

COMBUDS

First, let me provide the following background:

During the late sixties to early seventies, the National Department of Agriculture prepared income and cost estimates for the most important agricultural enterprises (crops, as well as livestock). The information was used as advisory and planning tools by the then regional economists, financial institutions and agri-businesses.

A group discussion method was used and information obtained was processed by hand. A large number of budgets were prepared for various enterprises, according to region and province. The information included dry land and areas under irrigation. Processed information documents were bound in bundles, to be distributed free of charge to users.

During the eighties, a Prof Kletke of the Oklahoma State University was invited to South Africa, to develop a programme to computerise the information. The programme was intended for the main frame computer controlled centrally by the Department of Agriculture in Pretoria.

With the powerful development of ever more powerful PCs, a programme was developed for use with PCs. It was called COMBUDS (an abbreviation for "Computerised Budgets") and it was accepted by the main users, particularly universities, agri-businesses, financial institutions etc. It is still used widely and the Directorate involved at the Department confirmed that the word COMBUDS is better known than others, such as "Enterprise budgets".

Currently some Provincial Departments of Agriculture still use COMBUDS, but in different ways. The Western Cape still uses the COMBUDS programme, but the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal prefer Excel spread sheets.

The PRF feels the name of the programme is not important, provided the user knows how the information was prepared and finds it easy to apply the information.

In Afrikaans the words "inkomste- en kosteramings" would be correct, while the English description "income and cost budgets" would be considered correct.

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