and logical relationships between the means, the focal solution, and the end. The solution tree can help find the most effective and feasible solutions for the NPA's challenges and monitor and evaluate their outcomes and impacts.

The solution tree for the NPA is presented below, based on the 5 focal problems identified:

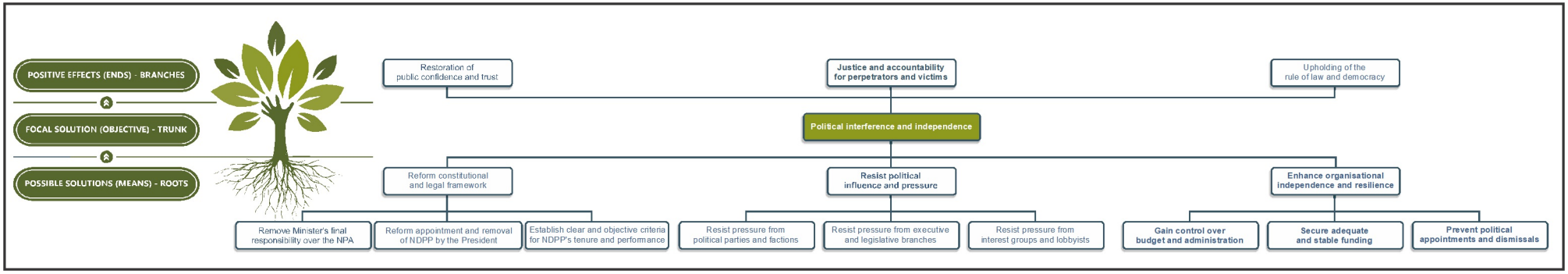
1. **Opaque decision-making**: The process of deciding not to prosecute is often shrouded in secrecy.



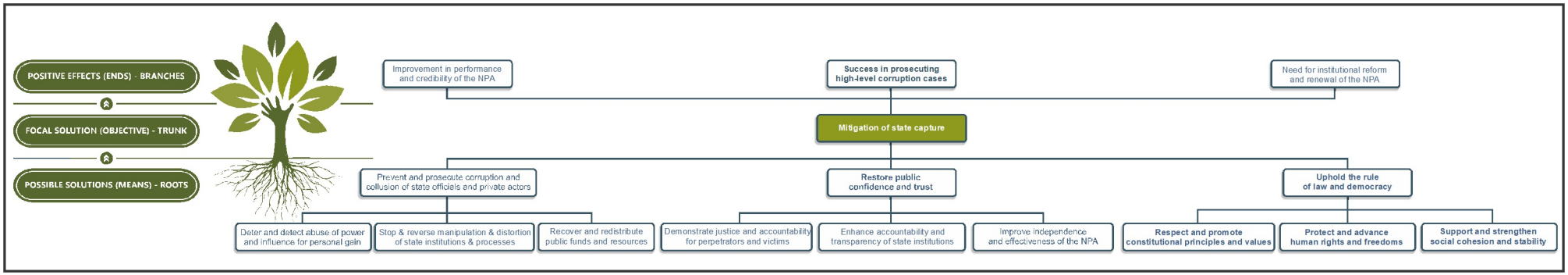
2. **Performance decline**: The NPA's performance, as measured by its conviction rate, has been on a downward trend, leading to questions about its efficiency and effectiveness.



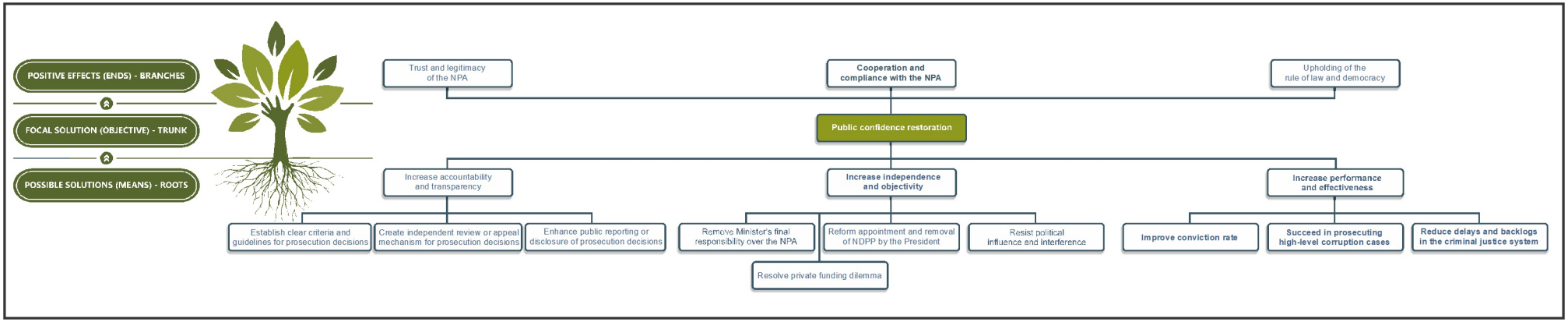
3. **Political interference and independence**: The NPA's independence is compromised until it becomes a fully autonomous entity controlling its own budget and administrative services. The Minister's "final responsibility" over the NPA is seen as a threat to its independence.



4. **Impact of state capture**: The devastating effects of state capture have significantly impacted the NPA.



5. **Public confidence erosion**: The NPA's credibility and effectiveness are threatened by declining public confidence. It is crucial for the NPA to address this issue to regain public trust and ensure justice in SA.



The focus shifts to the internal strategic audit of the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation in terms of its resources; and the one specific model that can be used for this purpose, namely, the Resource-Based View (Nieuwenhuizen, 2019:157).

4.8.1.5 Resources-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-based view (RBV) is a model used to conduct the internal strategic audit of the organisation in order to identify its internal strengths and weaknesses (see Section 4.5.2(iii)); it determines where the organisation can build its effectiveness, efficiency, and value to the public (Nieuwenhuizen, 2019:158). A central premise of this view is that organisations like the NPA operate on the basis of their resources and capabilities (Peteraf & Bergen, 2003:1027).

> RBV is a useful strategic tool for strategy practitioners. While strategising, they use the model to analyse an organisation's resource position – in other words, to determine whether a resource is a strength or weakness and formulate strategies to exploit the strengths and counter the weaknesses (UNISA, 2019a:67).

In the NPA study, the NPA could use its existing resources to develop a new initiative or improve an existing one; this could mean utilising its current human resources, experienced prosecutors and legal expertise, or technological infrastructure to enhance its operations or introduce a new service, or to develop strategies for that purpose. Similarly, a government entity like the Department of Health had to tap into some of its existing resources as it was developing and launching new public health initiatives (Manchidi, 2024).

RBV indicates an audit of the organisation that starts with a general internal strategic audit to determine its strengths, specifically as related to the sector in which it operates; important considerations for this audit are the following (Nieuwenhuizen, 2019:158-159):

a) *management's strategic role and the strategic direction* — this should reflect what is conveyed in the vision, mission, purpose and values to determine whether the organisation is clear about what it wants to achieve and how it wants to achieve it.

   In the NPA study, the NPA's vision, mission, purpose, and values guide its strategic direction; according to the NPA (2022b:7), the NPA is clear about its aim to ensure justice for victims of crime by prosecuting without fear, favour, or prejudice (Manchidi, 2024)

b) *core competencies* — core competencies, as identified, developed and protected by management that contribute to the competitive advantage of the organisation, should be considered.

   In the NPA study (NPA, 2022b:20), the NPA's core competencies include its ability to conduct criminal prosecutions on behalf of the state (Manchidi, 2024)

c) *resources* — the value, barriers to duplication, inimitability and rarity of the tangible and intangible resources of the organisation should be considered.

   In the NPA study, the NPA's resources include its personnel and infrastructure; these resources are valuable and rare, contributing to the NPA's unique position in SA's criminal justice system (Manchidi, 2024)

d) *capabilities* — the NPA's capabilities are determined by its organisational culture, the knowledge and skills of its employees, and its structure; these capabilities are valuable, hard to duplicate, and rare

e) *appropriability* — this refers to the ability of the organisation to retain the value it creates for its own benefit. The organisation also needs to determine who benefits from this added value. It needs to ensure the retention of key employees, the inimitability of intangible assets and an ownership structure that reinforces inimitability contribute to the core competencies of the organisation.

In the NPA study, the NPA retains the value it creates through its work; this value benefits the South African public by ensuring justice is served (Manchidi, 2024)

f) *managers* — In the NPA study, the NPA's leadership style and the establishment of the Investigating Directorate are in line with the organisation's strategy of effectively addressing high-profile and complex crimes (Bezuidenhout, 2021:1); this alignment is crucial for managers, as it demonstrates that their experience, strengths, and management style are in line with the overall goals and objectives of the organisation.

g) *public sector leaders and stakeholders (business owners and investors)* — this entails determining whether they are aware of and possess the resources, capabilities, and core competencies required for success in their organisation.

In the NPA study, the 'business owners' would be the South African government, which provides the resources necessary for the NPA to function effectively (Manchidi, 2024)

h) *operational issues* — aspects such as revenue, assets and location should be considered in order to determine whether the management thereof are appropriate for the specific organisation.

In the NPA study, the NPA faces various operational issues in its role as a government entity responsible for state prosecutions; these issues can be categorised into three main areas: human resources, technology, and collaboration (Manchidi, 2024):

i. *Human Resources (workforce capacity)*: the NPA has a significant workload, with a high number of cases to handle and limited resources; this can lead to delays in the prosecution process and a backlog of cases, impacting the efficiency and effectiveness of the NPA's operations

ii. *technology (information management)*: the NPA relies on technology for case management, evidence gathering, and communication. However, outdated systems and limited access to information can hinder its ability to effectively handle cases and collaborate with other stakeholders

iii. *collaboration (interagency cooperation)*: the NPA works closely with other government entities, such as the South African Police Service (SAPS), to investigate and prosecute cases; however, challenges in coordination and communication between these organisations can impact the efficiency and effectiveness of the NPA's operations

In the NPA study, the NPA faces operational issues in the areas of human resources, technology, and collaboration. By addressing these challenges, the NPA can enhance its ability to effectively carry

out its responsibilities, ensuring that those who commit crimes are charged and held responsible for their actions (Manchidi, 2024)

i) *employees* — the NPA, like any public sector or government entity, relies on its employees to carry out its mandate. The type and level of employees within the organisation should be evaluated to determine whether they possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience required for the organisation;

In the NPA study, for example, the NPA would need legal experts with a deep understanding of South African law and its application (Manchidi, 2024)

j) *organisational culture* — the culture within the organisation is also a crucial factor; it should be assessed to determine whether the shared values and beliefs of the people in the organisation are conducive to improved performance for all stakeholders. A culture that promotes integrity, transparency, and accountability.

In the NPA study, for example, would be beneficial for a public sector entity like the NPA (Manchidi, 2024).

A positive assessment of these aspects (management's strategic role and core competencies) within the organisation can lead to a sustainable competitive advantage.

Although the NPA does not have competitors in the traditional sense, it does strive for efficiency and effectiveness in its role within the justice system. This can ensure value to its clients - the South African public - and subsequently lead to superior performance in terms of the organisation's sustainability and attainment of its goals (Manchidi, 2024).

Although the RBV is a widely accepted and invaluable framework for strategy formulation, some limitations have been identified, as follows (Nieuwenhuizen, 2019:159):

i. the RBV has not yet been tested and proven empirically (Arend, 2006:418). Daellenbach and Rouse (2007:14) suggest that an important requirement is that the RBV be measured and analysed at the resource level, implying the need for longitudinal studies.

In the NPA study, this could mean conducting repeated observations of the same variables over different points in time to measure the organisation's performance; this would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how resources contribute to the NPA's effectiveness (Manchidi, 2024)

ii. the RBV, while insightful, does not provide explicit guidance on how to enhance operational efficiency (increase profitability) or develop further strategic (competitive) advantages.

In the NPA study (NPA, 2022b:37), this translates to a lack of direction on improving effectiveness in international cooperation in criminal matters, a complex and specialised field (Manchidi, 2024)

The RBV falls short in offering strategies to navigate these complexities and enhance efficiency in the investigation and prosecution of cases

iii. the RBV's lack of future orientation and inability to differentiate between valuable and less valuable resources can result in unpredictability.

In the NPA study, this might mean challenges in prioritising resource allocation; for example, it might be unclear whether more value is derived from investing in the NPA (2022b:22) campaigns to educate the public on the services provided and roles played by the community prosecutor are conducted as part of awareness raising and educating citizens on prosecution and crime prevention (Manchidi, 2024).

4.8.1.6 VRIO (Value, Rarity, Inimitability and Organisation) framework, Nieuwenhuizen (2019:155-156): Capabilities and resources have the potential to become core competencies and these core competencies can result in competitive advantage, but only if they meet certain conditions. A resource-based framework for analysis of an organisation like the NPA will determine the resources and capabilities that will result in core competencies.

For resources and capabilities to become the core competencies in the NPA, they should be valuable (V), rare (R), inimitable and non-substitutable (I), and exploitable by the organisation (O), creating (VRIO). Each of these measures can be used to test the strategic value of resources and capabilities within the NPA and are discussed below in more detail.

In the NPA study, the NPA's ability to effectively prosecute high-profile cases could be considered a valuable and rare resource; this capability is difficult to imitate and substitute due to the specialised legal expertise required, making it inimitable and non-substitutable. If the NPA can exploit this capability effectively, it could become a core competency, contributing to the NPA's mandate of ensuring justice for the South African public (Manchidi, 2024).

Value (V)

Valuable (V) resources imply that the organisation has the ability to transform a resource into a service at a lower expenditure or with a higher value to the public. Capabilities are valuable when they enable an organisation like the NPA to implement a strategy that improves efficiency and effectiveness. To be valuable, the capability must increase efficiency by using fewer resources to generate maximum outputs, or by using the same resources to generate more outputs.

In the NPA study, an information system could reduce the number of prosecutors required or increase the number of cases that the same number of prosecutors can handle (Manchidi, 2024).

To be valuable, the capability must increase the effectiveness of the organisation, meaning that the organisation should increasingly be *'doing the right things'* – formulating and pursuing appropriate organisational goals. Value is dependent on the type of strategy implemented,

for example, a *low-cost strategy* of a specialist South African public entity, such as SARS, that offers tax services at a lower cost than conventional entities. Thus, SARS attracts more taxpayers, which is valuable as this contributes to higher revenue for the government. Another example is value created by a *differentiating strategy* (Manchidi, 2024).

For example, South African National Parks (SANParks), the luxury parks in the group of national parks, generate additional income for the group from visitors who require specialist services and who are prepared to pay for such services. SANParks transform a resource into a service (park accommodation) with a higher value to its visitors (Manchidi, 2024).

An organisation like NPA decides on a strategy for a specific unit that will add value to the organisation. In the public sector, this value can be a measure such as public satisfaction (Manchidi, 2024).

Rarity (R)

A valuable resource and/or capability that an organisation owns that other organisations do not have, and that is not generally available in the broader ecosystem, is considered rare (R).

In the NPA study, this could be its unique mandate to conduct criminal prosecutions on behalf of the state , a role that no other entity in SA can perform (Manchidi, 2024).

The situation that arises when a few organisations have the same resource and/or capability, creates competitive parity.

In the NPA study, this concept may not apply in the to the NPA as it does not have competitors in the traditional sense; the NPA is a unique entity within the South African public sector with a specific constitutional mandate (Manchidi, 2024).

This is because organisations can use identical resources to implement the same strategies and no organisation.

In the NPA study, it uses its resources to implement its strategy of ensuring justice by objectively and fairly prosecuting criminal offences. No other organisation in SA has the same resources or capabilities to implement this strategy, further highlighting the rarity and value of the NPA within the public sector (Manchidi, 2024).

Inimitability (I) and non-substitutability

In the NPA study, the NPA as a public sector entity, can be analysed through the lens of the *VRIO* framework, specifically focusing on *Inimitability (I)* and *non-substitutability* (Manchidi, 2024).

Inimitable capabilities and core competencies are indeed valuable, unique, and complex resources.

In the NPA study, these include (Clulow & Gerstman, 2007:21,25):

(a) intangible resources such as the NPA's (organisational) reputation, networks employed, public trust, and the intellectual property that the NPA might have, and (b) capabilities such as knowledge, the culture of the organisation, skills and experience also play a significant role (for example, the NPA's legal expertise, its commitment to justice, and the experience of its prosecutors are all part of its inimitable capabilities) (Manchidi, 2024).

These elements make it difficult for any other entity to replicate what the NPA is doing, thereby contributing to its unique position within SA's justice system (Manchidi, 2024). If it were easy to copy something valuable that an organisation started doing first, its competitors would soon follow, eroding any competitive advantage. However,

In the NPA study, it does not have competitors in the traditional sense; its role is constitutionally mandated, and its functions cannot be taken over or replicated by another entity. This further reinforces the inimitability of the NPA's capabilities, resources, and core competencies that will result in a sustained competitive advantage within SA's public sector landscape (Manchidi, 2024).

Inimitability is a key aspect of the NPA's strategic value; this is due to several factors (Imitation by other similar entities' is prevented if):

(a) they do not understand the reason for the organisation's success. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); the NPA's effectiveness in prosecuting criminal cases and upholding justice is a result of its unique combination of legal expertise, organisational knowledge, and public mandate, (b) they do not have the same unique historical conditions. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); as an organisation established by the Constitution of SA, it has a unique role and authority that cannot be replicated by other entities, and (c) the cause of effectiveness is uncertain due to social complexity. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); the trust between the NPA and its stakeholders, teamwork within the organisation, and informal relationships such as networks with law enforcement agencies contribute to its success.

Non-substitutability

is also part of the inimitability of the organisation's resources and capabilities. In the NPA study, there are no equivalent resources or substitutes that can fulfil the same role as the NPA in SA's justice system (Manchidi, 2024). The strategic value of the organisation increases when it is difficult for others to substitute it and also when it is difficult for them to identify, discern or observe it. The specific knowledge of the organisation and trust relationships are not easily observable and therefore difficult to copy (Hoskisson, Hitt, Ireland & Harrison, 2008:109-110).

The NPA's inimitability and non-substitutability contribute to its strategic value within SA's public sector. These aspects make it a unique and indispensable entity in upholding justice in the country (Manchidi, 2024).

Organisation (O) (Exploitable by the organisation)

The organisation's structure and systems (O) should be suitable for a specific competitive advantage. If an organisation like the NPA cannot exploit a resource or capability, it will have little value. Managerial awareness, of both the potential competitive advantage and the action required to realise it, is essential (Harrison & St John, 2014:48).

In the NPA study, the NPA's specialised legal expertise could be a potential competitive advantage. However, this advantage can only be realised if the NPA's organisational structure and systems are designed to effectively utilise this expertise. This might involve having efficient case management systems, clear lines of communication and decision-making authority, and ongoing training and development programmes for prosecutors (Manchidi, 2024).

Similarly, another public sector entity, the SARS, also needs to ensure that its organisational structure and systems are suitable for its specific competitive advantage. For example, SARS's ability to efficiently process tax returns and combat tax evasion could be a potential competitive advantage. However, this can only be realised if SARS has effective data management systems, robust internal auditing processes, and a skilled workforce (Manchidi, 2024).

4.8.1.7 VRIOLU (VRIO, Large, and Unmet) framework

The extended VRIO framework, referred to as 'VRIOLU', provides a comprehensive evaluation of resources and capabilities from multiple perspectives. In the NPA study, this framework can be applied as follows (Hinterhuber, 2013:808; Nieuwenhuizen, 2019:171):

(a) from the company perspective, it evaluates the **Value (V)** to the organisation and the ability of the **Organisation (O)** to exploit the resources and capabilities.

In the NPA study, the NPA's legal expertise and authority to institute criminal proceedings are valuable resources that enable it to fulfil its mandate effectively (Manchidi, 2024),

(b) from the perspective of competitiveness, it considers the **Rareness (R)** and **Inimitability (I)** and the availability of resources and capabilities to competitors.

In the NPA study, its resources and capabilities are unique and cannot be replicated by other entities as it is the only body in SA with a mandate to conduct criminal prosecutions (Manchidi, 2024), and

(c) from the perspective of customers, (or In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); citizens, it evaluates the size of the societal segment) and determines whether it is **Large (L) enough** to cover the fixed costs of the organisation. It also evaluates the extent to which resources and capabilities allow the organisation to address **Unmet (U)** societal needs.

In the NPA study, the NPA's societal segment is large enough as it covers all citizens requiring justice services. Furthermore, by addressing unmet needs such as effective crime prosecution and justice for victims, the NPA can enhance public trust in the justice system (Manchidi, 2024).

Capturing the value generated by resources and capabilities (Nieuwenhuizen, 2019:170):

Even when resources are inherently valuable and comply with the VRIO principles, it does not necessarily mean that the organisation will have the capacity to take advantage of and benefit from them.

In the NPA study, the NPA has a significant annual budget of R4,353 billion (2021-22) and a workforce of 4,967 employees (NPA, 2022b:55). However, if the NPA cannot capture sufficient value to justify its investment in developing unique resources and capabilities, it will not be able to achieve its mandate, this is known as *appropriability* (Manchidi, 2024).

Dynamic capabilities involve the ability to integrate, build and reconfigure internal and external processes and competencies to address a rapidly changing environment.

In the NPA study, the NPA has established the Investigating Directorate (ID) in April 2019; its mandate is to investigate and prosecute high-profile and complex crimes (Bezuidenhout, 2021:1). It is this ability to adapt capabilities that is the ultimate basis of sustainable advantage for public sector entities like the NPA (Manchidi, 2024).

Resources and capabilities are valuable when they enable organisations (like the NPA) to deliver services to citizens at a level they are willing to accept; the value of resources and capabilities is indirectly determined by the following:

(a) the external environment, including demand and the potential of the market. In the NPA study, all citizens have a right to enjoy a life free from fear and free from crime (NPA, 2022a:1), (b) changes in the external environment, including technology, the structure of a sector and preferences of citizens. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); changes in crime patterns or legal frameworks may necessitate changes in how the NPA operates, (c) differences in resources of organisations. In the NPA study (Manchidi,

2024); unlike other public sector entities, the NPA has unique resources such as State Advocates and Public Prosecutors, and (d) value as determined by either lower operational cost than other public sector entities or increased efficiency, or a combination of the two. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); efficient prosecution processes can lead to cost savings for the NPA and improved service delivery for citizens.

While competitive advantage is crucial to an organisation, it does not necessarily guarantee superior performance on its own,

> especially in the context of a public sector or government entity (like the NPA), which does not operate for profit nor compete in the traditional sense (Manchidi, 2024);

for resources and capabilities to form the basis of a strategic advantage and ensure superior service delivery, the following factors are important:

(a) the resources and capabilities should be inherently valuable, as determined by the VRIO framework. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); the NPA possesses valuable resources and capabilities such as a dedicated team of legal experts, a strong legislative framework, and the authority to institute criminal proceedings; these resources are valuable as they enable the NPA to effectively carry out its mandate, (b) the resources and capabilities should enable the organisation to address market segments that are **Large enough (L)** to allow the organisation to generate sufficient financial returns. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); its *'market segment'* could be considered as *the South African population who require justice services*; this segment is large enough for the NPA to fulfil its mandate and contribute to societal wellbeing, and (c) the resources and capabilities should enable the organisation to identify and address an **Unmet (U)** need of customers; Unmet needs are defined as those needs of customers that are high in importance and insufficiently satisfied (Hinterhuber, 2013:803).

In the NPA study, unmet needs could be related to addressing crime effectively, ensuring justice for victims, and enhancing public trust in the justice system. By leveraging its resources and capabilities, the NPA can strive to meet these needs more effectively (Manchidi, 2024).

Participant responses on RQ5, Prompt 5.3: Which strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools should be used to audit the internal environment?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"Which strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools should be used to audit the internal environment?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (5.3), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- Only one participant (MM.2) mentioned the use of internal reports to scan the internal environment.
- The other two participants did not specify any framework or tool for scanning the internal environment, but implied the use of SWOT analysis, which is a tool that assesses both internal and external factors.
- Their understanding was generally vague and incomplete.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (5.3), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Nine participants (SM.1, SM.2, SM.3, SM.5, SM.6, SM.8, SM.9, SM.12, and SM.13) mentioned the use of various frameworks and tools to scan the internal environment, such as the Balanced Scorecard, the Theory of Change, the Fishbone diagram, the Root-Cause analysis, the Situational Analysis Report, and the SWOT analysis.
- The remaining four participants did not specify any framework or tool for scanning the internal environment, but suggested the involvement of key role players, the use of technology, and the alignment with the organisation's goals and vision.
- Their understanding was generally clear and comprehensive.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a more diverse and explicit understanding of the frameworks and tools for scanning the internal environment compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, 10 (62.5%) mentioned specific frameworks or tools for scanning the internal environment, while the remaining 6 (37.5%) implied their understanding of the frameworks or tools for scanning the internal environment. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, only 1 (33.33%) mentioned a specific tool for scanning the internal environment, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, 9 (69.23%) mentioned specific frameworks or tools for scanning the internal environment.

4.8.2 Tools for external strategic audit

4.8.2.1 Scenario Planning (NSG, 2019:41):

Scenario Planning is a planning tool that is often used for medium to long-term planning, or in preparation for the start of a new planning cycle. This tool is particularly useful for conducting a strategic audit or diagnostic analysis.

Scenario Planning is a key technique employed in the external strategic auditing process or diagnostic analysis; this process involves analysing the external factors of an organisation to understand uncertainty and achieve competitiveness; the primary objective of this auditing is to identify potential *opportunities* and *threats* (Manchidi, 2024).

Scenario Planning helps in building various plausible views of possible futures for the organisation; that is, scenarios allow for the articulation of various potential future pathways and the possible developments within each pathway. These scenarios can inform (or guide) adaptations to changing aspects within current environments. Scenario planning involves *"making decisions in the present with an understanding of their potential future outcomes"*

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024):

In the NPA study, the NPA is the body responsible for prosecuting criminal cases on behalf of the state and ensuring that justice is served fairly and impartially. The NPA faces many challenges, including political interference, corruption, lack of resources, public mistrust, and a high crime rate. These challenges affect the NPA's ability to fulfil its mandate and uphold the rule of law.

