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### The HSRC's public purposes

#### **Why the HSRC needs to formulate its public purposes**

Government budgets are under severe pressure in all countries and governments are attempting to identify ever more explicitly the public purposes to which they will allocate public funds, especially to the financing of public institutions. It is no longer possible for public institutions of any kind, including South Africa's science councils, to assume that they will continue to receive funding from the state simply because they were originally created by the state. They are required to demonstrate that they use their allocations from the state budget in pursuit of one or more agreed-upon public purposes.

The argument about public purposes speaks to the issue of why a government should provide public financing to any given activity, including research. Governments these days, including the South African government, expect spending programmes to have explicit and defensible purposes. It is no longer sufficient to claim that an institution "serves the public good". The challenge before the HSRC is to articulate as clearly as possible what the institution's public purposes are. The Review Panel hopes to contribute to that process.

Why should governments invest in research? This question has long been debated and the traditional answers have been based on the needs for new knowledge in areas of traditional governmental responsibility such as security, health, housing, education, the

establishment of standards and the provision of physical infrastructure. Such arguments have been supplemented by governments accepting responsibility to address *market failures* in investments in the generation of new knowledge by the private sector, which has led governments to share the risks of promoting technological innovation.

In the era of the information economy governments are accepting a need to address *information failures* as well. Individuals and groups in society or the economy have uneven access to information that they need to improve their prospects for development. Around the world the need to address information failures is particularly important for traditionally disenfranchised groups such as women, the poor or minority communities.

Another widely-accepted and knowledge-related government objective is *ensuring that the social benefits that arise from the development of knowledge are widely distributed*. This objective underlies the new mission proposed in South Africa's R&D strategy which will focus on "Science and Technology for Poverty Reduction", a major initiative which is to be co-managed by the HSRC, the University of Fort Hare and the CSIR.

As the HSRC considers a new draft Bill for the organisation, the Panel believes that it should identify a few public purposes that could serve as its justification or warrant for receiving public funds.

Furthermore, when an organisation articulates its public purposes it provides itself with a powerful set of criteria against which to judge its own actions.

## **Five public purposes for the HSRC**

The Review Panel proposes that the HSRC formally adopt a set of five public purposes to orient and give scope to its activities in future. We suggest the following formulation:

- 1 To foster and undertake applied social science – from data gathering through information provision to analysis – relevant to the development challenges of the new South Africa, especially by means of projects linked into large-scale, public sector-oriented, collaborative programmes.

- 2 To contribute to the effective making, implementing and monitoring of policy and to informing public debate through the effective dissemination of the results of research.
- 3 To help build the capacity of the social science system and its members, as well as fostering their activity in collaborations, networks and institutional linkages.
- 4 To respond to the needs for research and analysis on development problems identified by such groups in society whose organisations on their own do not have the capacity to undertake or access such enquiries.
- 5 To develop and make publicly available new data sets to underpin research, policy development and public discussion of the key issues of development and to develop new and improved methodologies for use in their production.

We would summarise our view by stating that to undertake social science research of high quality is not in itself a justification for a publicly supported body like the HSRC. The justification for continued and expanded public support lies in what the organisation chooses to research, how it manages its relationship with the research community here and abroad and what it does with the knowledge generated by the research.

The Panel further argues that in the fulfilment of its mandate, the HSRC should seek to foster productive relationships with social science research elsewhere in Africa through networks and joint programming. This is without prejudice to the established practice of international collaboration in social science research.

We propose that the five purposes and the obligation to foster linkages with the rest of Africa be enshrined in the proposed new HSRC Act.

## **Implications of the proposed public purposes**

In what follows, the five purposes will be referred to as the “policy-relevant research purpose”, the “policy information purpose”, the

“research stimulator purpose”, the “support to the disadvantaged purpose” and the “data set management purpose”.

### **The policy-relevant research purpose**

The Panel is advised that the HSRC is more comfortable with the idea of conducting “policy-relevant” research rather than explicitly “advising on policy formulation”; though on occasion it has been called upon to do the latter. The former is considered a more appropriate role for a science council with statutory autonomy.

