



Electronic Monitoring and Evaluation System, MFMA Calendar (Muni eMonitor)

Purpose

Section 5(2)(c) of the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) requires National Treasury to monitor and assess the compliance of municipalities and municipal entities. This circular provides an overview of the web-enabled **Muni eMonitor System and MFMA Calendar** designed to strengthen the capacity and capability of municipalities and municipal entities to comply with the provisions of the MFMA and its regulations, to introduce early reminders of impending deadlines, to improve information flows for public accountability, to enhance monitoring, oversight, support measures and effective reporting by various stakeholders in Municipalities, Provinces and National Treasury.

Background

National and Provincial Treasuries have a legislated mandate to monitoring compliance and support implementation of the MFMA by municipalities and municipal entities. The areas of persistent non-compliance have been raised during various engagement and publications with calls for stricter enforcement and consequences to be applied. The above has also been highlighted in many Treasury publications and MFMA audit reports issued by the Office of the Auditor-General.

The current MFMA compliance reporting system has evolved since the MFMA was introduced in 2003. The approach adopted at the time was to phase-in various reforms taking cognisance of existing capacity and capabilities. This approach has contributed towards changes in policies, processes, and procedures, skills, and capacity development programmes, management, and institutional reorganisation. The next phase of modernisation has commenced with the introduction of different electronic tools and promotion of effective utilisation of information technology.

The launch of the Muni eMonitor system is the next step in utilising technology to enhance and modernise existing MFMA compliance monitoring mechanisms, contribute towards the reduction in reporting requirements, promotes uniformity and standardisation, and assists various stakeholders with information to perform their oversight and support responsibilities. It allows for the monitoring and evaluation of performance on a regular, planned, and systematic basis throughout the MFMA financial cycle.

The Muni eMonitor system also complements and interfaces with other systems, has been designed to enhance the overall completeness, accuracy, and timely submissions of MFMA compliance reports. The system will reduce and limit the use of manual processes, which has also been associated with delays in implementing corrective actions. The additional requirement to report separately to different stakeholders is obviated as stakeholders have access to real time information.

Therefore, effective use of the system should result in increased municipal efficiencies and effectiveness and improved financial management.

The Muni eMonitor System

The Muni eMonitor system covers the entire MFMA compliance disciplines and complements other tools and systems. For example, the Financial Management Capability Maturity Model (FMCMM), Financial Ratios, and Audit Action Plan. (Please refer to MFMA Circular 113 and MFMA Circular 114 for more information on these systems – accessible on <http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/Circulars/Pages/default.aspx>).

The systems are centralised and freely accessible to national, provincial, municipal, and municipal entity users, requiring only an internet connection and standard internet browser.

The system provides Accounting Officers, Chief Financial Officers, other officials, as well as the National and Provincial Treasuries with real-time updated information on compliance with the MFMA and its regulations, with tailored reports immediately available for extraction and use. It is expected that reports generated will enable the treasuries and other stakeholders to proactively improve and direct support measures and interventions to areas that need attention within municipalities and municipal entities.

The information extracted from the system and through different reports will assist national and provincial oversight bodies to implement measures to improve financial management and financial governance. The overall configuration of the response types promotes financial and non-financial output that is consistent, relevant, and comparable.

Dashboards allow for easy compliance monitoring of the different financial management compliance disciplines and enable the results to be consolidated reflecting municipality, province or national.