To help the NPA navigate these challenges and prepare for the future, scenario planning can generate alternative visions of what might happen in the next 10 to 20 years and how the NPA might adapt to them. Scenario planning is not about predicting the future but rather about creating plausible stories that reflect different assumptions and perspectives about the future.

The following steps are usually followed to conduct scenario planning:

Step 1: Define the scope, purpose and time horizon of the scenario planning exercise

This involves clarifying the focal question or issue that the scenarios will address and the time horizon and geographic scope they will cover.

In the NPA study, the scope of the scenario planning exercise is to explore how the NPA can achieve its strategic focus (objectives) in the next five years (2020-2025), based on the NPA SP 2020-2025. The strategic focus of the NPA is derived from its vision, mission, and values, as well as the NDP 2030 (NPA, 2020:22):

a) to ensure that justice is delivered to the victims of crime by prosecuting without fear, favour or prejudice
b) to contribute to the prevention of crime by ensuring that offenders are brought to justice and held accountable for their actions
c) to promote the rule of law and uphold the Constitution by exercising its functions independently and impartially
d) to enhance public confidence and trust in the NPA by demonstrating its integrity, professionalism, and accountability
e) to develop and retain a skilled, motivated, and diverse workforce that reflects the demographics of SA
f) to foster effective and efficient cooperation and coordination with other justice stakeholders and partners.

Step 2: Identify the key uncertainties and drivers of change

These factors or forces have a significant impact on the future of the focal issue and are uncertain or unpredictable. They can be external (social, economic, political, technological, environmental, or legal factors) or internal (organisational culture, values, capabilities, or resources).

In the NPA study, some of the key uncertainties and drivers of change that could affect the NPA's performance and environment are:

a) the impact of COVID-19 on the health, safety, and well-being of the NPA staff and the public, as well as on the functioning and accessibility of the courts and the criminal justice system
b) the level and nature of corruption and state capture in SA and the extent and effectiveness of the NPA's efforts to combat them
c) the trends and patterns of crime in SA and the challenges and opportunities for the NPA to prosecute and prevent them
d) the pace and scope of digital transformation and innovation in the NPA and the criminal justice system, and the implications for the NPA's operations, capabilities, and security
e) the state of human rights and the rule of law in SA, and the role and responsibility of the NPA to uphold and protect them
f) the effects of climate change and environmental degradation on SA, the potential for environmental crimes, and also, according to France-Presse (2022:1), the conflicts that arise from recent interest in offshore oil and gas exploration; these conflicts have been particularly highlighted by the recent court ruling in SA that banned the energy giant Shell from using seismic waves to explore for oil and gas off the Indian Ocean coast.

Step 3: Generate a set of scenarios based on different combinations of the key uncertainties and drivers of change

This involves assessing how much each driver affects the focal issue and how much variation or volatility there is in each driver. The most important and uncertain drivers are then selected as the basis for creating scenarios.

In the NPA study, based on the key uncertainties and drivers of change identified in Step 2, three scenarios for the NPA of South Africa in the next five years have been generated. Each scenario is based on a different combination of two axes: high vs low trust in the NPA and high vs low corruption in SA. The scenarios are:

Scenario 1: High trust, low corruption

This scenario describes a future where the NPA has successfully restored public confidence and trust in its independence, integrity, and effectiveness and has made significant progress in fighting corruption and state capture in SA.

a) the NPA has been able to prosecute high-profile and complex cases involving powerful individuals and entities and has secured convictions and recoveries of assets
b) the NPA has also improved its cooperation and coordination with other justice stakeholders and partners and has received adequate resources and support from the government and society
c) the NPA has leveraged digital transformation and innovation to enhance its operations, capabilities, and security and has adopted a proactive and preventive approach to crime
d) the NPA has upheld and protected human rights and the rule of law and has contributed to social justice and reconciliation in SA
e) the NPA has also addressed environmental crimes and conflicts and has promoted environmental awareness and sustainability.

Scenario 2: Low trust, high corruption

This scenario describes a future where the NPA has failed to regain public confidence and trust in its independence, integrity, and effectiveness and has faced increasing challenges and resistance in combating corruption and state capture in SA

a) the NPA has been unable to prosecute high-profile and complex cases involving powerful individuals and entities and has faced interference, intimidation, and sabotage
b) the NPA has also experienced poor cooperation and coordination with other justice stakeholders and partners and has suffered from insufficient resources and support from the government and society
c) the NPA has lagged in digital transformation and innovation and has faced operational, capability, and security gaps and risks
d) the NPA has adopted a reactive and ineffective approach to crime and has struggled to cope with the rising and changing crime trends and patterns

e) the NPA has compromised and violated human rights and the rule of law and has contributed to social unrest and division in SA
f) the NPA has also ignored environmental crimes and conflicts and has exacerbated environmental degradation and vulnerability.

Scenario 3: High trust, high corruption

This scenario describes a future where the NPA has managed to maintain public confidence and trust in its independence, integrity, and effectiveness but has faced persistent and pervasive corruption and state capture in SA.

a) the NPA has been able to prosecute some high-profile and complex cases involving powerful individuals and entities but has faced limitations and challenges in securing convictions and recoveries of assets
b) the NPA has also achieved mixed results in its cooperation and coordination with other justice stakeholders and partners and has received variable resources and support from the government and society
c) the NPA has embraced digital transformation and innovation but has also encountered ethical and legal dilemmas and controversies
d) the NPA has adopted a balanced and adaptive approach to crime but has also faced trade-offs and conflicts of interest
e) the NPA has upheld and protected human rights and the rule of law but has also faced criticism and scrutiny from some segments of society
f) the NPA has also addressed some environmental crimes and conflicts but has also faced competing and conflicting priorities and demands.

Step 4: Analyse the implications and responses for each scenario (Develop scenario logic)

Analyse implications: this involves evaluating how each scenario might affect the organisation's goals, strategies, opportunities, threats, strengths, weaknesses, etc. This can help identify common themes across scenarios and specific actions or responses that might be needed in each scenario.

Develop scenario logic: these are the underlying themes or narratives that define each scenario. They are usually expressed as combinations of two or three key drivers, such as *"high crime-low trust"* or *"low corruption-high innovation"*. Scenario logic should be diverse, challenging, and relevant to the focal issue.

Elaborate scenarios: this involves fleshing out the details of each scenario, such as what events might happen, who might be involved, how they might behave, what consequences might follow, and how they might affect the focal issue. Scenarios should be coherent, consistent, and credible stories that illustrate different aspects of the future.

In the NPA study, for each scenario, the implications and responses for the NPA have been analysed as follows:

Scenario 1: High trust, low corruption

In this scenario, the NPA has achieved its strategic objectives and has become a leading and respected institution in the criminal justice system and society. The implications and responses for the NPA are:

Opportunities — the NPA can capitalise on its reputation and credibility to pursue its mandate and vision and to influence and shape the criminal justice system and society. The NPA can also leverage its resources and partnerships to enhance its performance and impact and to address emerging and evolving challenges and opportunities in the environment

Challenges — the NPA can face high expectations and pressures from the public and the stakeholders to maintain and improve its standards and results and to deal with the remaining and new issues and problems in the environment. The NPA can also face complacency and resistance to change and innovation within its organisation and culture

Risks — the NPA can face threats and attacks from the remnants and resurgence of corruption and state capture networks and actors, who may seek to undermine and sabotage the NPA's achievements and progress. The NPA can also face unforeseen and disruptive events and shocks in the environment, such as natural disasters,

pandemics, cyberattacks, or social upheavals, that may challenge and overwhelm the NPA's capabilities and capacities

Assumptions — the NPA assumes that the government and the society will continue to support and empower the NPA to fulfil its mandate and vision and that the NPA will retain its independence and impartiality. The NPA also assumes that the environment will remain stable and conducive to the NPA's operations and activities and that the NPA will be able to anticipate and adapt to the changes and uncertainties in the environment

Strategic actions — the NPA should consolidate and sustain its achievements and progress and continue to pursue its mandate and vision with vigour and commitment. The NPA should also seek to improve and innovate its operations and activities and to foster a culture of excellence and learning within the organisation. The NPA should also monitor and evaluate its performance and impact and use the feedback and evidence to inform and update its strategic plan, budget, and performance indicators. The NPA should also strengthen and expand its partnerships and networks and engage and communicate with the public and the stakeholders effectively and transparently.

Scenario 2: Low trust, high corruption

In this scenario, the NPA has failed to achieve its strategic objectives and has become a weak and distrusted institution in the criminal justice system and society. The implications and responses for the NPA are:

Opportunities — the NPA can use the crisis and the pressure as a catalyst and a motivation to reform and transform its organisation and culture and to regain its independence, integrity, and effectiveness. The NPA can also seek and mobilise support and assistance from the allies and champions within the government, the society, and the international community, who share the NPA's mandate and vision and who value the rule of law and democracy in SA

Challenges — the NPA can face severe constraints and obstacles in fulfilling its mandate and vision and in addressing the rampant and entrenched corruption and state capture in SA. The NPA can also face hostility and distrust from the public and the stakeholders, who may question and challenge the NPA's legitimacy and credibility and may lose faith and hope in the NPA and the criminal justice system

Risks — the NPA can face existential and systemic threats and attacks from the corruption and state capture networks and actors, who may seek to capture and control the NPA or to destroy and eliminate the NPA. The NPA can also face complex and wicked problems and challenges in the environment, such as poverty, inequality, violence, or social unrest

Assumptions — the NPA assumes that the corruption and state capture networks and actors will remain powerful and influential and that they will continue to challenge and undermine the NPA's mandate and vision. The NPA also assumes that the public and the stakeholders will remain supportive and trusting of the NPA and that the NPA will be able to balance and manage the conflicting and competing interests and demands in the environment

Strategic actions — the NPA should maintain and defend its independence, integrity, and effectiveness and continue to pursue its mandate and vision with courage and determination. The NPA should also seek to enhance and diversify its operations and activities and to foster a culture of innovation and ethics within the organisation. The NPA should also monitor and evaluate its performance and impact and use the feedback and evidence to inform and update its strategic plan, budget, and performance indicators. The NPA should also strengthen and expand its partnerships and networks and engage and communicate with the public and the stakeholders effectively and transparently.

Step 5: Communicate and use the scenarios for strategic planning and decision-making

The final step of the scenario planning process is to communicate and use the scenarios for strategic planning and decision-making. The NPA should present and discuss the scenarios with the relevant stakeholders, such as the NPA leadership, staff, partners, clients, or policymakers, and engage them in dialogue and feedback. Scenarios can also be used as inputs for decision-making, planning, innovation, learning, or monitoring. The NPA should also use the scenarios to inform and update its strategic plan, budget, and

performance indicators and to monitor and evaluate the progress and outcomes. The NPA should also review and revise the scenarios periodically and update the assumptions, implications, and responses accordingly.

Scenario planning can help the NPA anticipate and prepare for possible futures and enhance its strategic thinking and agility. By exploring different scenarios, the NPA can identify its core values and principles that should guide its actions in any situation, as well as its areas of vulnerability and opportunity that should inform its priorities and choices.

Scenario planning can also help the NPA communicate and collaborate with other stakeholders interested in or influencing its work, such as government departments, civil society organisations, media outlets, or international partners. By sharing scenarios with them, the NPA can foster mutual understanding and trust and create a shared vision for the future of justice in SA.

4.8.2.2 PESTLE analysis (NSG, 2019:42-43)

The aim of a PESTLE analysis is to determine what is going on in the external environment so that the organisation can respond to it. PESTLE stands for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental; it focuses on the macro view, including the political environment, economy, demographic trends, and forces. A PESTLE gives a bird's eye view of the environment from many different angles that one wants to check and keep track of during the analysis of the status quo.

According to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), the PEST analysis has numerous variations that integrate additional elements; these variations encompass:

PESTLE/PESTEL:	this model considers Political, Economic, Socio-Cultural, Technological, Legal, and Environmental factors
PESTLIED:	this variation expands on PESTLE/PESTEL by including International and Demographic factors
STEEPLE:	this model includes Social/Demographic, Technological, Economic, Environmental, Political, Legal, and Ethical factors In the NPA study, the NPA has adopted a mixed methods approach to data collection: literature review of external STEEPLE(NPA:2020:23)
SLEPT:	this is a more streamlined model that focuses on Socio-Cultural, Legal, Economic, Political, and Technological factors
LONGPESTLE:	this variation applies the PESTLE analysis at Local, National, and Global levels.

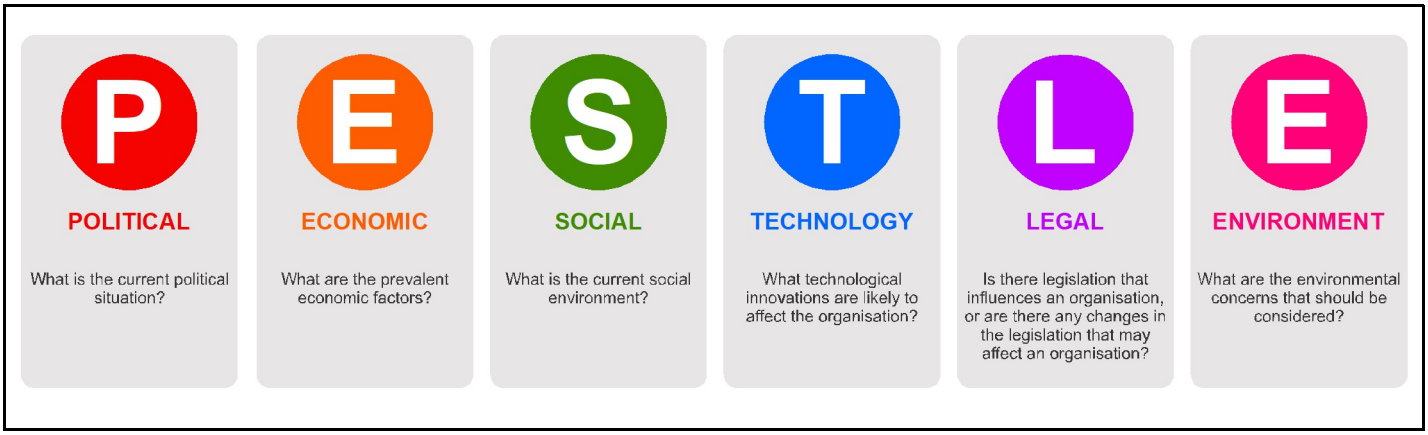


Figure 4.10 PESTLE Analysis

(Source: adapted from NSG, 2019:43)

Table 4.4 Summary of the PESTLE Analysis

Political factors	***What is the current political situation?*** Government policies: national, provincial, local; government resource allocations; changes in power, connectedness of key relevant actors/groups; expected direction of future political change; among others. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024): a) the NPA is a government entity that operates under the NPA Act, 32 of 1998, as amended (NPA, 2023b:3). This means that the NPA is subject to the political environment in SA, which can affect its operations and decision-making b) the NPA is accountable to the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services; this accountability can affect the NPA's Independence and ability to carry out its mandate (NPA, 2023b:2) c) the NPA is responsible for prosecuting crimes in SA, including corruption and organised crime (NPA, 2022b:16-17). This means that the NPA's operations can be affected by political factors such as corruption and political interference d) the NPA has faced political interference in the past, which has affected its ability to carry out its mandate. For example, in 2018, the NPA was accused of dropping corruption charges against former President Jacob Zuma due to political interference [source: News24].
Economic factors	***What are the prevalent economic factors?*** Economic situation: local, national, regional, global; financial situation of key stakeholders or other relevant entities; availability of private sector resources relevant for the project (initiative); expected direction of economic change; among others. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024): e) *budget advocacy and funding*: the NPA acknowledges the additional budget allocations received for the current Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period. However, it also highlights the need for additional funding to effectively deliver on its mandate, considering the nature and scale of challenges it faces (NPA, 2022b:13) f) *financial management*: the AR mentions financial management as one of the areas under the Strategy, Operations, and Compliance (SOC) division. This indicates the NPA's focus on ensuring transparent actions, spending, and routine reporting (NPA, 2022b:55) g) *asset forfeiture*: the AFU plays a crucial role in the NPA's efforts to combat economic crimes. The AFU obtained freezing orders to the value of R5.5 billion (NPA, 2022b:13). This demonstrates the NPA's commitment to recovering assets linked to economic offences.
Social factors	***What is the current social environment?*** Demographics and population trends; education levels; access to essential services; public perceptions; knowledge, attitudes and practices of a particular population group; among others. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024): h) *Gender-Based Violence and Femicide*: The NPA emphasises its commitment to dealing robustly with GBVF cases, which have a significant impact on society. Notable cases related to GBVF are mentioned in the AR (NPA, 2022b:30-32) i) *Community Prosecution Initiative*: The NPA has implemented a countrywide Community Prosecution Initiative as part of its strategic outcomes. This initiative aims to improve access to NPA services for all, including vulnerable communities (NPA, 2022b:7,15)

j) *Witness Protection*: The Office for Witness Protection (OWP) ensures the safety of witnesses and related persons. The report states that no persons were threatened, harmed, or killed while under the witness protection program, highlighting the NPA's commitment to protecting individuals involved in criminal cases (NPA, 2022b:51)

k) *Stakeholder Engagements*: The NPA actively engages with various stakeholders, including the public, to solve and prevent crime. The report mentions stakeholder engagements as part of the strategic initiatives undertaken by the National Director of Public Prosecutions (NPA, 2022b:18).

Technological factors	***What technological innovations are likely to affect the organisation?*** Population groups' access to technologies; new technologies that could affect the context significantly, or that could be used to achieve objectives; potential for innovation; among others. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024): The NPA encountered challenges due to malware attack on the IT systems of the DoJ&CD; despite these challenges, several ICT programmes were delivered (see Section 4.3.1.5).
Legal factors	***Is there legislation that influences an organisation, or are there any changes in the legislation that may affect an organisation?*** Human rights; existing legislation having an impact on other factors, or affecting population groups, or the work of the organisation; international agreements; among others. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024): l) the NPA's involvement in various legal proceedings, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission matters (NPA, 2022b:36), demonstrates its engagement with legal processes aimed at addressing historical injustices. m) the NPA's establishment of an Office for Ethics and Accountability highlights its commitment to maintaining integrity and addressing unethical behaviour within its ranks (NPA, 2022b:12) n) the NPA's focus on implementing a simple and tailored form of non-prosecution decisions (NPDs) aligns with global trends in resolving complex corruption cases (NPA, 2022b:15) o) the NPA operates within the legal framework of SA, ensuring ethical conduct, accountability, and compliance with the law (NPA, 2022b:7) p) the NPA is establishing an Office for Ethics and Accountability to promote ethical conduct and address complaints against NPA staff (NPA, 2022b:15).
Environmental factors	***What are the environmental concerns that should be considered?*** Contextually relevant environmental issues; Environmental impacts of planned or ongoing activities; Relevant environmental regulations or requirements; trends or expected future developments in the environment; among others. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024), (NPA, 2022b:33-34): q) environmental factors may not have a direct impact on the NPA's operations, but they can influence the broader context in which it operates r) the NPA's focus on environmental crime, reflects its recognition of the importance of protecting the environment and prosecuting those who engage in illegal activities that harm the environment s) the NPA's role in addressing essential infrastructure crimes and environmental crimes reflects its commitment to protecting the environment and ensuring sustainable development.

(Source: adapted from NSG, 2019:43)

While environmental factors may not directly impact the NPA's core mandate, it does prosecute environmental crimes; this requires an understanding of environmental laws and regulations, as well as technical knowledge about environmental issues (NPA, 2022b:34).

Participant responses on RQ5, Prompt 5.4: Which strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools should be used to audit the external environment?

When the participants of Sample A were asked, *"Which strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools should be used to audit the external environment?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (5.4), for verbatim excerpts from middle managers):

- Only two participants (MM.1 and MM.3) mentioned a specific framework/tool for scanning the external environment, namely the STEEPLE framework (Social, Technological, Environmental, Economic, Political, Legal, and Ethical factors).
- The remaining participant (MM.2) suggested using the SWOT analysis, which is more suitable for analysing both the internal and external environment.
- Their understanding was generally clear and comprehensive.

Sample B provided the following answers to the same question (refer to Annexure G (5.4), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Nine participants (SM.2, SM.3, SM.4, SM.5, SM.6, SM.8, SM.10, SM.12, and SM.13) mentioned a specific framework/tool for scanning the external environment, namely the PESTEL/PESTLE framework (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal factors). Some participants also mentioned variations of the PESTEL/PESTLE framework, such as PESTLIED, STEEPLE, and LONGPESTLE, or other tools, such as the Theory of Change and situational analysis.
- The remaining four participants (SM.1, SM.7, SM.9, and SM.11) did not mention any framework/tool, but suggested conducting an environmental assessment, monitoring the communications department, or involving relevant stakeholders.
- Their understanding was generally comprehensive and explicit.

In summary, Sample B demonstrated a more extensive and specific knowledge of frameworks/tools for scanning the external environment compared to Sample A. Out of 16 participants, 11 (68.75%) mentioned a specific framework/tool, while the remaining 5 (31.25%) did not mention any framework/tool. Among the 3 participants in Sample A, only 2 (66.67%) mentioned a specific framework/tool, while among the 13 participants in Sample B, 9 (69.23%) mentioned a specific framework/tool.

4.8.3 Tools for both the internal and external strategic audits

4.8.3.1 SWOT analysis (NSG, 2019:41-42):

SWOT analysis's purpose is to identify an organisation's internal strengths and weaknesses and its external opportunities and threats. This tool is crucial for understanding an organisation's position within its operational environment. It allows the organisation to seize opportunities to bolster its strengths while concurrently addressing its weaknesses to mitigate external threats.

As a traditional strategy formulation tool, a SWOT analysis provides a clear framework of internal strengths and weaknesses, along with external opportunities and threats. It offers a straightforward method for assessing the most effective strategy implementation. This tool guides planners in setting realistic expectations about what they can achieve and helps determine their focus areas.

The ensuing SWOT analysis draws upon information from the NPA APP (2022/2023) and the NPA AR (2021/2022). It is crucial to note that circumstances may have evolved since these reports were published, Also, as a government entity, the NPA's primary goal is not to compete but to serve the public effectively. Therefore, its strengths and opportunities should be leveraged to overcome weaknesses and challenges (Manchidi, 2024).

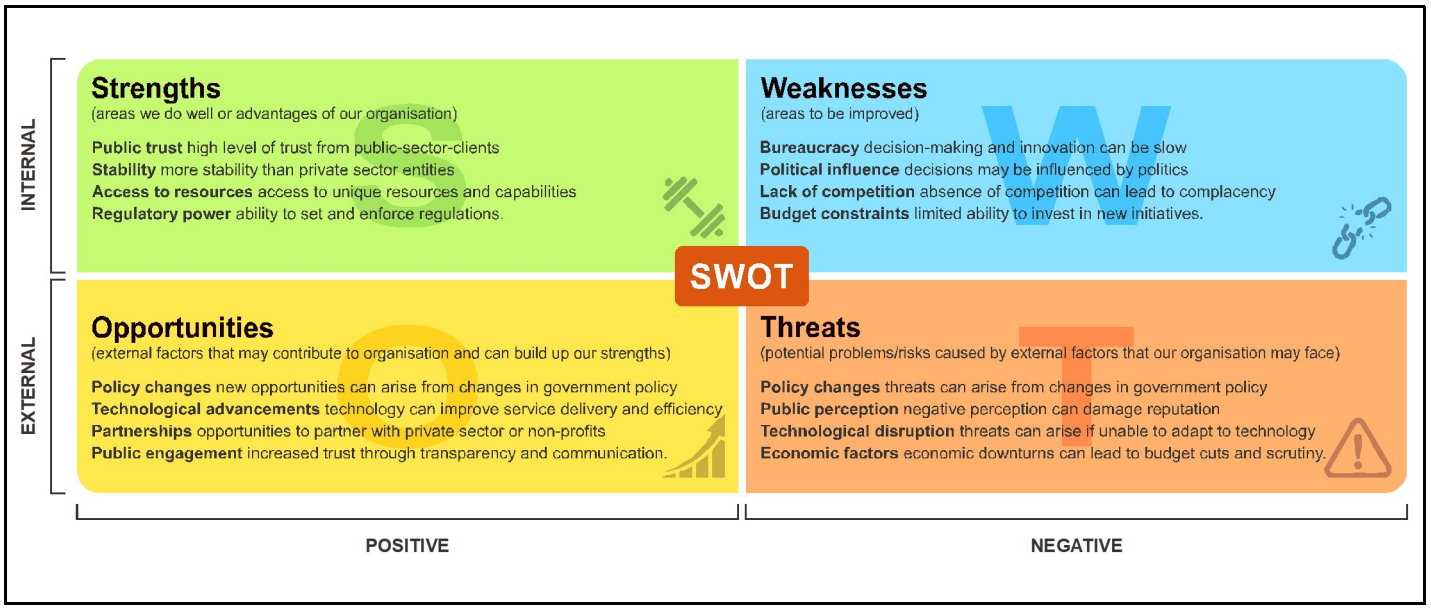


Figure 4.11 SWOT Analysis

Table 4.5 Template for a SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	**WEAKNESSES**
a) include kinds of capabilities or resources that the organisation (and partners and active stakeholders involved) can bring, in order to achieve the desired result b) unique competencies c) valuable assets and resources d) for example; Political: power, influence, connectedness, image and reputation; financial resources, skills, experience, knowledge, qualifications, accreditation; and geographical advantages; among others. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024): i. *powers and mandate* (NPA, 2023b:1): the NPA has significant powers and a constitutionally mandated responsibility to prosecute without fear or favour. This gives the NPA the authority to uphold the rule of law and contribute to a functioning society ii. *commitment to justice* (NPA, 2023b:1): the NPA is committed to promoting increased access to justice, speedy justice, and overall improvement in service delivery. They aim to address the enduring high levels of violent crime, particularly murders and rapes, which disproportionately affect vulnerable members of society iii. *focus on corruption* (NPA, 2023b:1): the NPA recognises the importance of addressing corruption, particularly in relation to state capture. They aim to put an end to impunity for the powerful and rebuild public confidence, which is closely linked to investor confidence and economic growth iv. *leadership*: the NPA has a strong leadership team, including Adv Shamila Batohi, Adv Nomvula Mokhatla, Adv Ouma Rabaji - Rasethaba, Adv Anton du Plessis and Adv Rodney De Kock (NPA, 2022b:8) v. *Specialised Units*: the NPA has specialised units such as the SCCU and the Priority Crimes Litigation Unit which handle specific types of crimes (NPA, 2022b:23;35) vi. *Asset Forfeiture Unit*: the AFU has been effective in dealing with notable cases (NPA, 2022b:41-42).	a) include existing gaps in capabilities or resources in the implementing organisation(s) b) bottlenecks in processes c) for example: weaknesses, which will take effect in the future, such as, departure of key staff, expiry of funds; known vulnerabilities. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024): i. *impunity and lack of prosecutions*: the NPA acknowledges the frustration over the lack of prosecutions for those involved in grand corruption and state capture (NPA, 2023b:1). This lack of action has led to a sense of impunity and undermines public trust in the NPA (NPA, 2023b:9) ii. *high levels of crime*: SA faces high levels of crime, including murder, assault, rape, and other serious crimes (NPA, 2023b:27). These challenges pose a significant obstacle to the NPA's goal of creating a safer environment for all (NPA, 2023b:1) iii. *staff morale and well-being*: there is a need for enhancing staff morale and well-being (NPA, 2022b:17-18) iv. *capacity*: there is a need for capacitating the NPA (NPA, 2022b:17).