Some of the HSRC's external critics appear to assume that undertaking policy-relevant research is illegitimate for social scientists, caricaturing it as the “handmaiden” role. The Panel by contrast sees the conduct of policy-relevant research as valid, intellectually defensible and important in an open and democratic society. When research is designed to contribute to policy it must be undertaken in full awareness of the factors that will come into play when policy is formulated. In that sense the research must be meaningful and useful to the policy maker.

The Panel recognises that the role of a statutory science council is different from that of an in-house research or policy unit within government, and it is important for the distinction to be maintained. In particular it is vitally important that the intellectual integrity of a scientific institution should not be compromised by injudicious entry into the political domain. Protocols must be in place to ensure that *ex ante* policy positions are not read into research data or analysis. Having given full value to this reservation, the Review Panel is strongly of the view that the provision of well reasoned, contextualised, policy-relevant research is a highly appropriate role for a research council to play. In order to do so effectively, however, it needs to internalise the implications for its domestic policies and practices.

Providing policy-relevant research implies providing data and findings capable of informing political decisions. Advising on policy implementation implies providing data and findings capable of informing the actions and decisions of public servants. Both forms of research need to be founded on an appreciation of policy goals and of the constraints of all kinds that limit the freedom of action of

politicians and officials. The quality of the performance of a body providing policy-relevant research (including policy analysis) is inextricably linked to its capacity to integrate a real appreciation of these factors with high quality outputs from its research programme. It is in this context that we repeat our view that the performance of high quality social science research is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the success of a policy advisory body.

Today's HSRC has done an admirable job of aligning its Research Programmes with the developmental priorities of Government as formally articulated by the President. Its Research Programmes and the projects undertaken within them need to incorporate a good level of understanding of the constraints that apply to the use of the research product. Such an understanding of constraints is by no means absent from the organisation, but it should be systematically applied at the time of project definition and formulation, not just when drafting final reports.

One option open to the HSRC is to acquire, in each Programme, some Programme staff with experience in policy formulation within Government or in the administration of public programmes. This might involve hiring staff without PhDs who might not be frequent authors of articles in refereed journals but who might have greater skill in drafting briefing materials for Ministers or Directors-General.

If the HSRC's research is to influence the direction of public policy and its implementation, the organisation will need to consider formulating its findings and choosing the appropriate vehicle of communication for at least five different target groups:

- Policy-makers – Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Directors-General – via briefing notes and, where possible, face-to-face meetings.
- Policy advisors closest to the decision-makers via research reports and seminars.
- The appropriate Parliamentary committees via briefing notes and appearances before the committees.
- Policy implementers – public servants, local government officials – via presentations and consultations.
- The community at large and in particular the communities most affected by the issue on which it is seeking to advise. In many

cases this will require sophisticated design of both the message and the medium.

All need to be addressed in ways that make it easy for them to comprehend and use the information being communicated.

### **The policy information purpose**

Success in reaching a wide audience depends on the organisation cultivating its own access to the mass media. On the evidence we have seen, the work of the HSRC already receives a respectable level of coverage in a good range of national and major regional newspapers, but the Review Panel received no information on coverage on either radio or TV.

EDs in particular will need to be good communicators as they are the people most likely to be called on for interviews. The likelihood that EDs will become the voice and public face of the HSRC underlines once more the urgency of achieving a good demographic balance in that important group.

### **The research stimulator purpose**

The principal implication of this purpose is that the HSRC will adjust its practices so as to create opportunities for many more collaborative ventures with social science research groups around the country, as we discussed in the previous section.

### **The support to disadvantaged people purpose**

The primary challenge facing the HSRC in adopting this public purpose will be to avoid the conventional view that disadvantaged groups are mere objects of research. Instead research design would commence with the recognition that such groups can be simultaneously sources of knowledge and insight, and able to be empowered through access to further knowledge through research to bring about beneficial change in their lives. The Review Panel has seen such an appreciation at work across projects in several Research Programmes, for instance CYFD, D&G and SCI.