Additional benefits of the Muni e-Monitor system include:

- ❖ Compliance questionnaires and evaluations are completed mainly through selections from drop-down menus, thereby reducing the risk of omissions and errors and reduces need to produce different compliance reports.
- ❖ Each aspect can be assigned to a specific responsible official for completion of the relevant section enhancing accountability and individual performance management.
- ❖ Timely reporting is enabled. The system is programmed to send out reminders as the due date for each action approaches, and an escalation notification is triggered, in addition to the reminder, when an action becomes due and overdue.
- ❖ The system enables simultaneous accessibility to key users in all three spheres of government (national, provincial and local), which enable enhanced co-operative government and oversight as Provincial Treasury and National Treasury reviews of the completed actions or evaluations are built in the system.
- ❖ Manual submissions are reduced as the required information is uploaded onto the system, thereby eliminating delays in sharing information with relevant stakeholders.
- ❖ Regular updates to the system will be made in response to comments and inputs from stakeholders and users.
- ❖ A comprehensive Help function is built into the system, which includes a detailed user guide. National Treasury has also introduced a helpdesk e-mail address, specifically for the Muni e-Monitor system queries, comments, and inputs, (muni.emonitor@treasury.gov.za).

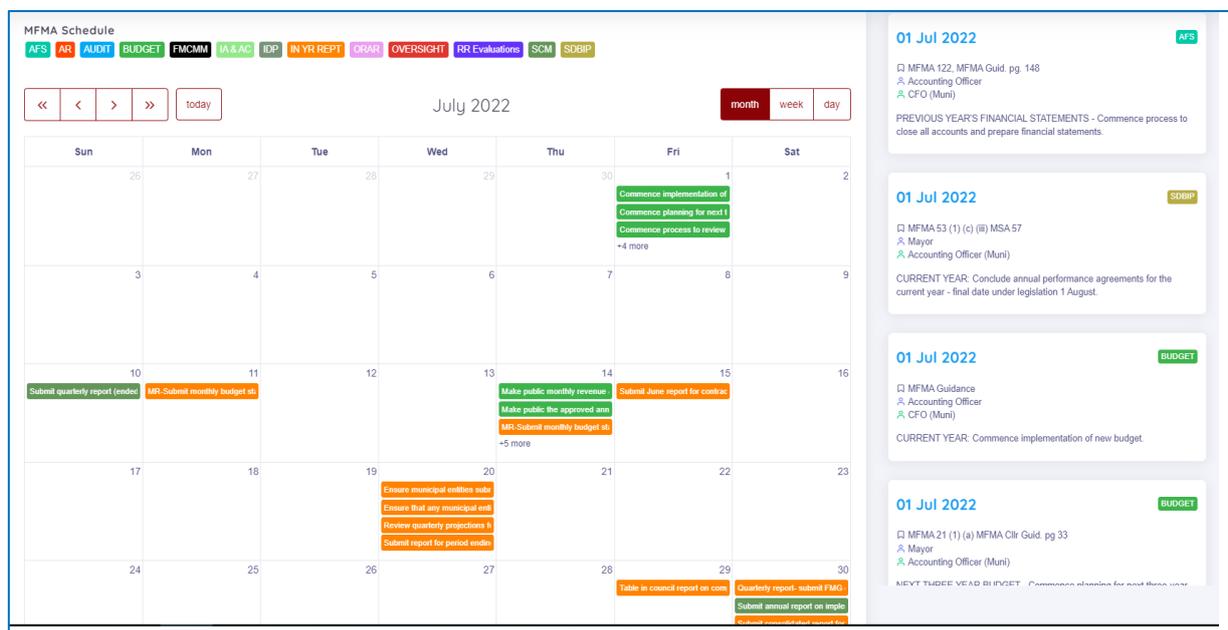
The Monitoring and Evaluation system consists of two main components, namely:

- the MFMA legislated calendar and Actions Management function; and
- the reporting Evaluations function.

The MFMA Legislated Calendar and Actions Management

The **MFMA electronic calendar** is a tool for use by municipal, provincial, and national officials, is easily assessable, and includes features such as reminders, editing or customisation.

The digital version is accessible online using various devices and will allow users to receive reminders of upcoming deadlines contributing to improved planning of tasks, prioritisation of activities, assigning and delegating responsibilities, and serve as an early notification of due dates for MFMA activities. The screenshot below shows the look and feel of the MFMA electronic calendar:



The MFMA electronic calendar is also available as a mobile app. The software application is designed to help municipal and municipal entity officials keep track of important events and tasks on their mobile devices. The MFMA calendar app is synced with the electronic MFMA calendar and provide features such as reminders and filters. The MFMA calendar app is available for download by public, councillors, ward members and other stakeholders. The access to information is crucial for promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance. The MFMA calendar app will allow citizens to obtain information about MFMA and related legislated due dates for required actions by municipalities, as well as to participate in public decision-making processes.