INTERNAL

EXTERNAL

OPPORTUNITIES

a) are found in the operational context within which the strategy will be implemented

b) for example: Relationships or partnerships that can be drawn upon; new information that has become available; practices adopted by other organisations/actors in addressing similar challenges; potential funding sources; possible efficiency gains from re-allocation of resources; among others.

In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024):

i. *enhanced collaboration* (NPA, 2023b:1): the NPA aims to strengthen internal and external collaboration to effectively address corruption. This includes collaborating with the Investigating Directorate (ID) and other stakeholders to enhance the impact of asset recovery and improve corruption-fighting skills

ii. *community prosecution initiative*: the NPA plans to implement a countrywide community prosecution initiative, which can help improve access to NPA services for all (NPA, 2023b:2) and enhance community engagement in the criminal justice process

iii. *strategic initiatives*: the NPA has several strategic initiatives such as prioritising for impact, expediting high-profile corruption cases, and focusing on serious violent and organised crime (NPA, 2022b:16-17)

iv. *stakeholder engagements*: the NPA has opportunities for stakeholder engagements (NPA, 2022b:18).

THREATS (CHALLENGES)

a) include events or trends that could threaten the strategy or that put progress at risk: Political, economic, social, technological, environmental, legal

b) for example, risks and disadvantages that would be incurred by a given initiative/action under consideration; time, including disappearing opportunities, deadlines, unrealistic timelines.

In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024):

i. *COVID-19 pandemic* (NPA, 2023b:27): the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose challenges to the NPA's optimal performance. Movement restrictions and disruptions to the court system have affected the functioning of the NPA and the justice system as a whole

ii. *high levels of crime*: the prevalence of crime, including murder, assault, and rape (NPA, 2023b:27), poses a threat to public safety and challenges the NPA's efforts to create a safer environment (NPA, 2023b:1). These crimes require effective prosecution to address the sense of insecurity in society

iii. *high-level corruption cases*: dealing with high-level corruption cases is a challenge (NPA, 2022b:16)

iv. *serious violent crime*: addressing serious violent crime is another challenge (NPA, 2022b:17)

v. *Gender-Based Violence and Femicide*: tackling GBVF is a significant challenge (NPA, 2022b:30)

vi. *management of forensic DNA*: the fight against violent crime, particularly murder and rape, has recently been undermined by the challenges around the management of forensic DNA due to shortages of essential chemicals required for the DNA analysis; this has resulted in a national backlog of these cases being prosecuted in courts (NPA, 2022b:30-31).

POSITIVE | **NEGATIVE**

4.8.3.2 Combined SWOT and PESTLE analysis

A combined SWOT and PESTLE analysis is a comprehensive analytical tool used in strategic management; this combination enables an organisation to understand its strategic positioning within a broader environment (NSG, 2019:43), thereby facilitating informed decision-making processes; this tool integrates the internal factors (Strengths, Weaknesses) and external factors (Opportunities, Threats) of SWOT analysis with the macro-environmental factors assessed by PESTLE analysis; this provides a holistic view of the organisation's strategic landscape (Manchidi, 2024).

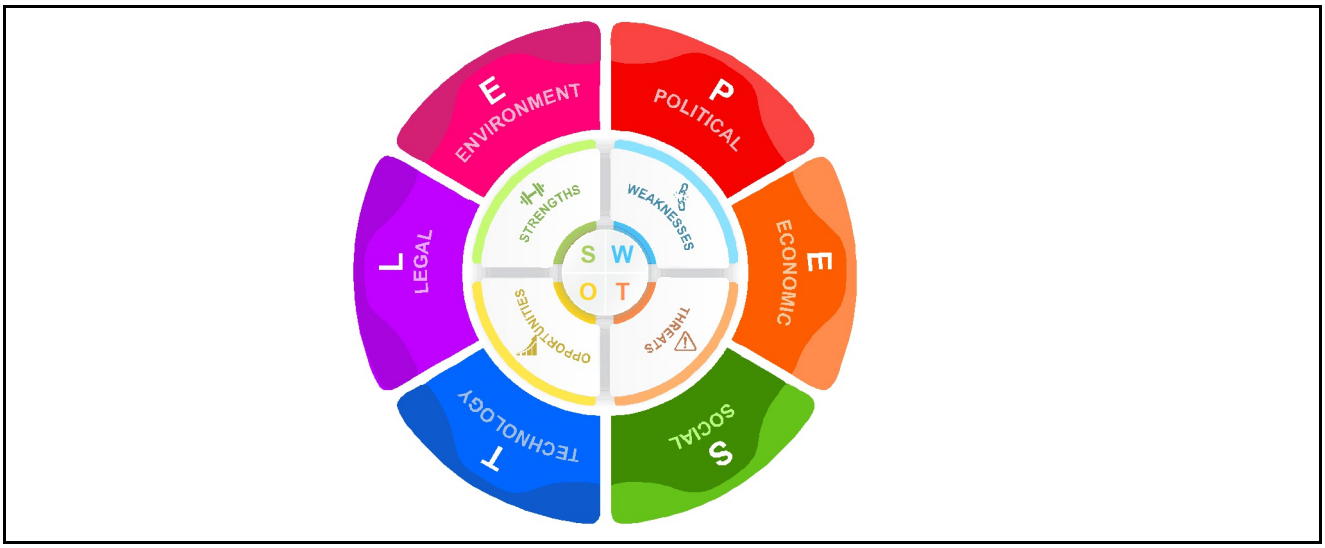


Figure 4.12 Combined SWOT and PESTLE Analysis

Recap of the glossary of the SWOT and PESTLE analysis frameworks (Manchidi, 2024):

SWOT Analysis (see Section 4.8.3.1)		**PESTLE Analysis (see Section 4.8.2.2)**	
Strengths	internal attributes beneficial to achieving objectives	**Political**	impact of government policies, regulations, and political stability
Weaknesses	internal attributes that could hinder the achievement of objectives	**Economic**	economic factors like inflation rate, unemployment rate, and economic growth
Opportunities	external conditions beneficial to achieving objectives	**Social**	societal trends like demographics, cultural norms, and attitudes
Threats	external conditions that could damage the objectives.	**Technological**	impact of emerging or existing technology
		Legal	existing or impending legislation
		Environmental	environmental considerations.

When combined, these analyses offer a comprehensive perspective on the environment in which an organisation operates; it is usually best to start with a SWOT analysis. Upon reaching the opportunities and threats components of the SWOT analysis, each can be split into PESTLE categories because *Opportunities* and *Threats* are external, just like all elements of PESTLE analysis. By integrating the available information and highlighting the concerns from PEST and SWOT analysis, one can comprehend both external influences (on a macro-level) and internal factors (on a micro-level). Although direct influence on PEST factors is impossible, they can be leveraged through SWOT analysis (Manchidi, 2024).

Table 4.6 Template for a Combined SWOT and PESTLE Analysis

Internal & external analysis	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Political	a) Constitutional mandate: the NPA operates within a constitutional democracy, ensuring adherence to the rule of law b) Legal authority: empowered by legislation to prosecute criminal cases effectively c) Experienced personnel: skilled prosecutors contribute to effective legal proceedings.	a) Political interference: political pressure may compromise the NPA's independence and impartiality b) Resource constraints: budget limitations may hinder investigations and prosecutions c) Case backlogs: delays in case resolution due to workload and resource limitations.	a) Collaboration: partner with other government agencies to enhance law enforcement effectiveness.	a) Political instability: changes in government may impact the NPA's mandate and funding b) Budget cuts: economic downturns may reduce funding for justice institutions c) Public perception: negative perception may erode trust in the NPA.
Economical	a) Government funding: the NPA receives funding, allowing it to carry out its functions b) Operational efficiency: efficient allocation of resources for effective prosecutions c) Asset management: proper utilisation of assets (e.g., forensic labs, technology).	a) Financial constraints: budget constraints may limit resources for investigations b) Financial transparency: ensure transparent financial practices.	a) Cost-effective technologies: Explore efficient tools for case management and evidence presentation b) Resource allocation: balancing funding across various priorities.	a) Economic downturns: reduced funding during economic crises.
Social	a) Public safety: the NPA plays a crucial role in maintaining social order b) Community trust: engage with communities to foster cooperation and support c) Victim support: ensuring victims' rights and support during legal proceedings.	a) Public perception: negative perception may erode trust in the NPA b) Communication challenges: clear communication about NPA's actions and decisions c) Inclusivity: address diversity and inclusivity within the NPA workforce.	a) Community engagement: raise awareness about the NPA's role and build public confidence.	a) Social unrest: civil disobedience or unrest can strain the NPA's capacity b) Cultural shifts: changing societal norms impacting legal processes c) Public expectations: meeting public expectations for justice delivery.
Technological	a) Digital tools: embrace technology for case management and evidence collection b) Data analytics: utilise data analytics for insights and decision-making c) Training programs: continuous	a) Technological gaps: address gaps in IT infrastructure and skills b) Legacy systems: modernise outdated systems for efficiency c) Resistance to change: overcoming resistance to	a) Forensic advancements: invest in advanced forensic technologies.	a) Cybersecurity risks: protect sensitive case information from cyber threats b) Data privacy: compliance with data protection regulations c) Digital divide: ensuring equitable access to technology for all stakeholders.

	training on technological advancements for staff.	adopting new technologies.		
Legal	a) Legal framework: operates within a robust legal framework, ensuring due process b) Experienced prosecutors: skilled legal professionals contribute to effective prosecutions c) Evidence admissibility: ensuring proper handling and presentation of evidence in court.	a) Legal bottlenecks: address delays in legal processes b) Complex legislation: navigating intricate laws and regulations c) Resource constraints: limited resources for legal research and case preparation.	a) Process streamlining: collaborate with legal experts to expedite case resolution b) Capacity building: enhance legal expertise through training and mentorship c) Legal reforms: advocate for legislative changes to enhance justice delivery.	a) Judicial independence: ensuring autonomy from external pressures b) Public scrutiny: media and public scrutiny affecting legal proceedings c) Legal challenges: litigation challenging NPA decisions.
Environmental	a) Environmental justice: prosecuting environmental crimes contributes to ecological well-being b) Collaboration with NGOs: partner with environmental organisations for joint initiatives c) Sustainable practices: implement eco-friendly practices within the NPA.	a) Limited focus: expand focus beyond traditional crimes to address ecological offenses b) Resource allocation: balancing resources between different types of cases.	a) Awareness campaigns: educate the public about environmental crimes and their impact b) Strengthening units: establish specialised units for environmental prosecutions c) Legislative advocacy: influence policy changes to strengthen environmental laws.	a) Climate change: impact of climate change on ecological violations b) Resource scarcity: limited resources for ecological investigations c) Public perception: ensuring public awareness of the NPA's ecological role.

(Source: adapted from NSG, 2019:44)

4.8.4 Adapted strategic audit framework or tools for the public sector

In this review, according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), various methodological approaches of conducting strategic auditing component in both the strategy formulation and the entire strategic management process were discussed, and their comparative strengths assessed. Issues such as adaptation of Porter's 5 forces analysis and SWOC strategic audit tools, terminologies, and flexibility in use were also examined. Four main theoretical frameworks regularly used in the strategic auditing process were identified: Mckinsey's 7s model; SWOT analysis; Porter's 5 forces analysis; PESTLE, presented in Figure 4.13.

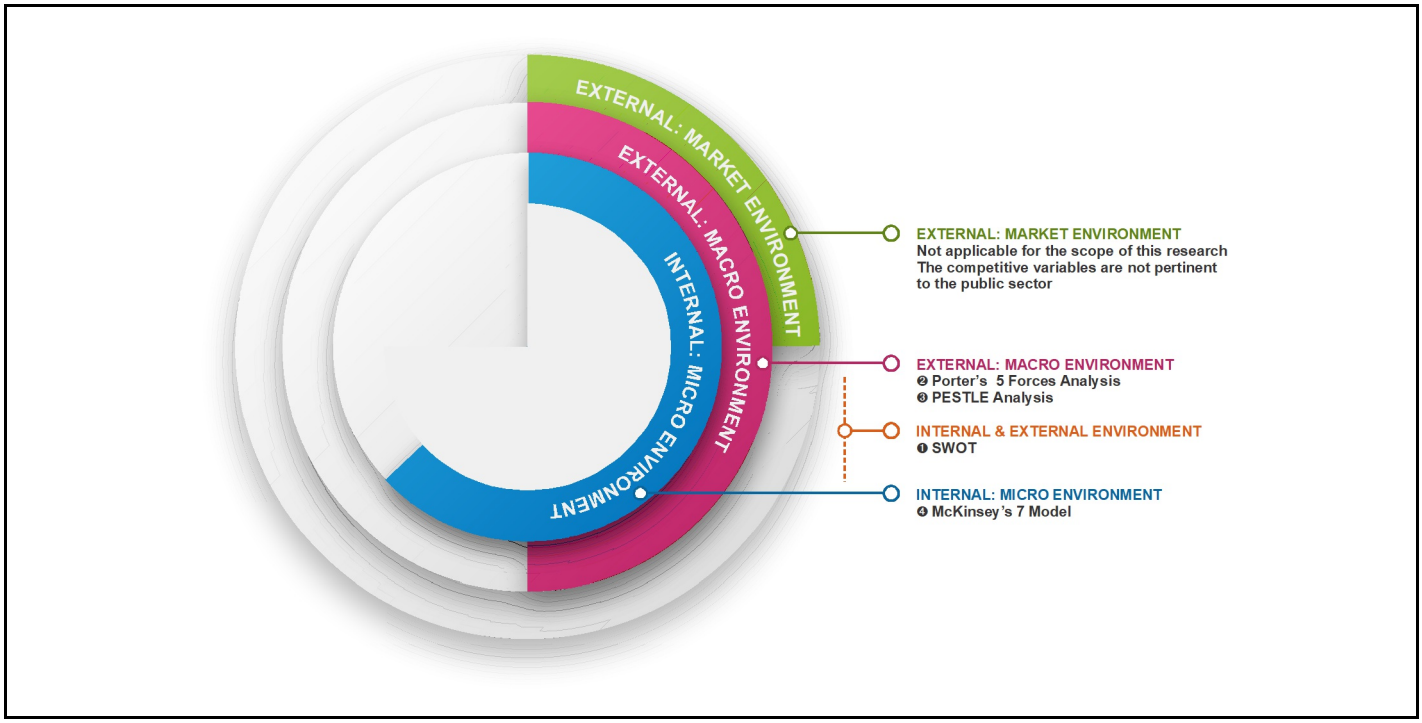


Figure 4.13 Strategic audit: theoretical framework

The review concluded that, while each of these had particular strengths, *Mckinsey's 7s model and PESTLE are well suited for the public sector* (Manchidi, 2024). According to Vining (2011:66), and cf. McKevitt (2000:97-100), the public sector can use some form of *Porter's 5 forces analysis* more effectively to perform external environment analysis when appropriately modified:

4.8.4.1 *Porter's 5 Forces Framework adapted to Open University's Expanded Public Agency Program 5 Forces Framework*

According to the Open University (2016:12), Porter's 5 Forces Framework is clearly most applicable to private-sector organisations operating in free markets. However, elements of the model apply to all organisations.

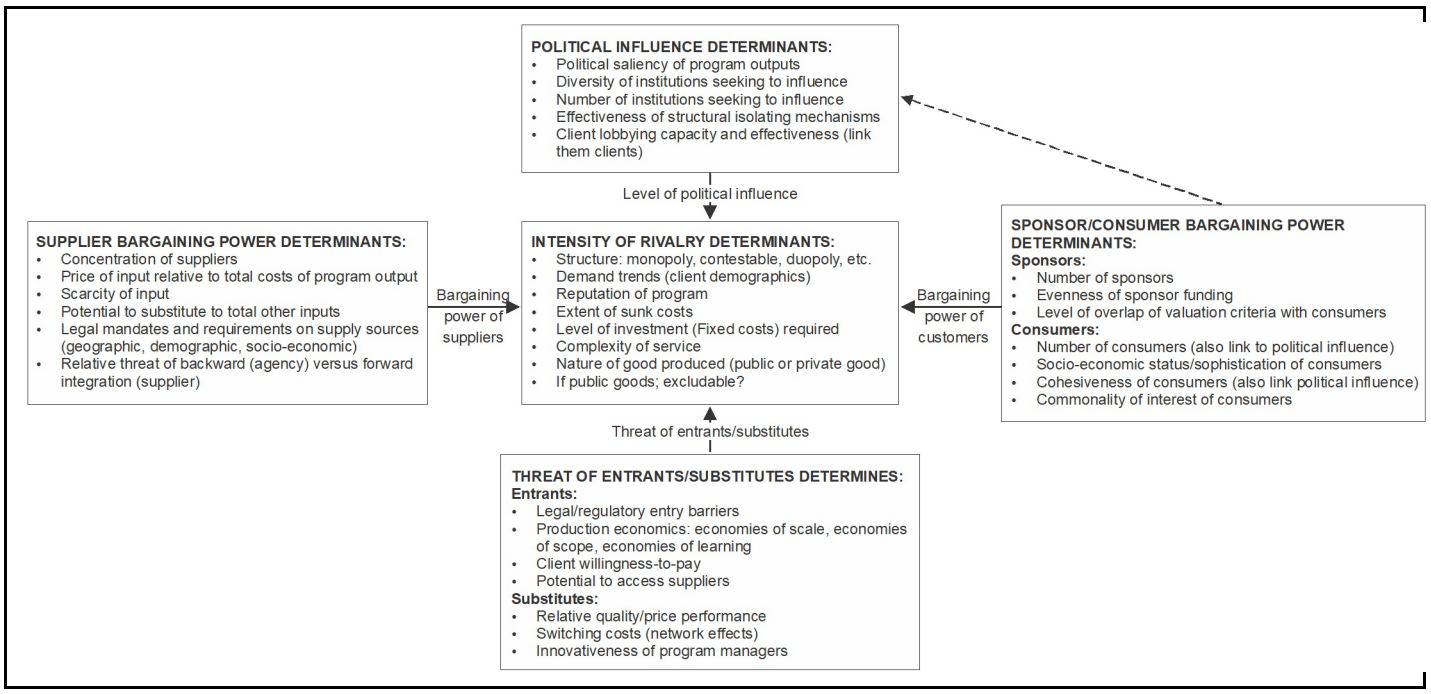


Figure 4.14 Expanded Public Agency Program 5 Forces Framework
(Source: adapted from Vining, 2011:73 & 83)

Table 4.7 The Complete Public Agency 5 Forces Framework

Threat of entrants/ substitutes:	new technologies (substitutes) often, simply represent more radical threats to incumbents than do ''classic'' entrants. Determinants of entry threat and the determinants of rivalry in many cases can be analysed as a determinant of either, or both forces and frequently are essential ''mirror images'' of each other, (i.e. significant economies of scale will both reduce the threat of entry and dampen rivalry)
Suppliers bargaining power:	the force of supplier bargaining power requires no adaptation, and is directly applicable to the public sector. By shifting costs to industry participants, limiting quality or services, or charging higher prices, powerful suppliers capture more of the value for themselves
Political influence:	the reality is that the NPA (public agency), according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), is subject to various levels of—''threats''—of *political influence* and, at the extreme, control. The extent of political influence must be incorporated into any framework that realistically analyses the behaviour of public managers and the external environment of the public agency
Sponsor/consumer bargaining power:	*Sponsors*: the NPA (agency) , according to the researcher (Manchidi, 2024), only faces one sponsor, the DoJ&CD that formally supplies all of its financial resources (there are no paying consumers), then it faces a bilateral monopoly situation and the distribution of the (autonomy) gains are hard to determine theoretically; it depends on the bargaining power of the DoJ&CD and the effectiveness of political influence. At one extreme, a powerful sponsoring agency may be able to eliminate the agency's policy autonomy

	through its control of the agency's budget *Consumers*: non-paying consumers, or those facing a monopoly agency, may find it more effective to try to exercise bargaining power indirectly. Consumers may try to strengthen bargaining power by lobbying political organisations, or sponsor agencies (as shown in Figure 4.14). The effective bargaining power of non-paying consumers is partly dependent on both their motivation to interact with: the nature and extent of their resources, organisational skills and cohesion, and; agency managers
Intensity of rivalry (or extent of competition):	all public agencies have either a *de jure* or *de facto* monopoly. The concept of rivalry is conceptually relevant even in a monopoly situation and does not directly reflect much the NPA and public sector reality. The degree of contestability is often more important in determining the degree of autonomy than is direct competition.

(Source: adapted from Vining, 2011:73,75-79)

4.8.4.2 Porter's 5 Forces Framework adapted to McKevitt's Street-level Public Organisations

McKevitt (2000:96) suggested a model for analysing the external environment of what he calls Street-Level Public Organisations (that is, public-sector organisations that interact directly with the public); this model is summarised in Figure 4.15.

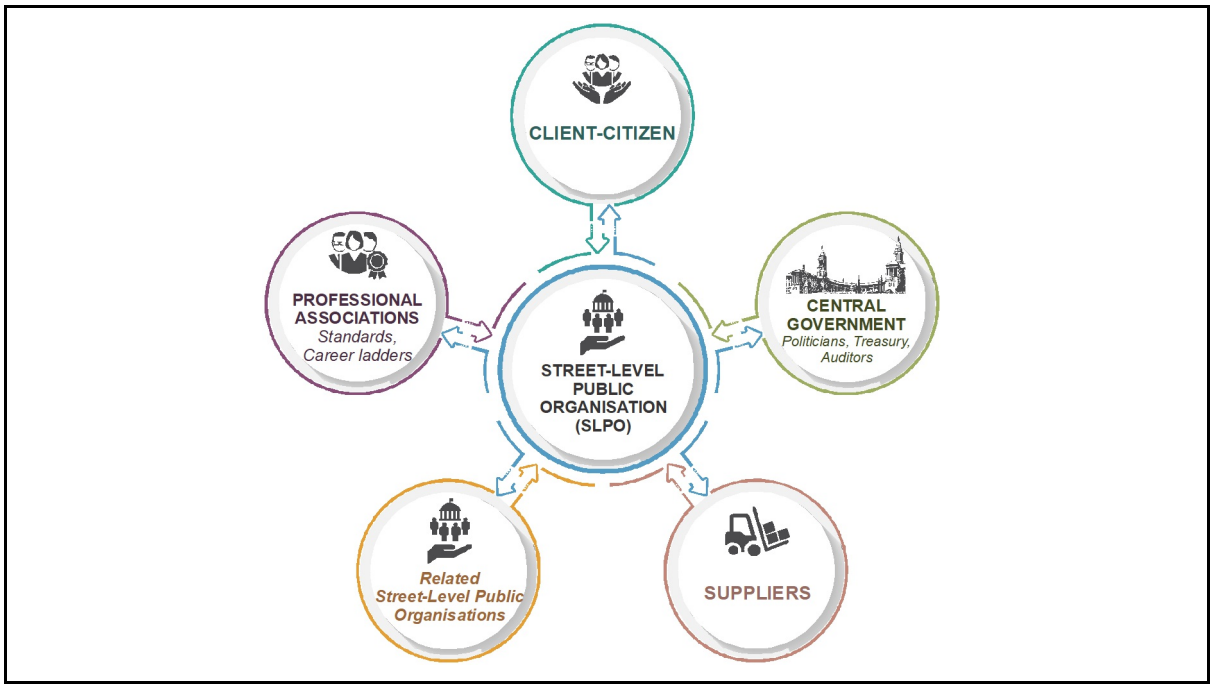


Figure 4.15 Environment of Public-Sector Organisations

(Source: adapted from The Open University, 2016:12)

Table 4.8 Environment of Public-Sector Organisations

Professional associations:	may provide career structures for the professionals involved in service delivery and are important since they set standards. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); various professional associations, play critical roles in regulating the legal profession in SA advocating for; legal practitioners, and setting standards entails: the Law Society of South Africa, the General Council of the Bar of South Africa, the National Association of Democratic Lawyers, the Attorneys' Fidelity Fund, the South African Women Lawyers Association, and the Black Lawyers Association.
Related street-level public organisations:	may play important roles either as collaborators, In the NPA study, for example, Lawyers for Human Rights, which advocates for human rights and challenges unlawful state actions or as substitutes, In the NPA study, for example, Legal Aid SA, which provides legal representation and education to those unable to afford private legal counsel (Manchidi, 2024).
Suppliers:	are important in the same way as in the private sector (some suppliers will also be related street-level organisations)
The relationship with the *client-citizen*:	is not the same as with buyers in the Porter model, often the client is a consumer rather than customer. In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); the *client-citizen relationship* differs significantly from traditional business *models like Porter's*, where customers are buyers seeking a product or service. The citizen is a *consumer of public justice*, not a customer purchasing a service. The NPA's relationship with client-citizens, is driven by *legal rights* and *social responsibilities* rather than market-driven transactions. Citizens do not *"choose"* the prosecution services they receive; they are entitled to them as a public service. While businesses must respond to *consumer demand* to maintain customer satisfaction, the NPA is accountable to the public interest—ensuring that the law is applied fairly and impartially - this relationship is therefore based on; *civic duty*, *public trust*, and *procedural fairness*, not on consumer satisfaction or competition. The NPA must balance the interests of; victims, the accused and the broader community, making its engagement with citizens - fundamentally different from a traditional customer service dynamic.
Central government:	In the NPA study (Manchidi, 2024); *the funding relationship with the DoJ&CD, as the primary funder*, operates quite differently from the dynamics of customers and buyers in *Porter's model*. Unlike in a business environment where customers directly drive demand, and competition, the NPA's funding is primarily determined by the *central government's budgetary allocation* through the DoJ&CD, and, as the funder, provides financial resources not based on a "market demand" or consumer satisfaction, but according to *public policy priorities* and the government's commitment to upholding the rule of law. The NPA's funding is tied to its role in *serving the public interest*, ensuring *justice* and *accountability*, rather than responding to specific, transactional needs of individuals or businesses, and - its financial support is contingent on, fulfilling the state's broader goals of; ensuring *equitable access to justice*, maintaining *legal integrity*, and *promoting social stability*, which are not market-driven but policy-driven imperatives. Therefore, the relationship between the NPA, and the DoJ&CD, is grounded in *institutional responsibility*, rather than, competitive pressures and it reflects, the government's commitment to financing public institutions that serve the public good, rather than, responding to a "demand" for services.