Other challenges with significant consequences for the organisation concern the choice of language and medium of communication. Fortunately, there is a recent and much-praised South African example of the use of an innovative medium of communication to convey important information to groups who are unlikely to be influenced much, if at all, by conventional documents and reports. The very successful television series *Yizo Yizo* has demonstrated that the popular media can be used to convey messages, in this case from the Department of Education, to a difficult-to-reach target audience, namely teenagers. Should some of the HSRC conclusions about the social impacts of HIV/AIDS, for example, be conveyed through this medium to the same audience?

### **The data set management purpose**

In the opinion of the Panel the HSRC will need to develop, implement and publish a data management policy that contains firm undertakings about the acceptable time delay between data collection and data release to public use. It would not be compatible with the public purpose that we propose for that policy to envisage delays in publication of data sets for the purpose of giving HSRC staff time to publish their own papers based on the data. The policy should include incentives such as positive recognition in the performance appraisal system of speedy release of such data sets. The policy should set high barriers to discourage undue delays in the release of data sets and should question the acceptance of contracts for projects in which the sponsor might wish to delay or prevent the public release of any data sets developed.

From our discussions with EDs this is clearly a matter of some sensitivity. It has been explained to us that funders or contractors (whether government departments, international agencies or foundations) frequently insist upon retaining ownership or copyright of data and analysis produced by the HSRC with their money. The Review Panel recognises that, especially in the policy domain, a government department might feel obliged to set restrictions on the use of data or analysis whose implications may not have been fully digested, or for some other reason of state. It is hard to imagine

other funders having similar justifications for retaining ownership of social science data and analysis developed in South Africa by a national agency acting in the public interest. Nevertheless, whether the client or funding body is a government department or otherwise, the Review Panel believes that the presumption ought to be that speedy access by the public (including, of course, other researchers) to the products of social science research undertaken by the HSRC, especially with public money (or money provided by way of support for social development), is manifestly desirable and necessary. The onus ought to rest on the funder or contractor to show cause why this principle should not be observed, and the bar ought to be set high.<sup>9</sup> Where clients are reluctant to release data in the near future the HSRC should negotiate for archival clauses that allow for eventual data release.

The issue is wider than the HSRC. As we noted earlier, the *National R&D Strategy* committed the DST, to develop a South African policy on Intellectual Property (IP), since the absence of such a policy was already putting South African science and technology at risk in the international arena. The principles of such a policy laid out in the strategy document appear to have been devised without much consideration for the particular characteristics of social science research or the rights of the public to have access to the products of social science research. Here, as in so many aspects of the HSRC's mandate and practice, an issue of domestic policy has wider-ranging social and political implications and presents itself as a serious issue for policy research in its own right.

The Review Panel recommends as a matter of urgency that the HSRC prepares itself to engage from a well-researched basis in the formulation of the national IP policy, if it is not already so engaged, and formulates its own policy on data set management and the publication of research results within that framework, in consultation with the research councils and HEIs in COHORT. This matter is particularly urgent. We learnt in the closing stages of the Review that the DST is preparing to release a draft IP Bill for public comment.

There is a second implication of importance: the need expressed by some researchers to maintain new data sets for a period of years

in order to clean and analyse data. In the medium to long term, responsibility for updating and disseminating the data sets, along with the financial resources allocated by government to their support, are the responsibility of the South African Data Archive (SADA) of the NRF.

### **The self-image of the HSRC**

Formal adoption of its public purposes by the HSRC would reinforce its identity as a source of “social science that makes a difference” and counter the notion that it is primarily a traditional research centre.

While the HSRC does not see itself as a traditional research organisation some of its policies and practices may lend themselves to such an interpretation. The Panel has benefited from a discussion with the CEO on the organisation’s identity, in the course of which he developed a diagram explaining what the HSRC is not. The diagram situates the HSRC at the hub of a continuous dynamic interaction with NGOs, consultancies, government departments and universities. The HSRC is emphatically not any one of those entities. Its agenda is autonomous, interactive and user-driven. Its output is public, consulted upon and user-owned. Its constitution is statutory. Its funding mix comprises Parliamentary grant, foundations and tendered contracts, and self-generated revenue. This is the “Orkin Synthesis” and it is highly suggestive even if it raises as many questions as it answers. It will be clear from our Report that the Review Panel is very comfortable with aspects of this representation and somewhat uncomfortable with others.