(Source: adapted from The Open University, 2016:12-13)

4.8.4.3 SWOT analysis adapted to Bryson's SWOC analysis for Public Agencies

Bryson (2011) (as cited in Vining, 2011:93) recommend a somewhat modified version of SWOT for public agencies, where *"threats"* are reconceptualised as *"challenges,"* thus SWOC. According to Bryson (2011:153), SWOC analysis is a strategy formulation tool which audit the internal or present strengths and weaknesses and future oriented organisational opportunities and challenges, traditionally challenges have been called threats.

> A SWOC analysis is a strategy formulation tool organisations use to identify their Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC). It is a variation of the traditional SWOT analysis, replacing the ***"threats"*** component with a focus on ***"challenges and constraints"***; this analysis is crucial in understanding both internal and external factors that may influence an organisation's strategy formulation and decision-making process. Recap of the glossary of the SWOC analysis framework (Manchidi, 2024):

S	The ***Strengths*** component; identifies the internal factors that give an organisation an advantage over others. For example, this could include access to resources, expertise, or a strong reputation for delivering services effectively and efficiently in the public sector.
W	The ***Weaknesses*** component; identifies the internal factors that may place an organisation at a disadvantage. For example, this could include a lack of resources, outdated technology, or a complex bureaucratic structure that hinders decision-making and responsiveness in the public sector.
O	The ***Opportunities*** component; identifies external factors that could benefit an organisation. For instance, changes in government policy, new funding opportunities, or emerging technologies could improve service delivery in the public sector.
C	The ***Challenges*** component; identifies external factors that could pose a challenge to an organisation. For example, this could include budget cuts, increased competition, or changing demographics that require the organisation to adapt its services and operations in the public sector; OR The ***Constraints*** component; identifies internal and external factors limiting an organisation's ability to achieve its goals. For example, this could include legal and regulatory requirements, budgetary constraints, or issues related to public perception and trust in the public sector.

Conducting a SWOC analysis allows organisations to understand their current situation better and develop strategies to leverage their strengths, address their weaknesses, capitalise on opportunities, and overcome challenges and constraints; this analysis can inform the development of SPs, policies, and initiatives more responsive to public needs and more effective in achieving the strategic objectives of the organisation (Manchidi, 2024).

Participant responses on RQ7: How can the strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools primarily designed for the private sector be adopted for the public sector?

When the participants of Sample B were asked, *"How can the strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools primarily designed for the private sector be adopted for the public sector?"*, the following responses were provided (refer to Annexure G (7)), for verbatim excerpts from senior/top managers):

- Four participants (SM.6, SM.5, SM.3, and SM.12) provided a clear and comprehensive understanding of how the strategic audit (analysis) framework/tools primarily designed for the private sector can be adapted for the public sector. They suggested that the frameworks and tools could be adapted by considering the unique characteristics and constraints of the public sector, such as its focus on public value, its complex stakeholder environment, and its need for transparency and accountability.
- The remaining participants did not explicitly describe how the frameworks and tools could be adapted, but suggested that it would involve a process of trial and error, learning from best practices, and continuous improvement.
- Their understanding was generally implied and partial.

In summary, out of 13 participants in Sample B, only 4 (30.77%) provided a clear understanding of how the strategic audit (analysis) framework/tools primarily designed for the private sector can be adapted for the public sector, while the remaining 9 (69.23%) implied their understanding. This suggests that there is a need for more explicit guidance and training on this topic in the public sector.

4.9 SUMMARY

The strategic audit, a critical process in the ever-changing organisational landscape, ensures an organisation's relevance and sustainability. This process involves establishing a strategic audit unit, conducting comprehensive internal and external audits, and formulating actionable strategies based on the findings. These strategies are then implemented, monitored, and evaluated for effectiveness, ensuring the organisation's alignment with its capabilities and the external environment.

A strategic audit identifies an organisation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the external environment. This information forms the basis for evidence-based strategy formulation, strategic alignment, and integration. Without a strategic audit, organisations may struggle to make informed decisions, align their strategies with their capabilities and the external environment, and effectively communicate and coordinate their plans and actions with stakeholders.

The strategic audit requires a multidisciplinary team with diverse skills, knowledge, and experience to ensure a comprehensive analysis. The duration of the strategic audit can vary depending on the organisation's size, complexity, and specific circumstances, but it typically takes several months to complete.

Regular strategic audits allow organisations to adapt to changes, capitalise on opportunities, and mitigate potential risks, enhancing their strategic decision-making and performance; this underlines the importance of strategic audits and their impact on organisational success.

The research study demonstrates the correct usage of these strategic audit tools as recommended by the DPME for public institutions. Tools such as Scenario Planning and PESTLE analysis enable organisations to navigate the complexities of the external environment proactively. These strategic audit tools allow organisations to anticipate and adapt to changes, identify potential risks and opportunities, and make informed strategic decisions, enhancing their competitiveness and long-term success.

Internal strategic audit tools, such as the 5 Whys, Fishbone diagrams, and Scenario Planning, provide a structured approach to assess an organisation's internal capabilities and resources. These tools facilitate identifying root causes, exploring potential scenarios, and assessing internal factors, contributing to the development of robust strategic plans and a sustainable competitive advantage.

In the public sector, it is crucial to adapt strategic audit tools to align with public organisations' specific characteristics and requirements. For instance, frameworks such as the SWOT and Porter's 5 Forces analyses, commonly used in the private sector, have been modified to suit the public sector context. One such adaptation is the transformation of:

a) Porter's 5 Forces Framework into the Open University's Expanded Public Agency Program 5 Forces Framework and McKevitt's Street-level Public Organisations Framework. These adaptations allow for a more nuanced understanding of the forces at play in the public sector; similarly the traditional
b) SWOT analysis has been adapted into Bryson's SWOC analysis for Public Agencies. The SWOC analysis is a strategy formulation tool organisations use to identify their Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges. This variation of the traditional SWOT analysis replaces the *"threats"* component with a focus on *"challenges and constraints"*, making it more suitable for public agencies.

By making these adaptations, public sector entities can effectively conduct strategic audits, identify key strategic issues, and develop strategies tailored to their unique operating environments and stakeholder needs. This process is essential for enhancing the strategic management capabilities of public organisations and ensuring their long-term success and sustainability.

The strategic audit is a critical process that ensures an organisation's relevance and sustainability in an ever-changing landscape. It provides a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to strategic decision-making, ensuring organisations are well-equipped to navigate the complexities of their internal and external environments. Organisations can stay ahead of the curve by conducting regular strategic audits, adapting to changes, and ensuring their continued success in an ever-changing landscape; this underlines the importance of strategic audits and their significant impact on organisational success. The strategic audit is a process necessary for any organisation aiming for long-term success and sustainability.

CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research findings obtained from the empirical component of the study. The findings are derived from semi-structured interviews conducted with 16 participants (3 middle managers and 13 senior and top managers) at the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) in Pretoria. Thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase process and guided by a deductive codebook developed from the research questions, was employed to analyse the data.

The presentation of findings integrates participants' perspectives with relevant insights from the literature reviewed in Chapters Three and Four; this approach allows for a rich, contextually grounded understanding of the use of strategic audit in evaluating the strategic management process at the NPA.

The findings are organised thematically around the key research questions, highlighting participants' understanding of strategic concepts, current practices, challenges encountered, and opportunities for improvement.

5.2 FINDINGS

THE CODEBOOK:

THEME OR RESEARCH QUESTION (RQ1): WHAT IS STRATEGIC AUDIT (ANALYSIS)?

Overview: This research question asked participants to define strategic audit (analysis) and to describe related prompts and components.

Authoritative definition (literature): *"A strategy audit involves auditing the actual direction of [an organisation] and comparing that course to the direction required to succeed in a changing environment. [An organisation's] actual direction is the sum of what it does and does not do, how well the organisation is internally aligned to support the strategy, and how viable the strategy is when compared to external market, competitor and financial realities. These two categories; (a) the internal strategic audit, and (b) the external strategic audit, make up the major elements of a strategy audit" (Della-Piana et al, 2005:1-2)".* Strategy is the direction provided by the actions and decisions of strategists (primarily a human activity) in pursuit of organisational goals (Venter, 2014:10).

Code definition: The participant is expected to provide their definition and understanding of what strategic audit (analysis) is. **Participant (SM.8):** *"Strategic analysis is a process that involves understanding the environment in which an organisation operates and identifying objectives for future strategies."*

Prompt 1.1 What is strategy? — **Code definition:** The participant provides their own definition and understanding of what a strategy is. **Participant (SM.4):** *Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy, [but implies that it is the outcome of strategic analysis and alignment. A possible answer could be: Strategy is] "the strategic direction we are pursuing ...that is informed and influenced by various factors and aligned with our vision and mission."*

Prompt 1.2 What is the purpose of strategic audit (analysis)? — **Code definition:** The participant explains the purpose and importance of conducting a strategic audit (analysis). **Participant (SM.9):** *"The purpose of strategic analysis is monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving the vision. It could also involve unpacking a strategy and examining its achievements, such as conducting a customer satisfaction survey."*

Prompt 1.3 What are the key components of strategic audit (analysis)? — Code definition: The participant identifies and describes the key components involved in a strategic audit (analysis). **Participant (SM.7):** *"The key components of strategic analysis involve: (a) Data-gathering: "a data-gathering process for planning before implementation", (b) Feasibility study: "this process is akin to conducting a feasibility study in business.", (c) Performance review: "before each financial year, it is important to review past performance reports", (d) Root cause analysis: "conduct a root cause analysis", and (e) Planning for improvement: "plan for improvement".*

THEME OR RESEARCH QUESTION (RQ2): WHY SHOULD ORGANISATIONS CONDUCT STRATEGIC AUDIT (ANALYSIS)?

Overview: This research question asked participants to explain why organisations should conduct strategic audit (analysis), its importance to planning, benefits, and risks of omission.

Code definition: The participant is expected to explain why organisations should conduct strategic analysis. **Participant (SM.2):** *"Organisations must conduct strategic analysis to avoid the risks associated with relying solely on intuition. Without a strategic analysis, the achievement of strategic objectives or outcomes may be compromised… A well-conducted strategic analysis incorporates a Cause-and-Effect Model into the planning process… The strategic analysis should yield macro outcomes, which are the high-level objectives or outcomes."*

Prompt 2.1 Why is strategic audit (analysis) important to strategy formulation (planning)? — Code definition: The participant discusses the importance of strategic audit (analysis) in the strategy formulation (planning) process. **Participant (SM.10):** *"The primary purpose of conducting a strategic analysis is to understand the environment in which our organisation operates… Through this analysis, we can examine both our internal and external environments; this allows us to identify factors that may have a positive or negative impact on our operations."*

Prompt 2.2 What are the benefits of conducting strategic audit (analysis)? — Code definition: The participant states what the organisation stands to gain from conducting the strategic audit (analysis). **Participant (SM.2):** *"A well-conducted strategic analysis incorporates a Cause-and-Effect Model into the planning process. Tools such as Root Cause Analysis can assist in identifying key issues that need to be addressed to achieve strategic objectives… These should then cascade down to the inputs required at the most granular level."*

Prompt 2.3 What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic audit (analysis)? — Code definition: The participant outlines the potential risks or drawbacks associated with not conducting a strategic audit (analysis). **Participant (SM.2):** *"Without a strategic analysis, the achievement of strategic objectives or outcomes may be compromised… failure is likely."*

THEME OR RESEARCH QUESTION (RQ3): WHO SHOULD CONDUCT STRATEGIC AUDIT (ANALYSIS)?

Overview: This research question asked participants to identify who should be responsible for conducting strategic audit (analysis), including qualifications and the number of people required.

Code definition: The participant is expected to identify who should be responsible for conducting strategic analysis. **Participant (SM.4):** *"In the context of who should conduct strategic analysis, it is essential to consider both leadership and specialist roles… However, the intricacies of strategic analysis are best handled by specialists within our organisation, such as those in research and strategy."*

Prompt 3.1 What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)? — **Code definition:** The participant list the minimum qualifications and experience required for conducting the strategic audit (analysis). **Participant (MM.1):** *"As for minimum qualifications, these would depend on the specific job descriptions of the individuals involved. However, the principle remains that everyone should be involved in the strategic analysis process, from the highest-ranking officials to the lowest."*

Prompt 3.2 How many people should conduct strategic audit (analysis)? — **Code definition:** The participant provides their perspective on the ideal number of people required to conduct strategic audit (analysis). **Participant (SM.8):** Despite the prompt, 'How many people should conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not specify an exact number of people who should conduct strategic analysis, [but suggests that it is *"a collaborative effort involving various organisational stakeholders, each contributing their unique expertise and knowledge."* This implies that multiple individuals from different areas of the organisation are involved].

THEME OR RESEARCH QUESTION (RQ4): WHEN SHOULD STRATEGIC AUDIT (ANALYSIS) BE CONDUCTED?

Overview: This research question asked participants to indicate timing, frequency, and expected duration for conducting strategic audit (analysis).

Code definition: The participant is expected to determine when strategic analysis should be conducted. **Participant (SM.10):** *"In the government sector, strategic analysis typically commences in the second quarter of the financial year, which begins on the 1st of April."*

Prompt 4.1 How often should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted? — **Code definition:** The participant provides information on how often a strategic audit (analysis) should be conducted. **Participant (SM.11):** *"Strategic analysis should be conducted annually…"*

Prompt 4.2 How long should it take to complete the strategic audit (analysis) process? — Code definition: The participant provides information on the expected duration to complete the strategic audit (analysis) process. **Participant (SM.13):** *"Typically, this process begins in October of the preceding year and concludes by the end of March in the current year. This timeline ensures that the strategic plans are ready to be implemented from the 1st of April, which marks the commencement of the new financial year in government settings."* [This suggests that the strategic analysis process should span approximately six months, from October to March].

THEME OR RESEARCH QUESTION (RQ5): HOW CAN STRATEGIC AUDIT (ANALYSIS) BE CONDUCTED?

Overview: This research question asked participants to describe methods, required information, steps, and frameworks/tools for internal and external audits.

Code definition: The participant is expected to provide methods for conducting strategic analysis. **Participant (SM.10):** *"In the process of conducting strategic analysis, we employ a variety of tools, which include PESTEL analysis, SWOT analysis, and Fishbone analysis… These tools are instrumental in analysing the environment and informing our strategic planning process."*

Prompt 5.1 What information is required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)? — Code definition: The participant describes the information required to conduct strategic audit (analysis). **Participant (SM.8):** *"Strategic analysis can be conducted by thoroughly examining the organisation's existing information, such as annual reports, performance plans, and previous strategic plans… Gather information: collect all relevant data from various reports and documents within the organisation."*

Prompt 5.2 What are the steps in the strategic audit (analysis) process? — Code definition: The participant outlines the steps in the strategic audit (analysis) process. **Participant (SM.8):** *"This process involves several steps: (a) Know the organisation's goals: understand the overarching objectives that the organisation aims to achieve (b) Identify the organisation's vision: before performing any analysis, it is crucial to comprehend the organisation's long-term aspirations (c) Gather information: collect all relevant data from various reports and documents within the organisation (d) Analyse the information: scrutinise the gathered data to identify patterns, trends, strengths, and weaknesses (e) Formulate strategy: based on the analysis, develop a strategy that aligns with the organisation's goals and vision."*

Prompt 5.3 Which strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools should be used to audit the internal environment? — Code definition: The participant identifies the framework/tools used to conduct an internal strategic audit (to audit the internal environment). **Participant (SM.10):** *"In government practice, the SWOT analysis is commonly used… Even here at the NPA, our primary tool for strategic analysis is the SWOT analysis…"*

Prompt 5.4 Which strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools should be used to audit the external environment? — **Code definition:** The participant identifies the framework/tools used to conduct an external strategic audit (to audit the external environment). **Participant (MM.1):** *"The NPA uses the STEEPLE framework (Social, Technological, Environmental, Economical, Political, Legal, and Ethical) to identify external issues that may impact the organisation."*

THEME OR RESEARCH QUESTION (RQ6).: WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS?
(see Annexure E, Section C (C.1))
Overview: This research question asked participants to define and interpret the strategic management process.
Authoritative definition (literature): Strategic management is the process for planning, implementing and controlling the strategy of the organisation (Venter, 2014:309).
Code definition: The participant provides their own definition and interpretation of the strategic management process. **Participant (SM.7):** *"The strategic management process entails the ongoing planning, monitoring, analysis and assessment of all necessities an organisation needs to meet its goals and objectives."*

THEME OR RESEARCH QUESTION (RQ7): HOW CAN THE STRATEGIC AUDIT (ANALYSIS) FRAMEWORK OR TOOLS PRIMARILY DESIGNED FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR BE ADAPTED FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR?
(see Annexure E, Section C (C.2))
Overview: This research question asked participants how private sector frameworks/tools can be adapted for public sector use.
Code definition: The participant explains how the strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools primarily designed for the private sector be adapted for the public sector. **Participant (SM.9):** *"We adapted it [PESTEL] into a model we call STEEPLE or EPESTEL, where we incorporated 'Ethics' as a critical component… In dealing with corrupt prosecutors, it is essential to consider both the ethical aspects and the recourse available to people… In my experience, people prefer to be involved in the process rather than having things done to them… Therefore, instead of conducting academic research or analysis in isolation, it is more effective to engage stakeholders in the process."*

The analysis revealed several consistent themes. Participants demonstrated a sound theoretical understanding of strategic management and strategic audit. However, there was widespread acknowledgement of a significant gap between theory and practice within the NPA.

5.2.1 Strategic audit awareness and application

Participants generally understood strategic audit as a systematic evaluation of the organisation's internal and external environment to inform strategy. Nevertheless, strategic audit was largely limited to the strategy formulation phase and was not applied consistently across implementation, review, and control stages. Many participants noted that the NPA relies heavily on compliance with the DPME framework, yet practical application remains superficial.

5.2.2 Strategic drift and misalignment

A prominent finding was the existence of strategic drift. Participants highlighted that the NPA's strategies often fail to evolve in tandem with the rapidly changing internal and external environment. Common misalignments were reported between the organisation's strategic plans, annual performance plans, operational plans, and actual service delivery, exacerbated by resource constraints, political influences, and high staff turnover.

5.2.3 Challenges in adapting strategic audit tools

Participants confirmed that most strategic audit tools (such as SWOT, PESTLE, and others) are designed for the private sector and require meaningful adaptation for the public sector context. Issues of prosecutorial independence, legislative constraints, and the unique mandate of the NPA were frequently cited as factors complicating the direct application of these tools.

5.2.4 Human and organisational capacity

Findings indicated insufficient capacity and institutionalisation of strategic audit practices. While senior management showed awareness, middle managers reported limited involvement and inadequate training. The absence of a dedicated strategic audit function or team further hindered systematic implementation.

5.2.5 Positive aspects and opportunities

Some participants noted strengths in the NPA's strategic planning documents and expressed optimism that a more robust strategic audit process could enhance alignment, improve responsiveness to environmental changes, and ultimately strengthen the organisation's ability to fulfil its constitutional mandate.

These findings corroborate the literature on the under-utilisation of strategic audit in public sector institutions and the persistent theory-practice gap observed in many SA government departments.

5.3 SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the key findings of the study. The empirical data revealed that although the NPA possesses theoretical knowledge of strategic audit, its application remains limited, inconsistent, and primarily confined to the formulation phase. Challenges such as strategic drift, misalignment, and difficulties in adapting private-sector tools were prominent. These findings provide a foundation for the recommendations and conclusions presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This final chapter provides a synthesis of the entire study. It begins with a summary of the research, highlighting the key aspects of each chapter. The chapter then presents practical recommendations derived from the findings, followed by a conclusion that reflects on the overall contribution of the study.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study comprises six chapters, each logically structured to address the research aims and questions.

Chapter One provides the general orientation to the study. It presents the background to the research, articulates the problem statement, outlines the research aims and objectives, poses the research questions, clarifies key theoretical concepts, and describes the overall structure of the dissertation.

Chapter Two details the research methodology adopted in the study. It justifies the qualitative research approach and exploratory case study design, describes the target population and the purposive and snowball sampling techniques employed. The chapter outlines the data collection methods (comprehensive literature review and semi-structured interviews), explains the thematic data analysis process, discusses the measures taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, and addresses the ethical considerations observed throughout the research.

Chapter Three focuses on strategic management concepts and processes. Divided into two parts, the first part conceptualises strategy and strategic management, while the second part examines the three core stages of the strategic management process: strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy review and control.

Chapter Four explores internal and external strategic audits in depth. It examines the purpose, importance, benefits, and risks of strategic audit, discusses the establishment of a strategic audit unit, outlines the process and key components of conducting both internal and external audits, and presents various tools and frameworks, including adaptations of private-sector instruments for public sector application.

Chapter Five presents the research findings derived from the empirical data. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with 16 NPA managers, this chapter provides a detailed thematic analysis of participants' perspectives on the current application of strategic audit within the NPA. It highlights the significant gap between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation, the prevalence of strategic drift, and the challenges associated with adapting strategic audit tools to the public sector context.

Chapter Six summarises the study, presents recommendations arising from the findings, and offers a conclusion.

In summary, this research explored the use of strategic audit as a mechanism to evaluate and strengthen the strategic management process at the NPA in Pretoria. The study found that although the NPA demonstrates theoretical familiarity with strategic management principles and the DPME framework, strategic audit remains significantly under-utilised and is largely confined to the strategy formulation phase. This has contributed to strategic drift and misalignment with the dynamic internal and external environment. By identifying both strengths and shortcomings in current practices, the study offers practical recommendations aimed at enhancing the NPA's strategic management capabilities, promoting greater organisational alignment, and supporting its long-term effectiveness and sustainability in fulfilling its constitutional mandate.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen the use of strategic audit and enhance the overall strategic management process at the NPA:

6.3.1 Institutionalisation of strategic audit

The NPA should institutionalise strategic audit as a formal, continuous, and integral component across all phases of the strategic management process — formulation, implementation, review, and control — rather than limiting it primarily to the strategy formulation phase.

6.3.2 Development of a context-specific strategic audit framework

Senior management should prioritise the development and implementation of a tailored strategic audit framework that is adapted to the unique mandate, regulatory environment, and operational realities of the public sector, and specifically the NPA. This framework should incorporate adapted tools such as SWOC analysis, PESTLE analysis, and comprehensive stakeholder analysis.

6.3.3 Capacity building and skills development

Targeted capacity-building initiatives, including structured training programmes for strategic planning champions, middle managers, and senior leadership, should be implemented to strengthen internal competencies in conducting, interpreting, and utilising strategic audits effectively.

6.3.4 Establishment of a dedicated Strategic Audit Unit

The NPA is strongly encouraged to establish a dedicated Strategic Audit Unit or function. Such a unit would promote independence, methodological rigour, continuity, and the systematic application of strategic audit practices throughout the organisation.

6.3.5 Integration of strategic audit findings

Mechanisms should be established to ensure that the findings and recommendations emanating from strategic audits are systematically integrated into performance monitoring, resource allocation decisions, annual performance plans, and annual reporting processes. This integration is essential to bridge the existing gap between theory and practice.

6.4 CONCLUSION

This research has highlighted both the potential value and current limitations of strategic audit within the NPA. By extending strategic audit beyond the formulation phase and adapting tools appropriately for the public sector, the NPA can achieve greater strategic alignment, responsiveness, and effectiveness in fulfilling its prosecutorial mandate.

The study contributes to the limited academic discourse on strategic audit in South African public sector institutions, particularly within the criminal justice environment. It underscores the need for public organisations to move from compliance-oriented planning to evidence-based, adaptive strategic management.

While the findings are context-specific, they offer valuable insights for other public institutions facing similar challenges. Implementing the recommendations of this study could significantly enhance the NPA's strategic management capability and overall organisational performance.

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LIST OF ANNEXURES

Annexure A University of South Africa Ethical Clearance

UNISA university of south africa

UNISA 2021 ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2021:08:23

ERC Reference No.: ST49
Name: MH Manchidi

Dear Ms Matswatswe Hellen Manchidi

Decision: Ethics Approval from 2021:08:23 to 2024:08:23

Researcher: Ms Matswatswe Hellen Manchidi

Supervisor: Prof JJ van der Merwe

Exploring the use of strategic audit to evaluate strategic management process at the National Prosecuting Authority in Pretoria

Qualification: MA in Criminal Justice

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa 2021 Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for 3 years.

*The **low risk application** was **reviewed** by the CLAW Ethics Review Committee on 23 August 2021 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. **The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa Covid-19 position statement on research ethics attached.**
2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

Open Rubric

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3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the CLAW Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
7. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
8. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2024:08:23**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number ST49-2021 should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Prof N Mollema
Acting Chair of CLAW ERC
E-mail: mollen@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 429-8384

Prof OJ Kole
Acting Executive Dean: CLAW
E-mail: koleoj@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 429-8305

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Annexure B Approval letter from National Prosecuting Authority

Administration

NATIONAL PROSECUTING AUTHORITY
South Africa

Enquiry: Mr. Marius Bester
Email: mjbester@npa.co.za
Phone: 012 845 6274
Date: 26/10/2021

Tel: +27 12 845 6000

Victoria & Griffiths
Mxenge Building
123 Westlake Avenue
Weavind Park
Pretoria

P/Bag X752
Pretoria
0001

Ms. Manchidi
PO Box 335
Pretoria
0001

RE: Request to conduct an interview with NPA Administrative Senior and Middle Managers at the VGM, responsible for Strategic Management of the NPA.

Dear Ms. Manchidi

Thank you for showing interest in conducting research in the NPA. The purpose of this memorandum is to communicate the outcome of your request to conduct research.

The request to conduct an interview with NPA Administrative Senior Managers (and where need be applicable Middle Managers) at the VGM, responsible for the Strategic Management of the NPA **has been approved**.

The NPA appreciates that the topic has been approved by the University of South Africa (Ethics clearance reference no: ST49). Please consider and/or observe (whichever is applicable) the below-mentioned in support of your research:

1. The research request focuses on gathering information through interviews with Senior and Middle Managers in the Administrative Component of the NPA, based at the VGM building in Pretoria, that are responsible for the Strategic Management and Annual Performance Plan of the National Prosecuting Authority.

Corporate Service Centres:

- Finance & Procurement
- Human Resources Development & Management
- Information Management
- Research & Policy Information
- Risk & Security

2. Permission to conduct research is limited to interviewing the selected NPA officials, and is subject to their availability and personal willingness to contribute to your research.
3. Permission is specifically subject to the stated research questions as stated in your research proposal.
4. Interviews with NPA officials should adhere to COVID-19 related Regulations.
5. It is requested that a copy of the report be sent to the NPA for perusal upon completion of the research project.
6. It is also requested that in the event of the author publishing an article on research which contains NPA information, such article should be shared with the NPA.
7. This approval letter is valid for 2 years from the date of approval by the Deputy National Director of Public Prosecutions: Strategy, Operations and Compliance. In case your research exceeds the above-mentioned timeframe, you will be required to re-apply.

In your case, there will be no need to complete "FORM A", which is the request for access to records of a Public Body, in terms of section 18(1) of the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000).

Kindly keep the NPA informed about further developments on this research and please direct your correspondence to Ms. Kefentse Mojaki-Moremogolo on the following details:

Telephone number: 012 845 6506 / 073 079 8444
E-mail address: kmojaki-moremogolo@npa.gov.za

Yours sincerely

Adv. Karen van Rensburg
Acting Head: Administration

Request to conduct an interview with NPA Administrative Senior and Middle Managers at the VGM, responsible for Strategic Management of the NPA.

Annexure C.1 Participant information sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Ethics clearance reference number: ST49
Research permission reference number:

<date>

Title: Exploring the use of strategic audit to evaluate strategic management process at the National Prosecuting Authority in Pretoria

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Ms. Matswatswe Hellen Manchidi, and I am doing research with Mr. J.J. van der Merwe, a senior lecturer (Policing) in the Department of Police Practice: College of Law, towards a MA in Criminal Justice at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled "Exploring the use of strategic audit to evaluate strategic management process at the National Prosecuting Authority in Pretoria".

What is the purpose of the study?
The study aims to determine the use of strategic audit in the strategic management process of the NPA of SA.

Why am I being invited to participate?
Your organisation has been selected because the research intent was only to consider the strategic management practices of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) functionaries. The population was narrowed to the NPA as a role player in the CJS in order to fulfill the requirements of the study.

The target population for the interview in this study will be selected according to the below criteria:

a) in this study, not only senior/top managers are strategists. The researcher will extend the strategists perspective to include strategic planners, middle managers, and consultants.

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b) purposive sample of the NPA senior managers (both male and female) will be selected as having had at least 2 years' experience in strategic planning and Annual Performance Plan (APP)

c) to obtain credible data from the interviews, the researcher will like to interview at least 15–20 senior managers.

What is the nature of my participation in this study?

The role of the participant is limited to stating the way they know and had experienced the phenomenon under study; there are no right or wrong answers; and information will be taken 'as is', without alterations.

Participants will be interviewed in their 'natural' setting, for convenience purposes to the participants; an alternative comfortable, safe, free from disturbances, and a quiet environment will be arranged should the need arise (i.e., any convenient outlets, coffee shops, and or restaurants)

The researcher will keep the interview invitation to one interview per participant; and participants will be contacted for additional interviews if the need arises for a follow-up interview.

The duration of interviews will depend on the amount of interest in the topic, information, personal opinions, and experience of the respondent; the expected duration of participation, and the time needed to complete specific research interviews; however, the researcher will allocate an average of 6–8 weeks to engage with participants; the researcher will also limit the interviews to 60 minutes per interview session.

The study involves the audio recording of semi-structured interviews.

The sample of the type of questions that will be asked entails:

a) what are the objectives of strategic analysis? [Sample A: question for middle managers]

what are the objectives of strategic audit? [Sample B: question for senior/top managers]

b) what is the value of using the strategic audit to analyse and evaluate the strategic management process?

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Can I withdraw from this study even after having agreed to participate?

Participation is voluntary, and that there is no penalty or loss of benefit for non-participation, and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason; however, it will not be possible to withdraw once the interview has been transcribed.

What are the potential benefits of taking part in this study?

The benefits of this study are:

a) Criticising or evaluating something (how well does something work?)

The researcher evaluated the existing method utilised by the NPA to analyse its environment; currently, the NPA only conducts strategic analysis of its strategic formulation; however, the researcher considered that the NPA could improve — by adopting strategic audit as a tool to analyse and evaluate its entire strategic management process.

b) Forecasting an outcome (what will happen in the future?)

The value of the research rests on how well it manages to predict events and supply useful forecasts to those who will use the knowledge, while the purpose of research is to arrive at conclusions about future events or situations (Denscombe, 2010:11).

The researcher will make recommendations based on the outcomes of the study for future research and practice. Furthermore, the researcher is of the opinion that the benefits of frequently conducting strategic audits will provide the NPA with a range of self-assessment audits to: a) highlight strengths and weaknesses within the NPA; b) identify problems before they happen; c) ensure organisation-wide control of the NPA; d) benchmarking results with other government departments; and lastly e) align overall NPA strategy with the organisation's needs and strengths.

c) Explaining the causes or consequences of something (why do things happen?)

The primary purpose of research is to understand the relationship between events and phenomena and to move towards theories or models that explain the *way things work* and to improve our understanding of *why things happen as they do* (Denscombe, 2010:11).

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Once the report of the NPA strategic formulation analysis is complete, the gap widens between where the NPA is expected to be and where it was during the strategic analysis. The ongoing process of the strategic audit will bridge that gap. The strategic audit report is a working document and should never be final.

d) Developing good practice (how can it be improved?)

Best practice analysis focuses more on *how things get done* than on *what gets done*; it focuses more on the overall secret of success than on particular process improvements (Della-Piana et al, 2005:37).

The study aims to arrive at recommendations for good practice that, if applied, would assist the NPA and other government departments (the public sector) on how to conduct strategic audits. In addition, the researcher will contextualise the adaptation of strategic analysis tools that were primarily designed for the private sector to be used in the public sector.

e) Empowerment (how can it help those who are being researched?)

The aim is to empower those (the NPA and the public sector) who are the subject of the investigation, and the principal motive for conducting the research is the welfare of those (senior managers) involved (Denscombe, 2010:12). Furthermore, the research aims at adding to the strategic audit knowledge base.

The outcomes of the study will benefit not only the NPA but also other government departments (the public sector). The most notable benefit of the study will be the prospect of raising awareness among government departments on the threat posed by the absence of strategic audits.

The strategic audit will also provide senior managers with a forum for debating and sharing divergent views about the internal and external environmental changes and their possible impact, where ambiguities and uncertainties in the environment can be made more explicit and assessed.

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Are there any negative consequences for me if I participate in the research project?

Potential risks are classified based on the anticipated degree of risk

Category 1 Negligible	Category 2 Low risk	Category 3 Medium risk	Category 4 High risk
No to indirect human participant involvement. ☐	Direct human participant involvement. The only foreseeable risk of harm is the potential for minor discomfort or inconvenience; thus, research that would not pose a risk above the everyday norm. [x]	Direct human participant involvement. Research that poses a risk above the everyday norm, including physical, psychological, and social risks. Steps can be taken to minimise the likelihood of the event occurring. ☐	Direct human participant involvement. A real or foreseeable risk of harm, including physical, psychological, and social risk which may lead to a serious adverse event if not managed responsibly. ☐

The participants are in the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA); however, the researcher will focus on open and declassified information processes and not the content of their work.

Will the information that I convey to the researcher and my identity be kept confidential?

The extent to which confidentiality of information will be maintained.

The participant has the right to insist that their name must not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research *[this measure refers to confidentiality]* OR the participant's name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give *[this measure refers to anonymity]*. Participant's answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym, and the participant will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings *[this measure refers to confidentiality].*

The researcher, supervisor, and co-supervisor will have access to the data, and these individuals will maintain confidentiality. Participant's answers may be reviewed by people responsible for ensuring that research is done properly, including members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify the participant will be available only to people working on the study unless the participant gives permission for other people to see the records.

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Participant's anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles, and/or conference proceedings. Privacy will be protected in any publication of the information [e.g., *a report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report].*

How will the researcher(s) protect the security of data?

Hard copies of the participant answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet at the residential place of the researcher for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed by the researcher and kept on the USB under password protection, in a safe, for a period of five years. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. Hard copies will be shredded, and or electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme (IObit Advanced SystemCare v14 Pro – File Shredder).

Will I receive payment or any incentives for participating in this study?

There will be no payment or reward offered, financial or otherwise, for participating in this study. There will be no costs incurred by the participant for participating in this study; participants will be interviewed in their 'natural' setting.

Has the study received ethics approval?

This study has received written approval from the Health Research Ethics Committee of the College of Law, Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

How will I be informed of the findings/results of the research?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, or should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Ms. M.H. Manchidi on 079-436-3381, or 50461613@mylife.unisa.ac.za.

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Who to contact concerning the conduct and ethical issues?

a) Conduct concerns:

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact my supervisor, Mr. J.J. van der Merwe on 012-433-9455, or jvdmerwe@unisa.ac.za.

b) Ethical concerns:

Contact the research ethics chairperson of the CAES Health Research Ethics Committee, Prof. M.A. Antwi, on 011-670-9391 or antwima@unisa.ac.za if you have any ethical concerns.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

Ms. M.H. Manchidi

The researcher

Student: MA in Criminal Justice

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Annexure C.2 Informed consent for participants

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty; however, it will not be possible to withdraw once the interview has been transcribed.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications, and/or conference proceedings but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the semi-structured interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname…… (please print)

Participant Signature…… Date……

Researcher's Name & Surname…… (please print)

Researcher's signature…… Date……

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Annexure D Interview schedule (Sample A) Middle managers: Strategic analysis

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (SAMPLE A)

MIDDLE MANAGERS:

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

FOR RESEARCHER USE ONLY
Participant: _____ (please assign a Code number OR a Pseudonym)

The information you provide will be used in a research project for a Master of Arts in Criminal Justice at the University of South Africa (UNISA).

Title: Exploring the use of strategic audit to evaluate strategic management process at the National Prosecuting Authority in Pretoria

Aim: To determine the use of strategic audit in the strategic management process of the NPA of South Africa

Research questions:

a) what are the objectives of strategic audit?

b) what is the strategic management process, and how are strategic audit framework/tools primarily designed for the private sector adapted for the public sector?

Permission already granted prior to conducting the interview

The participant will receive copies of the following:

a) written permission from the NPA for this interview to be conducted

b) informed, uncoerced consent from the participant to participate in the research

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Permission sought prior to conducting the interview

a) I hereby give permission to be interviewed and that any information supplied by me can be used in this research:

YES ☐ NO ☐

Signature of participant (optional) _____ Date _____

a) I hereby give permission to be for this interview to be recorded

YES ☐ NO ☐

Signature of participant (optional) _____ Date _____

Procedure: during the interview

a) only one answer per question is required

b) when answering the questions, it is very important to give your own opinion

c) should any question be unclear, please ask the researcher for clarification

d) your answers will be noted by the interviewer (the researcher), on paper, and by use of an audio recorder.

Procedure: after the interview

a) after the interview, the researcher will submit a transcript of the interview and get from the participant either a written acknowledgment of its accuracy or a corrected copy

b) the analysed and processed data will be published in a research report.

Researchers' assurance

a) the researcher is bound by her assurances and guarantees to the ethics code for research of the University of South Africa (UNISA)

c) the researcher ensures that no harm will come to the participant

e) the researcher aims to establish and maintain a good rapport with the participant

f) the researcher ensures the participants' privacy; and ensures to acknowledge the contributions of the participant through appropriate referencing.

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You are kindly requested to answer the following questions in this interview schedule for research purposes.

SECTION A: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A.1	Are you a strategic planner?				YES ☐	NO ☐
A.2	How long have you been a strategic planner?	1 – 5 yrs ☐	5 – 10 yrs ☐	10+ yrs ☐		
A.3	Have you ever conducted strategic analysis?				YES ☐	NO ☐
A.4	For how many years have you been conducting strategic analysis?				_____ years	
A.5	Did you receive strategic planning training?				YES ☐	NO ☐
A.6	Did you receive specific training to conduct strategic analysis?				YES ☐	NO ☐

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SECTION B: WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF STRATEGIC AUDIT (ANALYSIS)?

B.1) What is strategic analysis?

a) What is strategy?

b) What is the purpose of strategic analysis?

c) What are the key components of strategic analysis?

B.2) Why should organisations conduct strategic analysis?

a) Why is strategic analysis important to strategy formulation (planning)?

b) What are the benefits of conducting strategic analysis?

c) What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis?

B.3) Who should conduct strategic analysis

a) What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?

b) How many people should conduct strategic analysis?

B.4) When should strategic analysis be conducted?

a) How often should strategic analysis be conducted?

b) How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?

B.5) How can strategic analysis be conducted?

a) What information is required to conduct strategic analysis?

b) What are the steps in the strategic analysis process?

c) i. Which strategic analysis framework/tools should be used to scan the internal environment?

ii. Which strategic analysis framework/tools should be used to scan the external environment?

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Annexure E Interview Schedule (Sample B) Senior/top managers: Strategic audit

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (SAMPLE B)
SENIOR/TOP MANAGERS:
STRATEGIC AUDIT

FOR RESEARCHER USE ONLY
Participant: _____ (please assign a Code number OR a Pseudonym)

The information you provide will be used in a research project for a Master of Arts in Criminal Justice at the University of South Africa (UNISA).

Title: Exploring the use of strategic audit to evaluate strategic management process at the National Prosecuting Authority in Pretoria

Aim: To determine the use of strategic audit in the strategic management process of the NPA of South Africa

Research questions:

a) what are the objectives of strategic audit?

b) what is the strategic management process, and how are strategic audit framework/tools primarily designed for the private sector adapted for the public sector?

Permission already granted prior to conducting the interview

The participant will receive copies of the following:

a) written permission from the NPA for this interview to be conducted

b) informed, uncoerced consent from the participant to participate in the research

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Permission sought prior to conducting the interview

a) I hereby give permission to be interviewed and that any information supplied by me can be used in this research:

YES ☐ NO ☐

Signature of participant (optional) _____ Date _____

a) I hereby give permission to be for this interview to be recorded

YES ☐ NO ☐

Signature of participant (optional) _____ Date _____

Procedure: during the interview

a) only one answer per question is required

b) when answering the questions, it is very important to give your own opinion

c) should any question be unclear, please ask the researcher for clarification

d) your answers will be noted by the interviewer (the researcher), on paper, and by use of an audio recorder.

Procedure: after the interview

a) after the interview, the researcher will submit a transcript of the interview and get from the participant either a written acknowledgment of its accuracy or a corrected copy

b) the analysed and processed data will be published in a research report.

Researchers' assurance

a) the researcher is bound by her assurances and guarantees to the ethics code for research of the University of South Africa (UNISA)

c) the researcher ensures that no harm will come to the participant

e) the researcher aims to establish and maintain a good rapport with the participant

f) the researcher ensures the participants' privacy; and ensures to acknowledge the contributions of the participant through appropriate referencing.

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You are kindly requested to answer the following questions in this interview schedule for research purposes.

SECTION A: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A.1	Are you a strategic planner?				YES ☐	NO ☐
A.2	How long have you been a strategic planner?	1 – 5 yrs ☐		5 – 10 yrs ☐		10+ yrs ☐
A.3	Have you ever conducted strategic analysis?				YES ☐	NO ☐
A.4	For how many years have you been conducting strategic analysis?				_____ years	
A.5	Did you receive strategic planning training?				YES ☐	NO ☐
A.6	Did you receive specific training to conduct strategic analysis?				YES ☐	NO ☐

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SECTION B: WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF STRATEGIC AUDIT (ANALYSIS)?

B.1) What is strategic analysis?

a) What is strategy?

b) What is the purpose of strategic analysis?

c) What are the key components of strategic analysis?

B.2) Why should organisations conduct strategic analysis?

a) Why is strategic analysis important to strategy formulation (planning)?

b) What are the benefits of conducting strategic analysis?

c) What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis?

B.3) Who should conduct strategic analysis

a) What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?

b) How many people should conduct strategic analysis?

B.4) When should strategic analysis be conducted?

a) How often should strategic analysis be conducted?

b) How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?

B.5) How can strategic analysis be conducted?

a) What information is required to conduct strategic analysis?

b) What are the steps in the strategic analysis process?

c) i. Which strategic analysis framework/tools should be used to scan the internal environment?

ii. Which strategic analysis framework/tools should be used to scan the external environment?

SECTION C: WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS, AND HOW ARE STRATEGIC AUDIT FRAMEWORK/TOOLS PRIMARILY DESIGNED FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR ADAPTED FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR?

C.1) What is the strategic management process?

C.2) How can the strategic analysis framework/tools primarily designed for the private sector be adapted for the public sector?

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Annexure F List of participants, pseudonyms and contact details

Pseudonyms	Name and surname (Public version - column redacted)	Gender	Organisation	Position (Job title) (Public version - column redacted)	Contact details (Public version - column redacted)
Middle managers (Sample A):					
MM.1	[redacted]	Male	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
MM.2	[redacted]	Female	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
MM.3	[redacted]	Female	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
Senior and top managers (Sample B):					
SM.1	[redacted]	Male	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.2	[redacted]	Male	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.3	[redacted]	Female	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	c:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.4	[redacted]	Male	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.5	[redacted]	Male	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	c:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.6	[redacted]	Female	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.7	[redacted]	Male	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.8	[redacted]	Female	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.9	[redacted]	Female	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted]

				[redacted]	e:[redacted]
SM.10	[redacted]	Male	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.11	[redacted]	Male	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.12	[redacted]	Male	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]
SM.13	[redacted]	Female	National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa	[redacted]	t:[redacted] e:[redacted]

VERBATIM
THEMATIC ANALYSIS

VERBATIM THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Theme or Research question	Prompt or Code name	Verbatim excerpts from raw data (interview transcripts)
1. What is strategic audit (analysis)?	*RQ1. What is strategic audit (analysis)?*	**Middle managers (Sample A):** MM.1 *"Strategic analysis is a comprehensive evaluation process that guides an organisation in setting long-term objectives. Its primary aim is to instil a sense of certainty within the organisation, ensuring it can effectively fulfil its mandate."* MM.2 *"Strategic analysis refers to the process of conducting research on a company and its operating environment in order to formulate a strategy. It also involves evaluating an organisation's work environment, which defines its business operations."*
		MM.3 *"Strategic analysis can be succinctly defined as a process of researching and analysing an organisation, as well as the business environment in which it operates, with the aim of formulating an effective strategy."* **Senior and top managers (Sample B):** SM.1 *"Strategic analysis, as I understand it, begins with the formulation of a plan. This plan, which is typically long-term, outlines how an organisation intends to achieve its objectives… The analysis aspect comes into play when we examine these strategic goals and objectives to determine if they are being met and how they can be achieved."* SM.2 *"Strategic analysis, as I understand it, is a critical component of the strategic planning process. It involves a retrospective examination of an organisation's performance, assessing both its accomplishments and challenges… Simultaneously, it necessitates a forward-looking perspective to anticipate future obstacles… The importance of strategic analysis in strategic planning cannot be overstated, as it aids in identifying priorities and determining the focus of the strategic plan."* SM.3 *"Strategic analysis, as I understand it, involves an examination of the situation within an organisation. This examination often takes the form of a PESTEL analysis, which considers Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal aspects that impact an organisation's ability to perform both internally and externally. Strategic analysis also includes a SWOT analysis, which assesses an organisation's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats."* SM.4 *"Strategic analysis, in a non-academic context, is a process that allows us to comprehend the strategic direction we are pursuing. It ensures that our strategic direction aligns with our vision and mission… It questions whether our strategy remains aligned with the vision we strive to achieve and the long-term plans we have established, considering both the internal and external environments within which we operate."* SM.5 *"Therefore, strategic analysis is a process that assists the leadership and management at the NPA in setting clear goals and objectives; this is crucial in our pursuit of delivering justice to the people of South Africa through prosecution."* SM.6 *"Strategic analysis is the process where senior managers in government must be capable of providing a vision and setting the direction for their respective departments or institutions. They must also inspire others to deliver on their institutional mandates. This means that senior managers must*

		not only understand the vision of where the institution and their unit are headed, but they must also provide a roadmap for achieving this vision and motivate and inspire their staff to implement what was agreed. To define their strategy, they complete their internal and external analyses, unify and communicate their strategy to both implementers and beneficiaries."
	SM.7	*"Strategic analysis, in business, often refers to market analysis. However, in my field [Service Delivery], it is a data-gathering process for planning before implementation; this involves setting targets, determining tasks, and establishing timelines… Strategic analysis is essentially an organisational functionality assessment, evaluating past performance to plan better for the next financial year."*
	SM.8	*"Strategic analysis is a process that involves understanding the environment in which an organisation operates and identifying objectives for future strategies."*
	SM.9	*"Strategic analysis, closely tied to research, involves dissecting subject matter analytically… The essence of strategic analysis is monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving the vision. It could also involve unpacking a strategy and examining its achievements, such as conducting a customer satisfaction survey."*
	SM.10	*"Strategic analysis is a process that should be undertaken as it informs the overall planning process of a government or institution… we engage in this process to evaluate what has worked and what has not and to analyse what can be implemented through performance measurement in order to rectify the situation… through the strategic analysis process, we are able to determine which interventions and indicators are necessary and establish the budget required for these interventions to be implemented."*
	SM.11	*"Strategic analysis is a broad concept involving an in-depth examination of a department's objectives and mission, focusing on where it envisions itself in the next five to ten years… This process includes analysing both strengths and weaknesses, enabling the department to address these areas effectively and achieve its desired outcomes."*
	SM.12	*"Strategic analysis is an exercise conducted to identify factors that could impact the strategic direction of an organisation… As the term 'strategic' suggests, this analysis is conducted at a strategic level rather than an operational level, focusing on the organisation's strategic objectives… Consequently, strategic analysis involves identifying factors that may hinder or enable this mandate's implementation, as outlined in the Act."*
	SM.13	*"strategic analysis refers to the process of assessing the future plans of a department or an organisation; this involves a comprehensive examination of both the internal and external environments in which the department or organisation operates."*
1.1 What is strategy?	**Middle managers (Sample A):**	
	MM.1	*Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy, [but implies that it is the result of strategic analysis and planning. A possible answer could be: Strategy is] "the long-term objectives and plans that an organisation sets based on its understanding of the environment and its mandate."*
	MM.2	*Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of*

the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy.