An interesting question is the extent to which the researcher cadre in the HSRC has a similar self-image of the organisation. The Panel has the impression that the most widely held conception of the HSRC among research staff is that its primary duty is the conduct of research and that a number of processes, policies and support programmes have been implemented in ways that tend to reinforce that perception.

Firstly, HSRC programmes need expertise in areas such as policy design or programme implementation to reinforce the core research staff. Perhaps the phrase “programme staff” instead of “research

staff” would be more fitting. The maintenance of a research staff of the highest competence is a necessary condition for the HSRC's performance but it is not a sufficient condition for the HSRC to have impact.

A programme dominated by projects developed and implemented by individual researchers is a characteristic of academia and many traditional research institutions. We have observed evidence of this pattern in the HSRC, indicated by the prevalence of smaller projects. The available data shows a total of 195 current projects representing only 37% of income and amounting to 0.9 such projects per researcher in the HSRC. These data suggest that a large part of a multidisciplinary programme risks becoming no more than the sum of a set of small single-discipline projects. We advance this opinion with significant reservation, because the Review Panel has no doubt of the commitment of the CEO, many EDs and senior researchers to interdisciplinary research, and the proof of the pudding is in the publications. Nevertheless we are disturbed by the large number of small projects and conjecture whether it is a direct consequence of making individual researchers in a programme rather than the programme itself responsible for income generation? As far as the Panel has been able to determine, other science councils in South Africa hold programmes, not individual researchers, responsible for income generation.

It is no doubt true, as the Review Panel has been informed, that the HSRC is merely responding to market demand (that is, user needs) since the majority of small projects undertaken by HSRC researchers are externally funded. The Review Panel's point is that the balance in future should tilt away from a multitude of small projects in favour of an increased number of larger ones. If the HSRC becomes even more discriminating about what small projects to ignore, other research providers could take up the slack.

In a programme of many small projects it is unclear how the results of policy analysis and evaluation could be integrated. Probably only larger projects offer an opportunity to mount interdisciplinary research with multiple partners.

We have discussed the importance of research collaboration between the HSRC and the HEIs. According to HSRC-provided data,

only 16 of its 195 projects (8%) involve collaboration with universities as institutions, while another 71 (36% of the total) involve collaboration with individual researchers, many of whom are likely to be academics at universities. The Research Panel is informed that about 50% of all projects involve some form of collaboration and account for about three-quarters of all project expenditure. However, the other half of all current projects involves no form of external collaboration. The evidence related to programme structure suggests that in that respect the HSRC operates in a mode very close to that of a traditional academic research centre.

The HSRC has developed a robust policy and programme for its own publications, designed to meet the norms of the research community, including the introduction of an increasingly rigorous peer review system. The Review Panel was greatly impressed with the details of the year's research outputs in the HSRC's *Annual Report 2002/2003*, comprising a formidable list divided into "books, chapters in books and monographs", "occasional papers", "journal articles" and "reports and client reports". Peer reviewed scholarship is clearly distinguished from other varieties of publication. The Review Panel was introduced to the HSRC Press, which was recently launched in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg with the publication of its first title, *State of the Nation*. Moreover, the HSRC's already extensive electronic publishing programme has brought the fruits of even more research to a potentially vaster wider public.

The question arises, what means are used to bring the fruits of HSRC research home to the broader society? Public events with stakeholders to launch scholarly monographs are clearly desirable but are not a sufficient means of communicating important ideas to key stakeholders in the country. The Panel notes the references in the User and Stakeholder Survey Report to the use of workshops as a vehicle for communications with policy-makers and service providers. We have not been able to assess the extent of this practice and we are unsure whether it is systematically tracked or evaluated. Several individual programmes use a variety of effective techniques for communicating with stakeholders and affected groups, which the Panel warmly supports. The Panel was particularly struck by the

examples of the Grassy Park Petrol Station 5 (SCI) and the Collaborative HIV/AIDS and Adolescent Mental Health Project (CHAMP) (CYFD). The Panel is not clear how widespread such practices are across the Research Programmes.