MM.3 *Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy.*

Senior and top managers (Sample B):

SM.1 *"A strategic plan is a roadmap that guides an organisation, such as the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), in achieving its mandate. Typically, in government, we have a strategic plan that outlines the goals to be achieved over a five-year term"*

SM.2 *Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy, [but implies that it is the plan that is informed by the strategic analysis and the factors that influence it. A possible answer could be: Strategy is] "the organisation's adopted strategy and what factors have influenced that strategy."*

SM.3 *"In the context of strategic planning, the process begins with a strategic analysis of the organisation's internal and external environment. This analysis helps determine where the organisation fits in and how it should align its strategies."*

SM.4 *Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy, [but implies that it is the outcome of strategic analysis and alignment. A possible answer could be: Strategy is] "the strategic direction we are pursuing ...that is informed and influenced by various factors and aligned with our vision and mission."*

SM.5 *"The strategic analysis and planning conducted at the NPA serve not only to establish a roadmap of our objectives and what we aim to achieve in our role as prosecutors but also to facilitate our reporting and accountability to the executive branch through Parliament."*

SM.6 *"In essence, a strategy articulates an institution's vision and mission and the direction the institution intends to take to achieve its desired outcomes and outputs; this assists the government in effectively achieving its priorities. A strategy serves as a comprehensive approach and plan for the work to be undertaken by each department or component across all tiers of government; this can be for a short-term (the following year), medium-term (the following three years), or long-term (the following five to ten years) process."*

SM.7 *Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy, [but implies that it is the outcome of strategic analysis and planning. A possible answer could be: Strategy is] "the targets, tasks, and timelines ...that are informed by the data gathered and the feasibility study conducted."*

SM.8 *Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy, [but implies that it is the set of objectives that are derived from strategic analysis. A possible answer could be: Strategy is] "the intended objectives explicitly*

		...delineated for a five-year strategic plan."
	SM.9	*Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy, [but implies that it is the plan that is derived from the strategic analysis and the vision. A possible answer could be: Strategy is] "a five-year strategy supplemented by annual plans ...that aims to achieve specific outcomes."*
	SM.10	*Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy, [but implies that it is the plan or operational strategy that is informed by the strategic analysis process. A possible answer could be: Strategy is] "the plan or operational strategy that is informed by the strategic analysis process."*
	SM.11	*Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy, [but implies that it is the vision and the plan that are derived from the strategic analysis. A possible answer could be: Strategy is] "where [the department] envisions itself in the next five to ten years [and how it plans to] ...address [its] strengths and weaknesses [and] ...achieve its desired outcomes."*
	SM.12	*"Strategic direction is often linked to the mandate derived from legislation… This mandate primarily informs strategic decisions and directions."*
	SM.13	*Despite the prompt, 'What is strategy?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly define strategy, [but implies that it is the plan that is examined by the strategic audit. A possible answer could be: Strategy is] "the strategies employed by an organisation [that are reviewed by] ...the organisation's five-year plan, as agreed upon by its leadership."*
1.2 What is the purpose of strategic audit (analysis)?	**Middle managers (Sample A):**	
	MM.1	*[The participant states that the purpose of strategic analysis is to] "guide an organisation in settinglong-term objectives [and] ...to instil a sense of certainty within the organisation, ensuring it can effectively fulfil its mandate."*
	MM.2	*"Strategic analysis refers to the process of conducting research on a company and its operating environment in order to formulate a strategy. It also involves evaluating an organisation's work environment, which defines its business operations."*
	MM.3	*"Strategic analysis can be succinctly defined as a process of researching and analysing an organisation, as well as the business environment in which it operates, with the aim of formulating an effective strategy."*
	Senior and top managers (Sample B):	
	SM.1	*"The purpose of strategic analysis is to examine these strategic goals and objectives to determine if they are being met and how they can be achieved."*

	SM.2	*"The importance of strategic analysis in strategic planning cannot be overstated, as it aids in identifying priorities and determining the focus of the strategic plan."*
	SM.3	*"The purpose of strategic analysis is to help determine where the organisation fits in and how it should align its strategies."*
	SM.4	*"The purpose of strategic analysis is to ensure that our strategic direction aligns with our vision and mission… It questions whether our strategy remains aligned with the vision we strive to achieve and the long-term plans we have established, considering both the internal and external environments within which we operate."*
	SM.5	*"The strategic analysis and planning conducted at the NPA serve not only to establish a roadmap of our objectives and what we aim to achieve in our role as prosecutors but also to facilitate our reporting and accountability to the executive branch through Parliament."*
	SM.6	*"The purpose of strategic analysis is to provide a vision and set the direction for their respective departments or institutions. They [senior managers in government institutions] must also inspire others to deliver on their institutional mandates."*
	SM.7	*"The purpose of strategic analysis is to have information that informs the planning phase" and to "review past performance reports, conduct a root cause analysis, and plan for improvement."*
	SM.8	*"The purpose of strategic analysis is understanding the environment in which an organisation operates and identifying objectives for future strategies… It is essential to identify potential risks associated with the strategy and develop plans to mitigate them."*
	SM.9	*"The purpose of strategic analysis is monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving the vision. It could also involve unpacking a strategy and examining its achievements, such as conducting a customer satisfaction survey."*
	SM.10	*"We engage in this process to evaluate what has worked and what has not and to analyse what can be implemented through performance measurement in order to rectify the situation… through the strategic analysis process, we are able to determine which interventions and indicators are necessary and establish the budget required for these interventions to be implemented."*
	SM.11	*[The participant states that the purpose of strategic analysis is to] "examine…a department's objectives and mission [and to] ...analyse both strengths and weaknesses".*
	SM.12	*"The purpose of strategic analysis is to identify factors that could impact the strategic direction of an organisation… These factors may hinder or enable the implementation of the mandate outlined in the Act."*
	SM.13	*"The aim is to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that could potentially influence the implementation and success of these plans."*

1.3	What are the key components of strategic audit (analysis)?	**Middle managers (Sample A):** MM.1 *[The participant describes the key components of strategic analysis as follows]: (a) Understanding the environment: "the first step is to understand the organisation's environment", (b) Planning: "based on this understanding, plans are made", (c) Implementation: "these plans are then put into action", (d) Monitoring: "the progress of these strategies is closely monitored", (e) Review: "after implementation, the strategies and their results are reviewed. The review provides insights that enhance understanding of the operational environment", and (f) Enhancement: "this completes one cycle of strategic planning and sets the stage for the next".* MM.2 *"The process of strategic analysis has several common factors, including identifying and evaluating data relevant to the company's strategy, defining the internal and external environment to be analysed, and using several analytic methods such as Porter's Five Forces analysis, SWOT analysis, and Value chain analysis."* MM.3 *[The participant mentioned:] "Strategic analysis can be succinctly defined as a process of researching and analysing an organisation, as well as the business environment in which it operates…" [This suggests that the key components of strategic analysis, according to the participant, include the processes of researching and analysing both the organisation and its business environment.]* **Senior and top managers (Sample B):** SM.1 *"The key components of strategic analysis are the formulation of a plan, which is typically long-term, and the examination of these strategic goals and objectives to determine if they are being met and how they can be achieved."* SM.2 *[The participant mentions the following key components of strategic analysis]: (a) Retrospective examination: "a retrospective examination of an organisation's performance, assessing both its accomplishments and challenges", (b) Forward-looking perspective: "a forward-looking perspective to anticipate future obstacles", (c) Elements and tools: "various elements and utilises several tools, such as PESTEL, among others, to scrutinise the landscape", and (d) Priorities and focus: "identifying priorities and determining the focus of the strategic plan".* SM.3 *"The key components of strategic analysis include an examination of the situation within an organisation, often taking the form of a PESTEL analysis and a SWOT analysis. Another crucial part, which is often overlooked, is aligning the strategic plan with individual performance contracts."* SM.4 *"The key components of strategic analysis include: (a) Understanding the environment: "the environment in which we operate", (b) Alignment: "ensures that our strategic direction aligns with our vision and mission", (c) Communication: "understanding what our strategy communicates", (d) Information: "what informs it", (e) Influence: "what influences it", (f) Questioning: "questions whether our strategy remains aligned with the vision we strive to achieve and the long-term plans we have established", and (g) Achievement: "helps us to work towards achieving our long-term plans".* SM.5 *"The strategic analysis and planning conducted at the NPA serve not only to establish a roadmap of our objectives and what we aim to achieve in our role as prosecutors but also to facilitate our reporting and accountability to the executive branch through Parliament…Therefore, strategic analysis is a process that assists the leadership and management at the NPA in setting clear goals and objectives…"* SM.6 *"The key components of strategic analysis are: (a) understanding the vision of where the institution and their unit are headed, (b) providing a roadmap*

			for achieving this vision, (c) motivating and inspiring their staff to implement what was agreed, (d) completing their internal and external analyses, and (e) unifying and communicating their strategy to both implementers and beneficiaries."
			SM.7 *"The key components of strategic analysis involve: (a) Data-gathering: "a data-gathering process for planning before implementation", (b) Feasibility study: "this process is akin to conducting a feasibility study in business.", (c) Performance review: "before each financial year, it is important to review past performance reports", (d) Root cause analysis: "conduct a root cause analysis", and (e) Planning for improvement: "plan for improvement".*
			SM.8 *"The key components of strategic analysis include: (a) PESTLE analysis: "a key part of strategic analysis is conducting a PESTLE analysis, which examines internal and external factors that influence the organisation's mandate", (b) SWOT analysis: "a SWOT analysis should be conducted to identify the organisation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats", and (c) Risk identification and mitigation: "it is essential to identify potential risks associated with the strategy and develop plans to mitigate them".*
			SM.9 *"The key components of strategic analysis involve: (a) Research: "strategic analysis, closely tied to research, involves dissecting subject matter analytically", (b) Vision: "we must understand our country's vision, as outlined in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030", (c) Situation analysis: "the strategy is informed by a situation analysis report, examining the external and internal environment", (d) Monitoring and evaluation: "the essence of strategic analysis is monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving the vision", and (e) Unpacking and examination: "it could also involve unpacking a strategy and examining its achievements, such as conducting a customer satisfaction survey".*
			SM.10 *[The participant mentions the following key components of strategic analysis]: (a) Evaluation: "evaluate what has worked and what has not", (b) Analysis: "analyse what can be implemented through performance measurement in order to rectify the situation", (c) Determination: "determine which interventions and indicators are necessary", and (d) Budgeting: "establish the budget required for these interventions to be implemented".*
			SM.11 *[The participant mentions the following key components of strategic analysis]: (a) Examination: "an in-depth examination of a department's objectives and mission", (b) Analysis: "analysing both strengths and weaknesses", (c) Vision: "focusing on where it envisions itself in the next five to ten years", and (d) Outcomes: "achieving its desired outcomes".*
			SM.12 *"The key components of strategic analysis include various elements. Popular tools used in this process include SWOT analysis, which examines strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and PESTEL analysis, which considers political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors. These tools are supplemented by research to inform the strategic decisions that an organisation may need to make."*
			SM.13 *[The participant mentions the following key components of strategic analysis]: (a) Assessment: "assessing the future plans of a department or an organisation", (b) Examination: "a comprehensive examination of both the internal and external environments", (c) Factors: "the factors that could potentially influence the implementation and success of these plans".*
2. Why should organisations conduct strategic audit (analysis)?	*RQ2.*	*Why should organisations conduct strategic audit (analysis)?*	**Middle managers (Sample A):**
			.MM.1 *"Strategic analysis is crucial as it equips an organisation with the necessary knowledge and information to make informed decisions."*
			MM.2 *"The primary reason for conducting strategic analysis lies in its manifold benefits. Not only does it minimise risk, but it also enables an organisation*

to focus on and achieve its objectives. Strategic analysis allows a company to consider its competitors and evaluate organisation strategies to maintain a competitive edge."

MM.3 *"Organisations need to conduct strategic analysis to strengthen both internal operations and their response to external factors that might negatively affect the organisation. Furthermore, through strategic analysis, the organisation can gain valuable insights into what works well and identify areas that need improvement."*

Senior and top managers (Sample B):

SM.1 *"Most organisations have what are known as strategic units… The organisation needs to conduct an analysis to ensure it is aligned with its set goals… That is when an organisation needs to conduct an analysis to ensure it is still on the right track regarding what it said it would achieve."*

SM.2 *"Organisations must conduct strategic analysis to avoid the risks associated with relying solely on intuition. Without a strategic analysis, the achievement of strategic objectives or outcomes may be compromised…A well-conducted strategic analysis incorporates a Cause-and-Effect Model into the planning process… The strategic analysis should yield macro outcomes, which are the high-level objectives or outcomes."*

SM.3 *"In my view, strategic analysis is an integral part of the strategic planning process, which typically involves understanding, planning, executing, monitoring, and evaluating. This process is cyclical, with planning beginning anew after each evaluation phase… Strategic planning cannot occur in a vacuum; it is crucial to understand the various factors that impact an organisation's ability to perform and plan."*

SM.4 *"Strategic analysis is crucial for organisations, including the NPA…long-term plans are in place, such as the National Development Plan (NDP), which spans 30 years… within those 30 years, numerous changes can occur, including complications arising from shifts in government direction, administrative changes, and the introduction of new policies… Strategic analysis assists in aligning your strategy with the path you intend to follow, which is of utmost importance… Without strategic analysis, your strategy may remain aligned with outdated [strategies]… and your new path may not be up-to-date… Therefore, your strategy should be a living document, subject to consistent and continuous analysis to ensure alignment with the broader picture you aim to achieve in the long run."*

SM.5 *"In the context of why organisations should conduct strategic analysis, it is important to note that the process can overlap with other organisational activities. Strategic analysis aims to ensure that our work is focused, with clear goals and objectives supported by indicators and set targets…Strategic analysis and planning focus our efforts given the resources we have. Moreover, it enables us to account to Parliament based on previously agreed targets and specific indicators."*

SM.6 *"By conducting a strategic analysis, organisations can determine whether there is alignment between their strategic plans and the national plans, as well as the frameworks that guide performance and operational plans."*

SM.7 *"...conducting a strategic analysis is crucial for effective planning. This process allows an organisation to identify its shortcomings and areas for improvement, as the needs and expectations of service delivery are dynamic, not static… Without this step [strategic analysis], there is a risk of misalignment in the plans. Therefore, a strategic analysis is not just beneficial but necessary for any organisation aiming for successful service delivery."*

SM.8 *"Conducting a strategic analysis is crucial as it enables an organisation to understand the environment in which it operates. This understanding is key to formulating appropriate objectives or outcomes to guide the organisation's strategic direction. Therefore, strategic analysis is an essential process."*

SM.9 *"The purpose of strategic analysis is to ensure that you are aligned with the beneficiaries of your service and understand your position within the larger system… It is about ensuring that our strategy aligns with others to achieve the collective goals."*

SM.10 *"The primary purpose of conducting a strategic analysis is to understand the environment in which our organisation operates… These insights are the key benefits of conducting a strategic analysis."*

SM.11 *"To chart a course toward your desired future, it is essential first to understand your current position; this necessitates a strategic analysis to comprehend the present circumstances and to devise a plan for reaching your goals."*

SM.12 *"Strategic analysis is crucial for any organisation as it provides the necessary context for formulating effective strategies… Therefore, strategic analysis is essential to identify and understand the external and internal factors that could impact the implementation of an organisation's mandate."*

SM.13 *"Conducting a strategic analysis is crucial for an organisation as it provides a clear roadmap for achieving its objectives; this typically involves the creation of a five-year plan, which is reviewed and updated annually, outlining the organisation's goals and the strategies to achieve them."*

2.1 Why is strategic audit (analysis) important to strategy formulation (planning)?

Middle managers (Sample A):

MM.1 *"Strategic analysis is crucial as it equips an organisation with the necessary knowledge and information to make informed decisions."*

MM.2 *"Strategic analysis allows a company to consider its competitors and evaluate organisation strategies to maintain a competitive edge… It enables management to evaluate the organisation effectively and formulate and implement strategies."*

MM.3 *"Organisations need to conduct strategic analysis to strengthen both internal operations and their response to external factors that might negatively affect the organisation. Furthermore, through strategic analysis, the organisation can gain valuable insights into what works well and identify areas that need improvement." [This suggests that strategic analysis is important to strategy formulation as it helps strengthen operations and respond effectively to external factors.]*

Senior and top managers (Sample B):

SM.1 *"Strategists within these units work on the organisation's plan… This strategy should not come out of the blue; rather, it should be a well-thought-out plan to achieve the mandate. This plan is then broken down into smaller objectives in what we call an Annual Plan."*

SM.2 *"Organisations must conduct strategic analysis to avoid the risks associated with relying solely on intuition… The strategic analysis process necessitates the documentation of these objectives, without which failure is likely."*

SM.3 *"Strategic analysis is an integral part of the strategic planning process, which typically involves understanding, planning, executing, monitoring, and*

		evaluating… It is crucial to understand the various factors that impact an organisation's ability to perform and plan."
	SM.4	*"Strategic analysis assists in aligning your strategy with the path you intend to follow, which is of utmost importance."*
	SM.5	*"Strategic analysis aims to ensure that our work is focused, with clear goals and objectives supported by indicators and set targets…Strategic analysis and planning focus our efforts given the resources we have."*
	SM.6	*"The primary objective of strategic planning is to assist managers in identifying key internal and external factors that impact their unit and institution, thereby strengthening the decision-making process. The strategic plan translates an institution's vision into action."*
	SM.7	*"...conducting a strategic analysis is crucial for effective planning… Before embarking on planning, a strategic analysis should be conducted to 'get your ducks in a row'; this means understanding where you have fallen short in the past to improve future planning. In essence, proper planning is impossible without a preceding analysis."*
	SM.8	*[The participant states that strategic analysis is important to strategy formulation because it] "is key to formulating appropriate objectives or outcomes to guide the organisation's strategic direction."*
	SM.9	*"Firstly, it is crucial to understand that a strategy should not be stagnant… The purpose of strategic analysis is to ensure that you are aligned with the beneficiaries of your service and understand your position within the larger system… This alignment is also reflected in our ENE and MTSF indicators, which outline what we aim to achieve over a five-year period."*
	SM.10	"The primary purpose of conducting a strategic analysis is to understand the environment in which our organisation operates… Through this analysis, we can examine both our internal and external environments; this allows us to identify factors that may have a positive or negative impact on our operations."
	SM.11	*[The participant states that strategic analysis is important to strategy formulation because it helps to] "comprehend the present circumstances [and to] ...assess whether your objectives…are achievable."*
	SM.12	*"Strategic analysis is crucial for any organisation as it provides the necessary context for formulating effective strategies… This process ensures that the organisation's strategies are responsive and relevant to the current situation."*
	SM.13	*"Conducting a strategic analysis is crucial for an organisation as it provides a clear roadmap for achieving its objectives…"*
2.2 What are the benefits of conducting strategic audit (analysis)?	**Middle managers (Sample A):**	
	MM.1	*"This process underscores the importance of research, which serves as the foundation for gaining insights and understanding the requirements for strategic planning."*
	MM.2	*"The primary reason for conducting strategic analysis lies in its manifold benefits. Not only does it minimise risk, but it also enables an organisation to focus on and achieve its objectives… Another crucial aspect of strategic analysis is its ability to highlight the internal and external factors that*

influence an organisation… Conducting a strategic analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of internal capabilities, the external landscape, and potential opportunities and trends."

MM.3 *"Organisations need to conduct strategic analysis to strengthen both internal operations and their response to external factors that might negatively affect the organisation. Furthermore, through strategic analysis, the organisation can gain valuable insights into what works well and identify areas that need improvement."*

Senior and top managers (Sample B):

SM.1 *"The organisation needs to conduct an analysis to ensure it is aligned with its set goals… That is when an organisation needs to conduct an analysis to ensure it is still on the right track regarding what it said it would achieve."*

SM.2 *"A well-conducted strategic analysis incorporates a Cause-and-Effect Model into the planning process. Tools such as Root Cause Analysis can assist in identifying key issues that need to be addressed to achieve strategic objectives… These should then cascade down to the inputs required at the most granular level."*

SM.3 *"The benefits of conducting strategic analysis include understanding the various factors that impact an organisation's ability to perform and plan. These factors include government expectations, stakeholder expectations, and the need to prioritise due to funding constraints. Understanding these elements is essential for making difficult strategic decisions."*

SM.4 *"…your strategy should be a living document, subject to consistent and continuous analysis to ensure alignment with the broader picture you aim to achieve in the long run."*

SM.5 *"Strategic analysis aims to ensure that our work is focused, with clear goals and objectives supported by indicators and set targets…Strategic analysis and planning focus our efforts given the resources we have. Moreover, it enables us to account to Parliament based on previously agreed targets and specific indicators."*

SM.6 *"By conducting a strategic analysis, organisations can determine whether there is alignment between their strategic plans and the national plans, as well as the frameworks that guide performance and operational plans. Consequently, an effective strategic plan should provide the necessary information to develop high-impact Annual Performance and Operational Plans."*

SM.7 *"This process [strategic analysis] allows an organisation to identify its shortcomings and areas for improvement… A strategic analysis provides these insights, enabling an organisation, unit, or business to align its strategies effectively with its goals."*

SM.8 *"Strategic analysis allows an organisation to identify and respond to environmental changes effectively. It also provides a clear understanding of the organisation's capabilities, particularly regarding resource allocation."*

SM.9 *"The purpose of strategic analysis is to ensure that you are aligned with the beneficiaries of your service and understand your position within the larger system… This alignment is also reflected in our ENE and MTSF indicators."*

SM.10 *"These insights are the key benefits of conducting a strategic analysis. They provide us with a comprehensive understanding of our operating environment and enable us to develop strategies to mitigate any negative impacts on our operations."*

SM.11 *Despite the prompt, 'What are the benefits of conducting strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant does not explicitly mention the benefits of conducting strategic analysis, [but a possible answer could be inferred from their response. A possible answer could be: The benefits of conducting strategic analysis are that it provides the organisation with] "a valuable tool" [to understand its position and plan its future].*

SM.12 *"The benefits of conducting strategic analysis include providing the necessary context for formulating effective strategies and ensuring that the organisation's strategies are responsive and relevant to the current situation."*

SM.13 *"The organisation also conducts a SWOT analysis as part of the strategic planning process… This analysis… identifies the organisation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats."*

2.3 What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic audit (analysis)?

Middle managers (Sample A):

MM.1 *Despite the prompt, 'What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not mention any specific risks associated with the failure to conduct strategic analysis.*

MM.2 *Despite the prompt, 'What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not mention any specific risks associated with the failure to conduct strategic analysis.*

MM.3 *[While the participant did not directly address this prompt, we can infer from their statement:] "Organisations need to conduct strategic analysis to strengthen both internal operations and their response to external factors that might negatively affect the organisation. Furthermore, through strategic analysis, the organisation can gain valuable insights into what works well and identify areas that need improvement." [This suggests that not conducting strategic analysis could lead to a lack of understanding about what works well and which areas need improvement within the organisation. This could potentially result in ineffective strategies and operations, and a poor response to external factors that might negatively affect the organisation.]*

Senior and top managers (Sample B):

SM.1 *"Especially in government, there might be changes, such as elections, that could bring in a new administration with a different focus… Your strategy, which was done for a period of five years, might overlap with this new focus."*

SM.2 *"Without a strategic analysis, the achievement of strategic objectives or outcomes may be compromised… failure is likely."*

SM.3 *[The participant's response does not provide a specific answer to this prompt. However, they do mention that] "Strategic planning cannot occur in a vacuum; it is crucial to understand the various factors that impact an organisation's ability to perform and plan… Understanding these elements is essential for making difficult strategic decisions." [If strategic analysis is not conducted, it can be inferred that an organisation may lack this crucial understanding, which could potentially lead to ineffective strategic decisions and performance.]*

SM.4 *"Without strategic analysis, your strategy may remain aligned with outdated [strategies]… and your new path may not be up-to-date."*

SM.5 *[While the participant did not directly address this prompt, it can be inferred from their response that not conducting strategic analysis could lead to a lack of focus, unclear goals and objectives, and ineffective use of resources. As the participant mentioned,] "Strategic analysis aims to ensure that our work is focused, with clear goals and objectives supported by indicators and set targets…Strategic analysis and planning focus our efforts given the resources we have. Moreover, it enables us to account to Parliament based on previously agreed targets and specific indicators." [Therefore, without strategic analysis, these benefits may not be realised, potentially leading to inefficiencies and lack of accountability.]*

SM.6 *"Without strategic analysis, institutions may struggle to identify problem areas, understand where their failures lie, recognise high-performing areas, and properly allocate resources to improve service delivery."*

SM.7 *"Assumptions about customer preferences can lead to misalignment in service provision… Without this step [strategic analysis], there is a risk of misalignment in the plans."*

SM.8 *Despite the prompt, 'What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not mention any specific risks associated with the failure to conduct strategic analysis.*

SM.9 *"It is not enough to develop a five-year strategy and then create annual plans for its implementation. One must continually revisit and revise the strategy to ensure it remains relevant and effective."*

SM.10 *Despite the prompt, 'What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not mention any specific risks associated with the failure to conduct strategic analysis.*

SM.11 *Despite the prompt, 'What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not mention any specific risks associated with the failure to conduct strategic analysis.*

SM.12 *"Without strategic analysis, an organisation risks planning its strategies in a vacuum, potentially leading to irrelevant or ineffective strategies… If the current emerging problem is organised crime, continuing to focus on sexual offences without conducting a strategic analysis could lead to a misalignment between the organisation's strategies and the actual problems at hand."*

SM.13 *Despite the prompt, 'What are the potential risks of not conducting strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was*

		anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not mention any specific risks associated with the failure to conduct strategic analysis.
3. Who should conduct strategic audit (analysis)?	*RQ3. Who should conduct strategic audit (analysis)?*	**Middle managers (Sample A):** MM.1 *"Conducting a strategic analysis necessitates the involvement of all members of an organisation, particularly those in operational roles… However, the coordination of strategic analysis should not be limited to these specific units. It is imperative that everyone in the organisation, from management to operational roles, participates in the process and contributes to the organisational plans."* MM.2 *"An organisation's responsibility for conducting strategic analysis often falls to a dedicated team. For instance, at the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), the Strategic Management Team, which consists of the director and deputy directors, conducts the strategic analysis."* MM.3 *"In the case of our organisation, the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), the strategic analysis is conducted by a team with comprehensive knowledge of the entire organisation. This team, known as the Strategic Team, includes strategic planners facilitating the strategic planning sessions."* **Senior and top managers (Sample B):** SM.1 *"The individuals responsible for conducting strategic analysis can vary depending on the organisation. At the NPA, for instance, this task falls to us, the deputy directors… Therefore, we are required to conduct strategic analysis within our respective areas of work."* SM.2 *"Various approaches can be taken when deciding who should conduct a strategic analysis. In some instances, a specialist function or a research entity within the NPA may be responsible… Junior managers, for instance, should conduct a low-level strategic analysis to assess their performance and identify challenges; this information can then be consolidated and cascaded upwards, as the organisation's strategy must be adopted at all levels."* SM.3 *"Our Research component team is responsible for conducting strategic analysis…"* SM.4 *"In the context of who should conduct strategic analysis, it is essential to consider both leadership and specialist roles… However, the intricacies of strategic analysis are best handled by specialists within our organisation, such as those in research and strategy."* SM.5 *"During our planning season, those often invited to planning sessions are primarily individuals in management positions led by the head of the organisation, the National Director of Public Prosecutions, and regional representatives. These individuals form the core of our strategic planning analysis sessions…Our dedicated unit, the Strategic Management Office, facilitates these planning sessions at the NPA."* SM.6 *"Strategic analysis can be conducted by anyone within an institution who holds a post-qualification, such as a bachelor's degree, diploma, or post-graduate qualification, and has a minimum of three years' experience in strategic planning."* SM.7 *"In determining who should conduct strategic analysis, it is essential to consider the roles and responsibilities within the organisation. Regardless of rank or level, all managers should be involved in strategic analysis, particularly those responsible for specific areas."*

		SM.8 *"Strategic analysis should be conducted within an organisation by those involved in strategic management and strategy development, often in collaboration with other business units; this includes researchers within the organisation who conduct situational analyses to gain an overview of the operating environment."* SM.9 *"It is essential that everyone, including business units or sub-programmes, is involved… Therefore, the Business Unit, Planning, Research, and Performance Information departments should all be involved."* SM.10 *"Primarily, the responsibility of conducting a strategic analysis lies with those in divisions or units that coordinate and develop their organisations' strategies. However, it is crucial that the implementers of these strategies also participate in the development process…"*
		SM.11 *"Strategic analysis is typically conducted by trained planners, particularly within governmental organisations. These individuals possess expertise in the strategic environment and are equipped to guide the organisation toward its goals."* SM.12 *"In the context of government departments, strategic analysis is typically conducted by several units. These units may be known as the Directorate or the Chief Directorate of Strategic Management; some are called Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) units or Research units… For instance, in the NPA, the Research section works alongside Strategic Planners to conduct strategic analysis."* SM.13 *"The strategic analysis of an organisation should ideally be conducted by its leadership, specifically the executive committee (ExCo)."*
3.1	What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)?	**Middle managers (Sample A):** MM.1 *"As for minimum qualifications, these would depend on the specific job descriptions of the individuals involved. However, the principle remains that everyone should be involved in the strategic analysis process, from the highest-ranking officials to the lowest."* MM.2 *Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis.* MM.3 *Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis.* **Senior and top managers (Sample B):** SM.1 *"Our expertise in performance management and development systems, training, and bursaries makes us well-equipped to analyse these areas."* SM.2 *Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented*

	during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis.
SM.3	*Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis.*
SM.4	*Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis.*
SM.5	*Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis.*
SM.6	*"Strategic analysis can be conducted by anyone within an institution who holds a post-qualification, such as a bachelor's degree, diploma, or post-graduate qualification, and has a minimum of three years' experience in strategic planning."*
SM.7	*Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis.*
SM.8	*"Understanding the environment is crucial, and this knowledge often comes from individuals who have been in the environment for a significant period and have the necessary experience."*
SM.9	*Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis.*
SM.10	*Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct*

		strategic analysis.
	SM.11	*The participant's response suggests that "trained planners" who "possess expertise in the strategic environment" are typically responsible for conducting strategic analysis, implying that relevant training and expertise in strategic planning are required.*
	SM.12	*Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis.*
	SM.13	*Despite the prompt, 'What are the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about the minimum qualifications and experience required to conduct strategic analysis.*
3.2 How many people should conduct strategic audit (analysis)?	**Middle managers (Sample A):**	
	MM.1	*Despite the prompt, 'How many people should conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not specify an exact number of people who should conduct strategic analysis, [but it emphasises that] "everyone in the organisation, from management to operational roles, participates in the process…" [indicating that the process should be inclusive of all members of the organisation].*
	MM.2	*"The size of the team involved in this process can vary depending on the organisation's size. As the NPA is a large national department, our unit [Strategic Management Team] includes a chief director, a director, two deputy directors, and an assistant director."*
	MM.3	*"The strategic analysis is conducted by a team… This team, known as the Strategic Team, includes strategic planners facilitating the strategic planning sessions." [This suggests that multiple people, forming a team, should conduct strategic analysis.]*
	Senior and top managers (Sample B):	
	SM.1	*[The participant's response does not specify an exact number, but it does mention that] "the deputy directors… are required to conduct strategic analysis within our respective areas of work."*
	SM.2	*"Various approaches can be taken when deciding who should conduct a strategic analysis… given that strategy is implemented by everyone in the organisation, it would be beneficial for even the most junior members to contribute to the process."*
	SM.3	*[No specific answer can be extracted from the participant's response. However, the participant mentioned that] "consultation should occur before*

finalising the plan. It is also crucial to build commitment by helping every person understand their role within the strategic plan and how it all fits together to achieve the end result." [This suggests that the participant believes in a collaborative approach to strategic analysis.]

SM.4 *Despite the prompt, 'How many people should conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not specify an exact number of people who should conduct strategic analysis, [but indicates that it involves] "both leadership and specialist roles" [within the organisation. This suggests a collaborative effort between different roles rather than a specific number].*

SM.5 *Despite the prompt, 'How many people should conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not specify an exact number of people who should conduct strategic analysis, [but indicates that] "…those often invited to planning sessions are primarily individuals in management positions led by the head of the organisation, the National Director of Public Prosecutions, and regional representatives. These individuals form the core of our strategic planning analysis sessions." [This suggests that multiple individuals, including those in management positions and regional representatives, are involved in the process.]*

SM.6 *"The number of individuals involved in strategic analysis can vary and largely depends on the size and mission of the institution. It is impossible to specify a fixed number of people who can perform strategic analysis; it could be three, five, or more, depending on the institution's size."*

SM.7 *Despite the prompt, 'How many people should conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not specify an exact number of people who should conduct strategic analysis, [but indicates that] "all managers should be involved in strategic analysis, particularly those responsible for specific areas," [suggesting that multiple individuals across different levels and areas of the organisation should be involved].*

SM.8 *Despite the prompt, 'How many people should conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not specify an exact number of people who should conduct strategic analysis, [but suggests that it is] "a collaborative effort involving various organisational stakeholders, each contributing their unique expertise and knowledge." [This implies that multiple individuals from different areas of the organisation are involved].*

SM.9 *Despite the prompt, 'How many people should conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not specify an exact number of people who should conduct strategic analysis, [but suggests that multiple departments and units within the organisation, such as] "the Business Unit, Planning, Research, and Performance Information departments," [should be involved in the process. This implies that a diverse group of individuals from different areas of the organisation are included].*

SM.10 *Despite the prompt, 'How many people should conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response*

			does not specify an exact number of people who should conduct strategic analysis, [but suggests that both] "those in divisions or units that coordinate and develop their organisations' strategies" [and] "the implementers of these strategies" [should be involved, indicating a collaborative effort between strategy developers and implementers].
			SM.11 *Despite the prompt, 'How many people should conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not specify an exact number of people who should conduct strategic analysis, [but indicates that it is conducted by] "trained planners," [suggesting that it is a role fulfilled by professionals with specific expertise rather than a defined number of individuals].*
			SM.12 *"Strategic analysis is typically conducted by several units… These units often contain a Research section responsible for strategic analysis… In addition to the Research and Strategic Planning sections, the Monitoring section also contributes to strategic analysis."*
			SM.13 *Despite the prompt, 'How many people should conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not specify an exact number of people who should conduct strategic analysis, [but indicates that it should be conducted by "the executive committee (ExCo)," suggesting that the responsibility lies with the leadership team].*
4. When should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?	*RQ4.*	*When should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?*	**Middle managers (Sample A):** MM.1 *"Strategic analysis is an ongoing process that encompasses short-term, medium-term, and long-term analyses."* MM.2 *"Strategic analysis is typically conducted annually, prior to the start of the new financial year. For instance, at the NPA, the financial year commences on the 1st of April. Therefore, the strategic analysis is conducted during the last quarter of the financial year, specifically fromJanuary to April."* MM.3 *"Strategic planning in our organisation [the NPA] is typically conducted once a year."* **Senior and top managers (Sample B):** SM.1 *"In my opinion, strategic analysis should ideally be conducted at least by the third year of a five-year strategic plan… By the third year, one can gain a clear understanding of what strategies are working and which ones are not."* SM.2 *"Strategic analysis should be an ongoing process, not limited to an in-depth analysis at specific intervals… the NPA operates on a five-year strategy, which is extensively aligned with the MTSF and undergoes a comprehensive strategic analysis every five years… It is not advisable to wait until the end of a five-year cycle to suddenly conduct a comprehensive strategic analysis… Therefore, regular reviews are essential to prevent deviation from the strategic focus."* SM.3 *"The process begins with determining when plans must be tabled per parliamentary requirements and briefing sessions…In essence, the strategic planning process should commence the day after the submission of the last plan…"*

	SM.4	*The participant's response does not directly address the timing of when strategic analysis should be conducted.*
	SM.5	*"In the context of when strategic analysis should be conducted, it is essential to note that at the NPA, we conduct strategic analysis or planning annually for the upcoming financial year…Last year, at the organisational level, we developed an APP for the organisation. All business unit plans must align to feed into the APP; this is done annually, but these plans are reviewed and updated when there are major strategic changes…Therefore, whether you are reducing or increasing your targets, depending on the situation, especially now in our country where we are facing severe fiscal constraints, you will find that when the government announces budget cuts or reductions, it necessitates a realignment of goals and targets in line with available resources and finances; this will necessitate a review in your strategic analysis, particularly looking at what you had set yourself to achieve…At the NPA, we plan annually for Performance and Operational Plans, but over five years, we have a strategic plan; this is done at the beginning or during an election year when there is going to be a new administration coming in."*
	SM.6	*"Strategic analysis can be conducted at various times. It can be done before the beginning of the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) period, during the mid-term period, and at the end of the MTSF period. It can also be conducted when there are changes in an institution's policies…"*
	SM.7	*The participant's response does not directly address the timing of when strategic analysis should be conducted.*
	SM.8	*"Strategic analysis should be conducted within an organisation by those involved in strategic management and strategy development, often in collaboration with other business units; this includes researchers within the organisation who conduct situational analyses to gain an overview of the operating environment."*
	SM.9	*"Rather than adhering strictly to a five-year review cycle in alignment with the medium-term strategic framework, it is advisable to conduct analyses on a continual basis."*
	SM.10	*"In the government sector, strategic analysis typically commences in the second quarter of the financial year, which begins on the 1st of April."*
	SM.11	*"Strategic analysis should be conducted annually; it is crucial to perform this analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of your current plans and determine whether they align with your goals."*
	SM.12	*"Strategic analysis is a critical component of an organisation's planning process, and its timing is crucial… For instance, if a draft strategy is required by August, the strategic analysis should be conducted a month prior… The strategic analysis may continue until a week or a month before the final strategy document must be approved and presented to Parliament… Therefore, conducting the strategic analysis close to the time when the strategic document is due ensures that the information is not outdated."*
	SM.13	*"Strategic analysis should ideally be conducted in the period leading up to the beginning of the new financial year; this allows the findings of the analysis to be effectively incorporated into the planning for the upcoming year."*
4.1 How often should strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?	**Middle managers (Sample A):**	

MM.1 *"The Executive Committee (ExCo) conducts the short-term analysis every six months… Medium-term and long-term analyses span four to five years."*

MM.2 *"Strategic analysis is typically conducted annually…"*

MM.3 *"Strategic planning in our organisation [the NPA] is typically conducted once a year."*

Senior and top managers (Sample B):

SM.1 *"Strategic analysis should ideally be conducted at least by the third year of a five-year strategic plan."*

SM.2 *"Strategic analysis should be an ongoing process, not limited to an in-depth analysis at specific intervals… the NPA operates on a five-year strategy, which is extensively aligned with the MTSF and undergoes a comprehensive strategic analysis every five years… Therefore, regular reviews are essential to prevent deviation from the strategic focus."*

SM.3 *"It is a continuous process involving regular review, updates, and understanding to ensure relevance…"*

SM.4 *Despite the prompt, 'How often should strategic analysis be conducted?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details on how often strategic analysis should be conducted.*

SM.5 *"At the NPA, we conduct strategic analysis or planning annually for the upcoming financial year…All business unit plans must align to feed into the APP; this is done annually, but these plans are reviewed and updated when there are major strategic changes…If changes occur at an organisational level, they are subjected to the six-month review of government plans around August every year to update and gain approval…At the NPA, we plan annually for Performance and Operational Plans, but over five years, we have a strategic plan."*

SM.6 *[The participant's response does not provide a specific frequency for conducting strategic analysis. However, it is mentioned that] "Strategic analysis can be conducted at various times. It can be done before the beginning of the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) period, during the mid-term period, and at the end of the MTSF period…"*

SM.7 *Despite the prompt, 'How often should strategic analysis be conducted?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details on how often strategic analysis should be conducted.*

SM.8 *Despite the prompt, 'How often should strategic analysis be conducted?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details on how often strategic analysis should be conducted.*

SM.9 *"Regularly reviewing and analysing our strategy is imperative; this will ensure that we meet our mandates and respond effectively to external pressures and criticisms."*

SM.10 *[The participant's response indicates that strategic analysis is initiated annually, starting in the] "second quarter of the financial year."*

SM.11 *"Strategic analysis should be conducted annually…"*

SM.12 *Despite the prompt, 'How often should strategic analysis be conducted?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details on how often strategic analysis should be conducted.*

SM.13 *"Strategic analysis should ideally be conducted in the period leading up to the beginning of the newfinancial year…"*

4.2 How long should it take to complete the strategic audit (analysis) process?

Middle managers (Sample A):

MM.1 *Despite the prompt, 'How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about how long it should take to complete the strategic analysis process, [but mentions that "short-term analysis… bases its decisions on annual plans," and "Medium-term and long-term analyses span four to five years," which suggests that the duration of the analysis may vary depending on the term being considered].*

MM.2 *"…the strategic analysis is conducted during the last quarter of the financial year, specifically fromJanuary to April."*

MM.3 *Despite the prompt, 'How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about how long it should take to complete the strategic analysis process.*

Senior and top managers (Sample B):

SM.1 *[The participant's response does not specify an exact timeframe, but it does mention that] "strategic analysis should ideally be conducted at least by the third year of a five-year strategic plan… By the third year, one can gain a clear understanding of what strategies are working and which ones are not." [This suggests that the strategic analysis process might span over the remaining two years of the strategic plan.]*

SM.2 *Despite the prompt, 'How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about how long it should take to complete the strategic analysis process.*

SM.3 *"From there, you work your way backwards into a detailed project plan, outlining what needs to be done, the time required for each step, and when to start…" [This suggests that the time it takes to complete the strategic analysis process depends on the detailed project plan and the requirements of each step.]*

SM.4 *Despite the prompt, 'How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about how long it should take to complete the strategic analysis process, [but emphasises that "strategic analysis must align with the vision set by senior management" and that "our strategy and research specialists are responsible for conducting detailed strategic analysis." This suggests that strategic analysis is an ongoing process that should be conducted regularly to ensure alignment with the organisation's vision and direction. The process involves both leadership and specialists within the organisation, indicating a collaborative approach to strategic planning].*

SM.5 *[While the participant did not provide a specific duration, they mentioned,] "During our planning season, those often invited to planning sessions are primarily individuals in management positions led by the head of the organisation, the National Director of Public Prosecutions, and regional representatives…Our dedicated unit, the Strategic Management Office, facilitates these planning sessions at the NPA…Last year, at the organisational level, we developed an APP for the organisation…All business unit plans must align to feed into the APP; this is done annually, but these plans are reviewed and updated when there are major strategic changes…Therefore, whether you are reducing or increasing your targets, depending on the situation, especially now in our country where we are facing severe fiscal constraints, you will find that when the government announces budget cuts or reductions, it necessitates a realignment of goals and targets in line with available resources and finances; this will necessitate a review in your strategic analysis, particularly looking at what you had set yourself to achieve…At the NPA, we plan annually for Performance and Operational Plans, but over five years, we have a strategic plan; this is done at the beginning or during an election year when there is going to be a new administration coming in." [This suggests that the duration of the strategic analysis process may vary depending on the level of planning (organisational or business unit), the occurrence of major strategic changes, and the alignment with government processes.]*

SM.6 *Despite the prompt, 'How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about how long it should take to complete the strategic analysis process.*

SM.7 *Despite the prompt, 'How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about how long it should take to complete the strategic analysis process, [but emphasises that "strategic planning often involves higher-level personnel such as MMS, Deputy Directors and above" and that "it is imperative to include these individuals [implementers] in the planning phase, even at the sub-directorate or directorate level." This suggests that strategic analysis is an inclusive process that should involve various levels of management and implementers within the organisation, indicating a collaborative approach to strategic planning. The response also implies that strategic analysis is a continuous process, as it involves ongoing involvement and understanding of strategic priorities at all levels].*

SM.8 *Despite the prompt, 'How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about how long it should take to complete the strategic analysis process, [but emphasises that "strategic analysis is a collaborative effort involving various organisational stakeholders, each contributing their unique expertise and knowledge."*

		This suggests that strategic analysis is an ongoing process that should be conducted regularly to ensure alignment with the organisation's vision and direction. The process involves both leadership and specialists within the organisation, indicating a collaborative approach to strategic planning].
		SM.9 *Despite the prompt, 'How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about how long it should take to complete the strategic analysis process, [but the emphasis on the need for continual analysis suggests that strategic analysis is an ongoing activity rather than a process with a defined end point. The participant highlights the importance of being "responsive to ongoing developments," which indicates that the strategic analysis process should be flexible and adaptable to changes in the environment].*
		SM.10 *"The strategic analysis process begins with research conducted early in the second quarter… By the end of the third or fourth quarter, we have a comprehensive understanding of the factors and issues that need to be considered in developing and finalising our strategies." [This suggests that the strategic analysis process spans over the second to the fourth quarter of the financial year].*
		SM.11 *Despite the prompt, 'How long should it take to complete the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant's response does not provide specific details about how long it should take to complete the strategic analysis process, [but, the emphasis on annual strategic analysis suggests that the process should be completed within a year to align with the annual evaluation cycle].*
		SM.12 *"If a draft strategy is required by August, the strategic analysis should be conducted a month prior… The strategic analysis may continue until a week or a month before the final strategy document must be approved and presented to Parliament."*
		SM.13 *"Typically, this process begins in October of the preceding year and concludes by the end of March in the current year. This timeline ensures that the strategic plans are ready to be implemented from the 1st of April, which marks the commencement of the new financial year in government settings." [This suggests that the strategic analysis process should span approximately six months, from October to March].*
5. How can strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?	*RQ5. How can strategic audit (analysis) be conducted?*	**Middle managers (Sample A):**
		MM.1 *"Firstly, conducting a strategic analysis requires an understanding of the organisation's mandate, as well as the mandates of its various components… An annual situational analysis report is produced, which informs short, medium, and long-term planning."*
		MM.2 *"Strategic analysis can be conducted by using the SWOT analysis of the organisation, using the internal reports and the external reports to check how the environment operates."*
		MM.3 *"In conducting strategic analysis, we utilise several frameworks. We align ourselves, the NPA, with the framework the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) provides. Additionally, we employ the SWOT analysis method, among a few other frameworks."*
		Senior and top managers (Sample B):

SM.1 *"…the process of conducting strategic analysis involves several steps… We have annual plans and various documents that guide us… We printed all these documents and scrutinised them in groups… We examined these documents to determine whether we were still aligned with our initial objectives… This process of questioning and analysis is how we conducted our strategic analysis."*

SM.2 *"Strategic analysis begins with a review of the already adopted strategy, assessing its performance and the factors that have influenced it… For an organisation like the NPA, this includes considering legislation, political factors, operational changes, staffing, and budgeting… The PESTEL process is often employed to understand both the internal and external environment… Ultimately, the goal is to determine where the organisation can have the most impact regarding its decided priorities… While various individuals or departments can gather the information for strategic analysis, management typically makes the final priority decision."*

SM.3 *"Strategic analysis involves several steps and tools…The strategic analysis should be conducted by those who work in the relevant environment, which is why we use researchers…In terms of strategic planning, involving the Strategic Planning Unit is important, but they should not be left to do it alone…I prefer approaches that start with the customer and work backwards…"*

SM.4 *"Strategic analysis can be conducted using various methods, each tailored to the specific context and purpose of the analysis… This approach ensures that we are prepared for both current and future challenges."*

SM.5 *"In conducting strategic analysis at the NPA, we utilise various tools to guide our discussions and develop a plan that will guide our performance throughout the year…We also conduct an in-depth situational analysis through our Research Unit, which presents management with a broader analysis of what is happening externally…We have positioned ourselves to respond to these emerging crime trends through strategic analysis and environmental scanning using tools like SWOT analysis and PESTEL…We also have a Research Unit that benchmarks with other countries to understand how they plan and measure their prosecution work."*

SM.6 *"Planning documents and performance reports are needed to conduct a strategic analysis… Scanning processes for both internal and external environments can be carried out… In addition, a strategy needs to be formulated, specific strategies and actions developed, and an implementation plan devised; this involves planning how to take action to implement the strategy that has been formulated and how to achieve the set objectives."*

SM.7 *"The ability to conduct strategic analysis largely depends on an organisation's level of technological modernisation… Therefore, a digitised system not only facilitates but also accelerates the process of strategic analysis."*

SM.8 *"Strategic analysis can be conducted by thoroughly examining the organisation's existing information, such as annual reports, performance plans, and previous strategic plans… Tools like SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) and PESTLE (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental) analyses can be particularly useful in this process."*

SM.9 *"Strategic analysis can be conducted in various ways. One approach is to perform a surface-level scan of your environment, staying alert to current events and trends… In my view, strategic analysis should not be a one-off activity but rather a continuous cycle of understanding, planning, monitoring, and executing; this cycle, termed 'understand, plan, monitor, execute', is a reiterative process that constantly reassesses your situation and environment."*

		SM.10 *"In the process of conducting strategic analysis, we employ a variety of tools, which include PESTEL analysis, SWOT analysis, and Fishbone analysis… These tools are instrumental in analysing the environment and informing our strategic planning process."*
		SM.11 *"Strategic analysis is conducted with the involvement of key role players within the organisation… this process involves gathering all role players in a single meeting to plan for the next five or ten years."*
		SM.12 *"Several tools come to mind in addressing the question of how strategic analysis can be conducted… Typically, these analyses are conducted in a workshop setting, involving relevant stakeholders instrumental in implementing the strategy… For example, a representative from the Polokwane magistrate court might highlight issues unknown to the head office, such as a lack of water supply."*
		SM.13 *"Strategic analysis can be conducted using a variety of tools and methodologies… [Collectively, these tools provide a comprehensive strategic analysis, aiding in formulating effective strategies and decision-making processes]."*
5.1	What information is required to conduct strategic audit (analysis)?	**Middle managers (Sample A):**
		MM.1 *"Firstly, conducting a strategic analysis requires an understanding of the organisation's mandate, as well as the mandates of its various components… Secondly, performance evaluation is crucial; this involves assessing both the output (quantitative data) and the outcome (qualitative data, often related to customer satisfaction)."*
		MM.2 *"…using the internal reports and the external reports to check how the environment operates."*
		MM.3 *[The participant did not directly specify the information required to conduct strategic analysis. However, they mentioned:] "In conducting strategic analysis, we utilise several frameworks… Additionally, we employ the SWOT analysis method, among a few other frameworks." [This suggests that the information required would be whatever is necessary to utilise these frameworks and methods.]*
		Senior and top managers (Sample B):
		SM.1 *"We have annual plans and various documents that guide us, including frameworks governing training, performance management, internships, bursaries, and our policies."*
		SM.2 *"Strategic analysis begins with a review of the already adopted strategy, assessing its performance and the factors that have influenced it… For an organisation like the NPA, this includes considering legislation, political factors, operational changes, staffing, and budgeting."*
		SM.3 *"Many strategic books reference the PESTEL analysis, which examines Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal factors…We also look to the future. For instance, as we approach an election year in 2024, we start by considering the ANC 'Lekgotla', as there is a high probability that they will continue to be the ruling party; this helps us understand the likely direction of future policy…Surveys on customer satisfaction and expectations and workshops are beneficial for understanding their priorities. When budget constraints exist, it is important to understand what can be given up and what is most important to people."*

SM.4 *"One of the most popular tools we use, particularly within the NPA, is the 'Situational Analysis Report'… This tool covers many areas and is crucial for understanding our direction."*

SM.5 *"One essential tool we often use is a SWOT analysis, which allows us to scan both our internal and external environment, identifying our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats…The crime statistics produced by the South African Police Service (SAPS) are paramount to us at the NPA…We also consider political developments to determine our focus as the NPA."*

SM.6 *"Planning documents and performance reports are needed to conduct a strategic analysis… Understanding the strategy and performance, which can be based on the institution's previous performance, is crucial."*

SM.7 *Despite the prompt, 'What information is required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify the particular information required to conduct strategic analysis, [but implied that having a digitised system is crucial for efficient strategic analysis as it allows for quick retrieval and analysis of information].*

SM.8 *"Strategic analysis can be conducted by thoroughly examining the organisation's existing information, such as annual reports, performance plans, and previous strategic plans… Gather information: collect all relevant data from various reports and documents within the organisation."*

SM.9 *"One approach is to perform a surface-level scan of your environment, staying alert to current events and trends; this can be facilitated through your communications department, which can monitor the types of questions being asked by the portfolio committee, the media's commentary, and the perceptions of ordinary citizens who are the recipients of your services."*

SM.10 *Despite the prompt, 'What information is required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify the particular information required to conduct strategic analysis, [but mentioned the use of various tools for strategic analysis without specifying the particular information required].*

SM.11 *Despite the prompt, 'What information is required to conduct strategic analysis?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify the particular information required to conduct strategic analysis, [but instead focused on the involvement of key role players and the coordination of a session with the management team to discuss goals and aspirations].*

SM.12 *"A representative from the Polokwane magistrate court might highlight issues unknown to the head office, such as a lack of water supply. This information is crucial in understanding the challenges faced by the workforce."*