In summary, while HSRC is indeed more than just a research agency, its human resource policies, its programme structure and its communications strategies, in combination, tend to reinforce the image of a conventional research centre. These matters deserve the HSRC's attention in relation to its consideration of public purposes.

### **The HSRC's engagement with Africa**

It is nowadays an axiom of state policy in South Africa that the New Programme for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is the framework for broad-ranging South African engagement with the rest of Africa. The President has encouraged South Africans through their various social formations to give substance to NEPAD and ensure that it becomes a living vehicle of continental solidarity and development. As a public body the HSRC has a special obligation to make its powerful research and communication resources available to the NEPAD project, and the Review Panel understands that there has been significant engagement with the NEPAD Secretariat. It is not clear to the Panel whether the HSRC has yet made the opportunity for a formal institution-wide analysis of possibilities and the development of a strategy for engaging in social science research collaboration in Africa. If not, this would be a fruitful by-product of the review process.

Meanwhile the extent and variety of project collaborations across Africa is praiseworthy, given the short time in which they have been achieved. A map in the *Annual Report* shows these to advantage. Though there is no text to give an overall synthesis of this involvement, some details are given in the individual Research Programme reports and the Review Panel received further information during our consultations. Research support is given through international programmes such as UNESCO's Measurement of Learning Achievement (MLA) project (ATEE), through regional collaborations such as the SAHARA project on HIV/AIDS prevalence (SAHA), or HSRC

initiatives like the international conference on the Human Genome and Africa (SCI), to name but three varied examples.

The EDs readily agree that the organisation is only at the beginning of a long journey into African collaboration. A strategic approach by the HSRC would seem to be necessary and so far not yet achieved. As the NEPAD Secretariat matures there will no doubt be stronger indications of where the HSRC's resources might be best deployed. However it is unnecessary to wait for that to occur, and indeed the organisation has not waited. The extent and nature of engagement with the rest of the continent is likely to differ from Programme to Programme, and in certain instances likely to be confined appropriately to a particular set of interfaces. The strategy behind individual engagements needs to be clearly articulated.

It is important for the HSRC to adopt a correct posture in relation to the continent, and to consider what political and ethical issues must become touchstones of its continental engagement. From the Review Panel's point of view there is no substitute for first-hand knowledge. All Research Programmes except one thus far have had direct project experience in Africa, and many Research Programmes have experience in a range of countries and over a period of time. In addition several senior African researchers from outside South Africa have been recruited to the organisation. The number of senior African visitors to the organisation is not yet at a level commensurate to our location but their increasing presence should feed as systematically as possible into the HSRC's knowledge base on Africa. Altogether this suggests that there needs to be an internal process within the HSRC to assimilate the combined African experience and the lessons to be learned from it. Beyond that, the HSRC should perhaps consider mounting a number of familiarisation visits at the highest executive level to the main organs of continental research and development, both pan-African and regional, in order to achieve a better understanding of the currents of research interest and opinion, and incidentally to make known the HSRC's willingness to learn from the continent and be useful to it.

The Review Panel believes that exploring the scope for building networks among African public interest, social science research organisations in a variety of areas should be an important goal of this

combination of exploratory activities by the CEO and EDs, building on the experience already achieved. The intention should be to ensure that the broader social science community in South Africa is linked into such networks in the most appropriate way.

It might need to be considered what special expertise in the CEO's office might be required to champion African networking and serve as a sort of diplomatic interface with the broader African institutional, social science community, quite apart from individual project links.

It is impossible to close this discussion without reference to the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA), which since 2001 has become a statutory science council reporting to the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology.<sup>10</sup> The Review Panel regrets that it was unable to meet representatives of AISA during the intensive phase of its work. However, we were subsequently able to consult separately with the Chairperson of the AISA Council and the HSRC CEO on relations between the two bodies.

The AISA Act envisages the transformation of the institute from an apartheid-era company into a statutory council with an explicit mandate to "provide research and policy development support in its pursuit of programmes which will contribute to the further development of the African continent" and to "establish ... networks on the African continent which will contribute to the peaceful development and prosperity of the continent" (Preamble). The first objective of the Institute is to "promote knowledge and understanding of African affairs through leading social scientists acting in concert and across all disciplines" (s. 3(a)). AISA summarises its mandate as follows:

to provide research and policy development; to conduct research and embark on training programmes; and to establish, participate in and maintain networks for peace, development and prosperity on the African continent.<sup>11</sup>

In 2002/03 the organisation prioritised all its Research Programmes "in terms of the continent's two most significant current initiatives: the African Union and NEPAD". In disciplinary terms AISA's work has tended to focus on African politics, political economy and

international relations, though the range may expand under the influence of the new AISA Council that took office in April 2003. The organisation has formal links with a number of regional and national research centres in Africa and abroad.

In 2002/03 AISA had a total staff of 38 (36% research staff), a core Parliamentary grant of R8.9 million and external contract funding of R1.6 million.<sup>12</sup>

To put it no stronger, at the formal level the mutual interests of the HSRC and AISA self-evidently overlap. In practical terms the areas of common interest have thus far been quite limited. The HSRC's view is that some overlap in mandate and programmes is manageable and healthy and permits collaboration, as with other science councils. The Panel was informed of one recent project on economic integration strategies for the AU on which Parliament requested the two bodies to collaborate.

From what we have learnt there has been minimal formal contact hitherto between the HSRC and the Africa Institute, and very little joint professional activity. For obvious reasons this needs to be remedied. The HSRC appears to have been ready for such contact for some time. The Review Panel recommends formal consultations between the two bodies at the highest governance and executive levels as a matter of urgency. At a time when DST and the HSRC are contemplating a new HSRC Act it is particularly important to ensure that the research and outreach jurisdictions of these two publicly-funded bodies are clear and non-competitive, and that their *modus vivendi* is collegial and co-operative.

### **A new name and legislation for the HSRC**

Our terms of reference required us to consider the implications of our recommendations for a new name and Act for the organisation.

We heard no evidence on a new name. We heard no complaints about the present name, which is not to suggest that everyone is happy with it. However, the question of a new name was not a matter of importance to the Review Panel and we prefer to say nothing about it.

We have considered the question of a new Act. The Review Panel took note of the fact that the DST believes the time is ripe for new legislation to replace the current Human Sciences Research Act, 1968 (Act No. 23 of 1968) which was last amended in 1990. It is unusual for an important law of the previous regime to have remained untouched since 1994. The reason seems to have been that the Human Science Research Act is a remarkably bland document whose provisions give no particular offence. The Act has not prevented the Council from pursuing the transformation of the HSRC as it has seen fit, subject to Ministerial approval. However, a transformed HSRC deserves a better governing instrument. The Review Panel agrees that a new Act is needed.

We confine our discussion of a new HSRC Act to three points concerning a preamble, a statement of purposes and the composition of the Council.

A preamble conveys the intention or prospectus of a law, and may (like the South African Constitution, 1996) make explicit the civic values underlying its provisions. Recent judgments of South African Courts make clear that the preamble may be applied without qualification in the interpretation of an Act. A preamble may therefore set out the argument of an Act, and be construed as fully part of an Act, reinforcing its formal provisions. The current Act has no preamble. There is good reason for a new Act to have one. A preamble can make clear in the most emphatic way what public good the HSRC is to serve. A preamble may also distinguish the way in which the new HSRC differs from the old.

We propose, as a starting point for discussion, that a preamble for a new HSRC Act might in some manner reflect the following sentiments:

That the Republic of South Africa has been founded on the basis of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms, with the intention of improving the quality of life of all citizens and liberating the potential of each person.

That the new South Africa must overcome the legacy of social disintegration and inequality left to it by the apartheid order, while coping with the social consequences of both poverty and disease and rapid economic and technological change under the impact of globalisation.

## Report of the Review Panel

That the social sciences, like all branches of human knowledge and culture, need to enlist in the cause of human well-being and social justice.

That it is necessary to promote social science research of the highest quality in South Africa in order to improve public knowledge and understanding of social conditions and the processes of social change, particularly among the most vulnerable and marginalised.

That such knowledge and understanding should inform processes of public policy and implementation aimed at empowering people to find solutions to their problems and uplift the quality of their lives.