SM.13 *"The strategic analysis process involves employing a variety of tools and methodologies, including the Balanced Scorecard approach and the 'Theory of Change' model. A Stakeholder analysis is also conducted to identify and understand the influence and expectations of various stakeholders. Additionally, PESTEL and SWOT analyses are used to assess the external macro-environment and the organisation's internal strengths and weaknesses, respectively."*

5.2	What are the steps in the strategic audit (analysis) process?	**Middle managers (Sample A):** MM.1 *"The strategic analysis process involves understanding; (a) planning, (b) implementing, (c) monitoring and reviewing."* MM.2 *[The participant did not provide a detailed step-by-step process in their response. However, they mentioned:] "Strategic analysis can be conducted by using the SWOT analysis of the organisation, using the internal reports and the external reports to check how the environment operates." [This suggests that the use of strategic analysis tools, such as SWOT analysis, and the evaluation of internal and external reports are part of their strategic analysis process.]* MM.3 *[The participant did not provide a detailed step-by-step process in their response. However, they mentioned:] "In conducting strategic analysis, we utilise several frameworks… Additionally, we employ the SWOT analysis method, among a few other frameworks." [This suggests that the use of various frameworks and methods, such as SWOT analysis, are part of their strategic analysis process.]* **Senior and top managers (Sample B):** SM.1 *"The process of conducting strategic analysis involves several steps… We printed all these documents and scrutinised them in groups… We examined these documents to determine whether we were still aligned with our initial objectives. We asked ourselves: Are we still following the plan? Are we still on track to achieve our goals? Are the tools and approaches we used still applicable? Are they working for us? Did the interventions we implemented work? This process of questioning and analysis is how we conducted our strategic analysis."* SM.2 *"Strategic analysis begins with a review of the already adopted strategy, assessing its performance and the factors that have influenced it… A forward-looking examination of the environment then complements this retrospective analysis… The PESTEL process is often employed to understand both the internal and external environment… Ultimately, the goal is to determine where the organisation can have the most impact regarding its decided priorities."* SM.3 *"Strategic analysis involves several steps and tools…The strategic analysis should be conducted by those who work in the relevant environment, which is why we use researchers…In terms of strategic planning, involving the Strategic Planning Unit is important, but they should not be left to do it alone…I prefer approaches that start with the customer and work backwards…It is crucial to identify key role players, including top leadership, and engage with them openly and actively…Surveys on customer satisfaction and expectations and workshops are beneficial for understanding their priorities. When budget constraints exist, it is important to understand what can be given up and what is most important to people…The executive also plays a vital role due to their oversight function and representation of the people and constituencies."* SM.4 *The participant did not provide a direct answer to this prompt. [However, mentioned the use of specific tools such as the 'Situational Analysis Report' and the 'Theory of Change', which implies steps involving the identification of external factors and envisioning changes within the environment and communities].* SM.5 *"In conducting strategic analysis at the NPA, we utilise various tools to guide our discussions and develop a plan that will guide our performance throughout the year…We also conduct an in-depth situational analysis through our Research Unit, which presents management with a broader analysis of what is happening externally…We have positioned ourselves to respond to these emerging crime trends through strategic analysis and*

		environmental scanning using tools like SWOT analysis and PESTEL…We also have a Research Unit that benchmarks with other countries to understand how they plan and measure their prosecution work."
	SM.6	*"Scanning processes for both internal and external environments can be carried out… In addition, a strategy needs to be formulated, specific strategies and actions developed, and an implementation plan devised; this involves planning how to take action to implement the strategy that has been formulated and how to achieve the set objectives."*
	SM.7	*Despite the prompt, 'What are the steps in the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not outline the strategic analysis process, [but instead focused on the importance of technological modernisation in facilitating strategic analysis].*
	SM.8	*"This process involves several steps: (a) Know the organisation's goals: understand the overarching objectives that the organisation aims to achieve (b) Identify the organisation's vision: before performing any analysis, it is crucial to comprehend the organisation's long-term aspirations (c) Gather information: collect all relevant data from various reports and documents within the organisation (d) Analyse the information: scrutinise the gathered data to identify patterns, trends, strengths, and weaknesses (e) Formulate strategy: based on the analysis, develop a strategy that aligns with the organisation's goals and vision."*
	SM.9	*"Strategic analysis should not be a one-off activity but rather a continuous cycle of understanding, planning, monitoring, and executing; this cycle, termed 'Understand, Plan, Monitor, Execute', is a reiterative process that constantly reassesses your situation and environment."*
	SM.10	*Despite the prompt, 'What are the steps in the strategic analysis process?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not outline the strategic analysis process, [but discussed the employment of various tools for strategic analysis without outlining specific steps in the process].*
	SM.11	*"Strategic analysis is conducted with the involvement of key role players within the organisation… this process involves gathering all role players in a single meeting to plan for the next five or ten years. Conducting a self-assessment and an environmental assessment is also essential…"*
	SM.12	*[The participant's response suggests that] "several tools come to mind in addressing the question of how strategic analysis can be conducted. These include situational analysis tools such as SWOT and PESTEL, often employed by researchers. Additionally, Root-Cause analysis and the Fishbone diagram are integral to the process, complementing the situational analysis… Typically, these analyses are conducted in a workshop setting, involving relevant stakeholders instrumental in implementing the strategy… For instance, representatives from different levels of the organisation provide invaluable insights during these workshops." [This process of gathering and analysing information using these tools can be considered as steps in the strategic analysis process. However, the participant did not explicitly outline these steps in a sequential manner].*
	SM.13	*"The strategic analysis process involves employing a variety of tools and methodologies, including the Balanced Scorecard approach and the Theory of Change model. A Stakeholder analysis is also conducted to identify and understand the influence and expectations of various stakeholders. Additionally, PESTEL and SWOT analyses are used to assess the external macro-environment and the organisation's internal strengths and weaknesses, respectively."*

5.3	Which strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools should be used to audit the internal environment?	**Middle managers (Sample A):** MM.1 *"Internally, this is guided by the mandate, governance calendar, performance, and risk matrix. The NPA utilises Enterprise Risk Management and Performance Information Management to ensure these needs are met."* MM.2 *"Strategic analysis can be conducted by using the SWOT analysis of the organisation…"* MM.3 *"In conducting strategic analysis, we utilise several frameworks… Additionally, we employ the SWOT analysis method, among a few other frameworks."* **Senior and top managers (Sample B):** SM.1 *Despite the prompt, 'Which framework/tools should be used to scan the internal environment?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify a framework for scanning the internal environment in their response.* SM.2 *"The PESTEL process is often employed to understand both the internal and external environment…"* SM.3 *"In our government environment at the NPA, we have adapted this [tools] to include a review of our organisational performance and an understanding of the factors that drive or inhibit performance…"* SM.4 *Despite the prompt, 'Which framework/tools should be used to scan the internal environment?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify a framework for scanning the internal environment in their response.* SM.5 *"One essential tool we often use is a SWOT analysis, which allows us to scan both our internal and external environment, identifying our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats."* SM.6 *"The tools for scanning the internal …environment include Scenario Planning, SWOT analysis, Fishbone analysis, and Problem and Solution Tree analysis."* SM.7 *Despite the prompt, 'Which framework/tools should be used to scan the internal environment?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify a framework for scanning the internal environment in their response.* SM.8 *"Tools like SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)… can be particularly useful in this process."* SM.9 *Despite the prompt, 'Which framework/tools should be used to scan the internal environment?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify a framework for scanning the internal environment in their response, [but instead mentioned a continuous cycle of activities*

		that includes understanding and planning, which suggests an internal review process].
		SM.10 *"In government practice, the SWOT analysis is commonly used… Even here at the NPA, our primary tool for strategic analysis is the SWOT analysis…"*
		SM.11 *Despite the prompt, 'Which framework/tools should be used to scan the internal environment?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify a framework for scanning the internal environment in their response, [but instead mentioned] "conducting a self-assessment"[, which implies that the participant views the process of scanning the internal environment as a self-assessment, suggesting an internal review process].*
		SM.12 *"situational analysis tools such as SWOT… often employed by researchers. Additionally, Root-Cause analysis and the Fishbone diagram are integral to the process, complementing the situational analysis" [can be used to scan the internal environment. The SWOT analysis is a tool that helps identify an organisation's internal Strengths and Weaknesses. Additionally, Root-Cause analysis and the Fishbone diagram can also be used to identify internal factors].*
		SM.13 *"SWOT analyses are commonly employed to assess… the organisation's internal strengths and weaknesses."*
5.4	Which strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools should be used to audit the external environment?	**Middle managers (Sample A):**
		MM.1 *"The NPA uses the STEEPLE framework (Social, Technological, Environmental, Economical, Political, Legal, and Ethical) to identify external issues that may impact the organisation."*
		MM.2 *"Strategic analysis can be conducted by using the SWOT analysis of the organisation…"*
		MM.3 *"In conducting strategic analysis, we utilise several frameworks… Additionally, we employ the SWOT analysis method, among a few other frameworks."*
		Senior and top managers (Sample B):
		SM.1 *Despite the prompt, 'Which framework/tools should be used to scan the external environment?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify a framework for scanning the external environment in their response.*
		SM.2 *"The PESTEL process is often employed to understand both the internal and external environment…"*
		SM.3 *"Many strategic books reference the PESTEL analysis, which examines Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal factors…We also look to the future. For instance, as we approach an election year in 2024, we start by considering the ANC 'Lekgotla', as there is a high probability that they will continue to be the ruling party; this helps us understand the likely direction of future policy…"*

SM.4 *"This tool, academically known as a PESTEL analysis, examines policies, environmental factors, technologies, and other issues; by identifying these elements, we can better anticipate the challenges and trends that may arise over the next five years… Moreover, if your strategic plans do not consider climate change, especially in light of events such as the KwaZulu-Natal floods, it could indicate that the PESTEL analysis is not being taken seriously… Another tool we frequently use in strategic planning is the 'Theory of Change'; this method allows us to envision the changes we want to effect within the environment and the communities."*

SM.5 *"We also conduct an in-depth situational analysis through our Research Unit, which presents management with a broader analysis of what is happening externally…We have positioned ourselves to respond to these emerging crime trends through strategic analysis and environmental scanning using tools like SWOT analysis and PESTEL."*

SM.6 *"The tools for scanning the …external environment include SWOT analysis and PESTEL analysis."*

SM.7 *Despite the prompt, 'Which framework/tools should be used to scan the external environment?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify a framework for scanning the external environment in their response, [but instead discussed the general impact of technological modernisation on strategic analysis, which implies that the participant views the process of scanning the external environment as being influenced by technological modernisation].*

SM.8 *"Tools like… PESTLE (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental) analyses can be particularly useful in this process."*

SM.9 *Despite the prompt, 'Which framework/tools should be used to scan the external environment?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify a framework for scanning the external environment in their response, [but instead, the participant suggested that the communications department plays a role in scanning the external environment by] "monitoring the types of questions being asked by the portfolio committee, the media's commentary, and the perceptions of ordinary citizens who are the recipients of your services" [, which implies that the participant views the process of scanning the external environment as a multi-source monitoring activity, even though the participant did not mention a specific framework or tool."*

SM.10 *"…we also use PESTEL analysis, albeit to a lesser extent. These tools [SWOT and PESTEL] are instrumental in analysing the environment and informing our strategic planning process."*

SM.11 *Despite the prompt, 'Which framework/tools should be used to scan the external environment?', not being explicitly presented during the interview, it was anticipated that the participant's understanding of the topic would naturally lead them to address the prompt in their response. However, the participant did not specify a framework for scanning the external environment in their response, [but instead mentioned] "conducting an environmental assessment" [, which implies that the participant views the process of scanning the external environment as a review of external factors].*

SM.12 *"situational analysis tools such as SWOT and PESTEL, often employed by researchers" [and] "involving relevant stakeholders" [can be used to scan the external environment. The PESTEL analysis is a tool that helps identify external Political, Economic, Sociocultural, Technological, Environmental,*

			and Legal factors that could impact an organisation. The SWOT analysis can also be used to identify external Opportunities and Threats. Stakeholder analysis can also be considered as it helps to understand the influence and expectations of various external entities that are integral to the organisation's operations].
			SM.13 *"PESTEL… analyses are commonly employed to assess the external macro-environment…"*
6. What is the strategic management process (see Annexure E, Section C (C.1))	RQ6. What is the strategic management process?	**Senior and top managers (Sample B):**	
			SM.1 *"My understanding of the strategic management process begins with understanding an organisation's mandate… Based on this mandate, we develop a strategic plan for a five-year period. This plan outlines how we aim to achieve our objectives… The process involves ensuring we have the necessary staff and resources to fulfil our mandate… It is a comprehensive process that requires us to examine various aspects until we reach the performance evaluation stage… This evaluation helps us understand whether we have achieved our objectives and whether the decisions taken in our strategic meetings have been effective… The process also involves the formation of committees or teams to address specific projects or areas where there may be deficiencies. These teams manage the process to ensure we fulfil the mandate given to us as an organisation."*
			SM.2 *"The strategic management process is a broad and integral part of the government cycle. If starting from scratch, one would conduct a PESTEL analysis, collate all relevant factors, and determine priorities based on the organisation's vision and mission; this initiates a cycle of progress review and ongoing monitoring, with periodic revisits to the analysis… In a typical five-year government cycle, major changes such as leadership or legislative shifts may necessitate a realignment of the vision and, at times, a complete restart of the strategic analysis and strategy review. Game-changing events may also trigger a return to the strategic analysis stage… Therefore, it is crucial to incorporate a cycle of analysis and review into the process… In government settings, where terms are long, a new appointee may enter in the middle of a government cycle and must follow the strategic planning management process through to its conclusion."*
			SM.3 *"My understanding of the strategic management process is that it is a highly regulated process, often set out by entities such as the DPME and the National Treasury. The process begins with understanding your internal and external environment and all the factors that impact your organisation…Following this understanding phase, you engage in a thorough planning process, culminating in a written plan. However, implementation is the most crucial aspect of the strategic planning process, which is often overlooked. During this phase, it is important to ensure that individual performance agreements align with the strategic plans so that all elements add up to achieve the desired total outcome. Continuous monitoring and evaluation are also integral parts of the process. If a problem is identified, you return to the understanding phase, and this new understanding feeds into the next planning phase. In essence, the strategic management process is a cyclical process of understanding, planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and then understanding again."*
			SM.4 *"The strategic management process is a crucial tool for any government institution. It is guided by a set of values, some of which are constitutionally driven, while others are based on good practices… Strategic management is not just about planning but also a vital decision-making tool… In essence, strategic management is about practicality and the little elements that collectively define what strategic management is all about."*
			SM.5 *"In the context of understanding the strategic management process, it can be described as a process that guides us when we approach a new financial year. It helps us identify our priorities, set our goals, and recognise areas where we need to improve. The strategic management process*

focuses our thinking and aids in producing a document that holds us accountable for achieving our goals…This process involves setting goals and objectives, defining outcomes supported by specific indicators, and linking outputs to these outcomes, which in turn have their own indicators…We will have achieved a particular objective when a guilty verdict is reached, and a sentence is passed. However, it is essential to note that we aim to serve justice, and sometimes justice is served even when we do not secure a conviction. The strategic management process enables us to understand what we should do daily to achieve these set outcomes and goals."

SM.6 *"Strategic management integrates management actions through processes that coordinate and align resources and actions with planning and monitoring… It extends beyond mere planning. Strategic management involves the implementation of the strategic plan across the organisation, the measurement and evaluation of results, and the implementation of improvements. Effective strategic management necessitates using information on the organisation's performance to monitor progress, revise strategy, and adjust planning."*

SM.7 *"Strategic management, as I understand it, is a systematic process that involves the formulation and implementation of strategies aimed at achieving organisational goals… The strategic management process is a dynamic and iterative process that allows organisations to strategise, implement, review, and adjust their strategies to achieve their objectives effectively."*

SM.8 *"The strategic management process entails systematically analysing an organisation's internal and external environment to achieve better results."*

SM.9 *"The revised strategic framework from the National Treasury informs my understanding of the strategic management process… This strategic management process, as outlined by the National Treasury's framework, guides us in achieving our organisational goals effectively and efficiently."*

SM.10 *"My understanding of the strategic management process is that it requires each institution to align its strategies across different levels of planning; this begins with the National Development Plan, followed by the Medium Term Strategic Framework, and then the Strategic Plan (SP)… In summary, the strategic management process is about aligning and managing strategies effectively across different levels of planning and operations within an organisation."*

SM.11 *"The strategic management process is a methodical approach to formulating and implementing organisational strategies… [Therefore, the strategic management process involves not only the creation of strategies but also their execution, all while adhering to the relevant legal and regulatory guidelines.]"*

SM.12 *"The strategic management process, in my understanding, mirrors the public or policymaking process… The process begins by identifying an agenda, which would be the NPA's or government's mandate. Following this, a high-level problem that needs resolution is identified… Subsequent to problem identification, research is conducted to gather extensive information about the problem… Once these options are formulated, they are presented in a workshop for situational analysis and debated… Following this, indicators, activities, targets, etc., that support the strategic decision are identified… As the strategy is implemented, there are individuals who monitor its execution and write reports (quarterly and annual)… This brings the process back to planning, thus making it cyclical."*

SM.13 *"My understanding of the strategic management process is centred on the thematic analysis of an organisation's internal and external environments."*

7. How can the strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools primarily designed for the private sector be adapted for the public sector?	RQ7.	How can the strategic audit (analysis) framework or tools primarily designed for the private sector be adapted for the public sector?	**Senior and top managers (Sample B):** SM.1 *"There is no one-size-fits-all approach to the frameworks or tools for strategic analysis in the public sector… Each institution has a specific mandate, as the constitution outlines, guiding its strategic analysis… For instance, in our HRD and Human Resource Management (HRM) departments, we use the same tools as the Department of Cooperative Governance and others. These tools are based on standard directives from the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA)… However, the strategies might differ when it comes to each department's core functions… This is because each department in the public sector, not just the NPA, has a specific mandate and area of focus… Therefore, the strategic analysis tools might vary when it comes to the core functions of each institution."* SM.2 *"Certain tools used for strategic analysis in the private sector may not apply to the public sector… Tools like the balanced scorecard may need to be adapted, as public sector departments do not typically generate income… In the public sector, the budget is allocated rather than generated, and the emphasis is less on income generation and more on funding… Factors such as the political environment and the MTSF are significant in the public sector. While some elements may be imposed, there is usually an opportunity for input. An election manifesto, for instance, may include elements that a government department does not see as important, but they may still be imposed."* SM.3 *"In the public sector, the room for adapting the frameworks or tools for strategic analysis is limited because the DPME and the National Treasury set out the process. However, they do so at a high level, not in minute detail. As such, we have adapted our understanding phase to include more than what I believe most other government departments do…In our planning phase, the document we present is rigorous regarding compliance because it gets audited. We differ in that we have various levels. For instance, if we want to introduce a new indicator, we will not necessarily include it in our annual plan immediately. Instead, we will first introduce it at the business unit level during operational planning and see how it pans out and whether we can monitor it properly…In an organisation like ours, our performance information, like our financials, could be audited. Therefore, it is essential to have a credible and compliant reporting mechanism…Technical indicators, such as the quality of prosecution, are complex to measure due to the many aspects and processes within the prosecution phase. So we would test it accordingly. We also have a policy that supplements this and allows us to ensure compliance with timelines and reporting; this is where innovation comes in. Of course, we also check for alignment with individual plans."* SM.4 *"Since 2019, the government has introduced the 'Theory of Change', [(ToC)] a significant shift from the previous 'Activity-Based Method'… The new approach [ToC] focuses on outcomes, designing a path towards the desired goal, with the 'how' fitting in accordingly… Situational analysis remains a critical part of our framework… In the NPA's context, we consider factors such as population growth and current trends in South Africa; this enables us to allocate resources effectively… The nature of economic activity also influences the complexity of crimes… These frameworks inform our strategic planning process and decision-making. Understanding our environment enables us to make informed decisions."* SM.5 *"In the context of how the frameworks and tools for strategic analysis are adapted for the public sector, it is essential to note that we at the NPA have adopted the strategic management framework as outlined by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME)…We subscribe to this ToC and follow it closely. We also utilise tools such as SWOT analysis and PESTEL. While we do not use all available tools, we have adapted those we use to suit our environment. As these tools are outlined in the framework, we are able to operate them within or apply them in our environment to achieve our goals."* SM.6 *"Various tools can be adapted for use in the public sector… One such tool is scenario planning, which, although not typically used as part of the*

	planning process, can be utilised for medium to long-term planning or in preparation for the beginning of a new planning cycle… This tool is suitable for developing a situational or diagnostic analysis… Scenarios are tools that assist in taking a long view of significant uncertainties… Scenario planning involves the process of making current choices with an understanding of how they might unfold in the future… Scenarios can inform decisions about the future and enable institutions to take a long view… Additionally, SWOT analysis and PESTEL can be used together, which are widely used in government… These tools identify key external and internal factors that can be considered during the situational analysis process."
SM.7	*"In the context of adapting the strategic analysis framework/tools for the public sector, the Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation (DPME) plays a crucial role as the custodian of Strategic Management and Performance Management in government… While we primarily rely on DPME's tools, there is no harm in customising them to suit our organisational needs better… However, we have the flexibility to make modifications and enhancements as needed; the tools may be subjected to changes or customisation each financial year… Regardless of any modifications, it is crucial to ensure that the tool remains aligned with the DPME's guidelines… In summary, the strategic analysis framework and its tools are dynamic and adaptable, allowing for customisation based on organisational requirements while maintaining alignment with DPME's standards."*
SM.8	*"These tools [SWOT and PESTLE] are integral to the system of planning employed by the government. The framework identifies and necessitates the use of such processes and tools to develop the strategy one wishes to implement… Moreover, these tools are adaptable and flexible… From a formal perspective, these tools are highly beneficial. They offer a structured approach to strategic planning without restricting the freedom to adapt to specific contexts or objectives."*
SM.9	*"We adapted it [PESTEL] into a model we call STEEPLE or EPESTEL, where we incorporated 'Ethics' as a critical component… In dealing with corrupt prosecutors, it is essential to consider both the ethical aspects and the recourse available to people… In my experience, people prefer to be involved in the process rather than having things done to them… Therefore, instead of conducting academic research or analysis in isolation, it is more effective to engage stakeholders in the process."*
SM.10	*"In adapting strategic analysis tools for the public sector, I will discuss our adoption of the SWOT analysis. When engaging with the NPA's business units, we coordinate and develop various AOPs. As part of this process, we guide these units through the creation of their own SWOT analyses… The use of 'Slido' ensures confidentiality, as the identities of those who input responses are not visible; only the participants' responses are displayed. This method of implementing the SWOT analysis into the NPA's business has been well received."*
SM.11	*The participant's response was not directly relevant to the inquiry and will not be included in the research study.*
SM.12	*"In the public sector, the DPME guides the adaptation of strategic analysis frameworks and tools… Regularly, the DPME issues guidelines detailing how departments should plan, monitor, and report annually… However, this approach changed when it became apparent that the impact on the community was not visible. The focus shifted to outcome-level planning, which is more concerned with the effects on individuals affected by these cases, such as victims of crime… The government is now introducing the 'Theory of Change' to address this. This approach ensures that the intended outcomes align with the planned activities… This ongoing process of adaptation and improvement characterises the application of strategic analysis frameworks and tools in the South African government."*
SM.13	*"We adapt strategic analysis frameworks and tools in the public sector, such as SWOT and PESTEL analyses, to our specific context. As a point*

of departure, we are guided by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME). We recognise our dependence on various stakeholders and service delivery points, and these considerations shape our strategic analysis… When conducting a SWOT analysis, we pay particular attention to the weaknesses that could hinder us from achieving our objectives. We also incorporate the latest statistics, such as crime rates, into our analysis. Furthermore, we consider our clients' needs and feedback to ensure our strategies are responsive and effective."

Annexure H Department of Correctional Services: Dissertation statement for researcher

correctional services
Department:
Correctional Services
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ENQUIRIES:	Ms Nyathi M.
DATE	04/03/2019

Ms Manchidi M.H
Pretoria Central Prison TVET College
Pretoria

DISSERTATION STATEMENT FOR MS. MATSWATSWE HELLEN MANCHIDI

The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) faces a critical challenge in complying with the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) framework. Despite the recognition of the importance of the DPME framework by our Directorate Strategic Management and the Strategic Planning Monitoring and Management (SPMM), a significant discrepancy exists between the knowledge of the DPME framework and its practical application within the Department. This discrepancy underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of the framework and its effective use as provided by the DPME for public institutions.

An analysis of current practices reveals that, although the DPME framework is acknowledged as essential, its implementation remains inconsistent and often superficial. This inconsistency presents a challenge in complying with the framework mandated by the DPME. Within the DCS, the framework is underutilised, and its potential benefits are not fully realised. It is important to note that adherence to the DPME framework is mandated for public institutions.

We believe that addressing this discrepancy is crucial for enhancing the strategic management process within the DCS and contributing to the broader understanding of the DPME framework in public sector organisations.

Kind Regards

Mr MOLEKI M.T
Head of Centre: Pretoria Central Prison

Date: 2019/03/04

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Ms M.H. Manchidi
Pretoria

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter serves to certify that I, Lucas Makgoathane, have completed a comprehensive copy edit of your Master's Dissertation, entitled, 'Exploring the use of strategic audit to evaluate strategic management process at the National Prosecuting Authority in Pretoria'.

The editing process includes the following:

- **Checking and correcting spelling errors**
- **Ensuring correct usage of tenses**
- **Improving vocabulary where necessary**
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- **Checking the layout and sequential numbering of tables and figures**
- **Limited content editing.**

This editing process includes editing the layout and formatting of the dissertation, as well as conducting a thorough check of all references, to the best extent possible.

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Lucas Makgoathane
Pretoria: 28th January, 2024

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Annexure J Turnitin similarity report

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by Matswatswe Hellen Manchidi

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