That the South African social science community is obliged to engage with their colleagues elsewhere in Africa through networks and joint programmes of research on pressing social issues relevant to human welfare and prosperity.

That it is necessary for social scientists, in collaboration with other scientists and scholars, to analyse the social conditions arising from processes of globalisation and the challenges they present.

For these reasons it is necessary to establish a Human Sciences Research Council.

Secondly, in the body of the new Act, the section describing the purposes of the HSRC should incorporate the statement of public purposes proposed by the Review Panel (or a statement embodying similar sentiments).

Thirdly, in considering the provision in the Act for appointing the Council of the HSRC, the drafters might take four observations into account. In the first place, from our own observation and views expressed to us, it is apparent that the present HSRC Council has provided an outstanding example of intellectual engagement with the executive and good corporate governance. The new Act should permit if not encourage the appointment of successor Councils of equivalent range and calibre. Secondly, in formulating the criterion of representivity, it would be appropriate to require an equal number of women and men. Thirdly, the employees of the HSRC should be represented by their union's nominee. Fourthly, the

Council should include a distinguished representative of the social science research community in the rest of Africa.

### **The HSRC's access to public funding**

As we indicated at the outset of this section the Review Panel believes that organisations closely aligned to a set of explicit public purposes are at an advantage in making the case for public financial support. The Review Panel considers that the HSRC has merited its claim for an increase in its Parliamentary grant and for subsequent increases to at least match the rate of the average of the other science councils.

In the case of the data set management purpose, we believe that the case has already been accepted in South Africa that programmes serving such purposes should be funded, in the main, by the public purse, either through budgetary allocations or via performance contracts. In this respect, we would cite the treatment within the Science Vote of the Council for Geosciences. As in all countries, the national geological survey receives a high percentage of its income from the state. We would expect that Government would apply the same principles to the financing of national social surveys.

As we have noted elsewhere, the HSRC is well positioned to participate strongly with other science councils in the DST's "Technology and innovation for poverty reduction mission", for which the Department intends to allocate R150 million. Indeed the HSRC is the lead agency for this mission, working with the University of Fort Hare and the CSIR.

In Table 4 we summarise the main implications for the HSRC of the five proposed public purposes.

Table 4. Implications for the HSRC of the five public purposes

|                                | <b>1. The policy-relevant research purpose</b>  | <b>2. The policy information purpose</b>  | <b>3. The research stimulator purpose</b>  | <b>4. The support to the disadvantaged purpose</b>  | <b>5. The data-set management purpose</b>   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Research quality</b>        | High quality of research essential to underpin all purposes   |   |  |   |   |
| <b>Research “integration”</b>  | Needs to undertake interdisciplinary research mainly in larger teams  |   |  |   |   |
| <b>Research strategy</b>       | Needs to integrate an appreciation of the constraints faced by policy makers  | Needs to build in a capacity to interpret research outputs in ways that make them more accessible to wider audiences.   | Needs to be increasingly based on the concepts of creating national programmes and networks in which active collaboration takes place. | Needs strongly participatory research methodologies. Disadvantaged groups to be seen as users of research not as subjects of research | Needs to receive funding for multi-year production of the data sets until the methodologies are mature, then in medium term to transfer the management responsibility |
| <b>Staff skills</b>            | Needs policy skills added to programmes   |   | Needs expertise in promoting team work and in creating and managing networks   | Needs multiple language skills  | Needs to maintain high level of technical skills in survey methodologies and database management needs  |
| <b>Communications strategy</b> | Needs distinct strategies to address decision-makers, their advisors, Parliamentarians and the public at large                  | Needs to increase its skills in reaching the mass media, specially radio and TV. This has implications for representivity in creating the “public face and voice” of HSRC | Needs to create expanded opportunities for discussion of both its overall research agenda and its Research Programmes.                 | Needs strong skills in use of non-written media of communication  | Needs a formal policy on data disclosure  |
| <b>Creation of linkages</b>    | Often will need active collaboration of stakeholders  |   | Key requirement  |   |   |
| <b>Self-image of HSRC</b>      | Needs to cultivate an image of being more than just a research centre and to communicate its image more clearly to stakeholders |   |  |   |   |