The MFMA electronic calendar app has been published and is ready for download on the Google Play store, which is available for android users with OS Android 6.0. The availability of the MFMA electronic calendar app on other platforms such as Huawei App Gallery and Apple App Store, is currently in progress. Further communication will follow when the apps are available for download on these platforms.

To ensure universal access, the MFMA electronic calendar is available in a Desktop widget. The desktop widget is a small application placed on a computer's desktop to provide quick access to MFMA and related legislated due dates for required actions by municipalities and municipal entities. The desktop widget will display notifications reminders by providing users with easy access to the electronic MFMA calendar. The desktop widget can be downloaded on the Microsoft Store once publication of the application is completed, further communication will follow when the desktop widget is available for download.

The MFMA electronic calendar includes an **Actions Management Function** that supports municipal officials to improve compliance with key deadlines. This feature is available to officials that have registered on the Muni eMonitor system. It provides a built-in review process that improves the quality of compliance information. Use of the system will assist municipalities/municipal entities in strengthening accountability as the system tracks actions taken and review comments made. The actions management function is integrated with the electronic MFMA calendar and email notifications making it convenient and user-friendly.

The system saves the uploaded evidence files confirming the compliance status, making it simple for reviewers to access relevant information. The information also allows users to track actions taken in previous years.

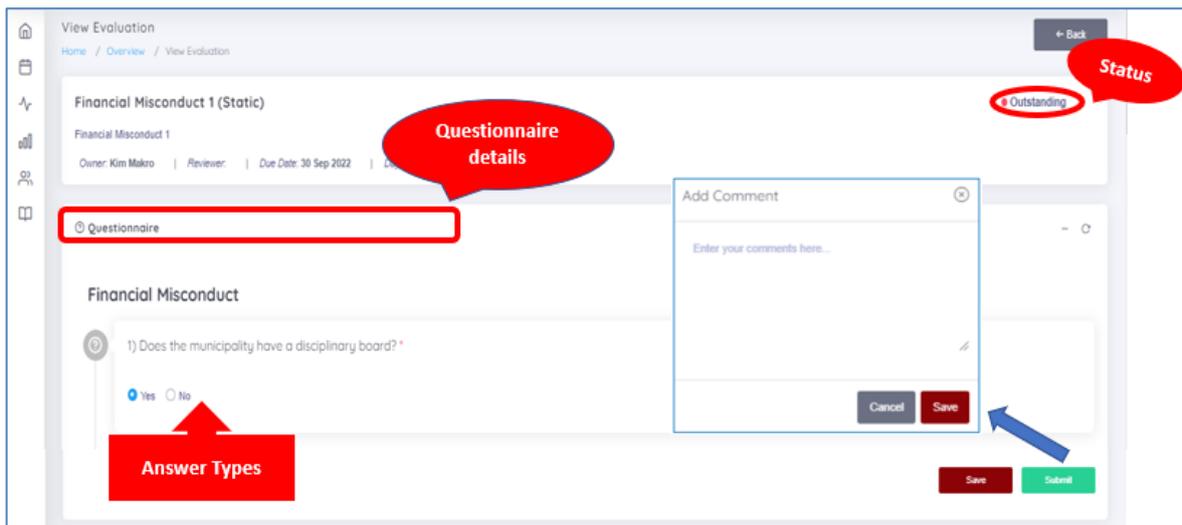
The Monitoring and Evaluations System

It is imperative that municipalities and municipal entities operate effective systems to generate credible and timely internal and external MFMA reports.

The system supports management generate information as part of its Monitoring and Evaluation activities and has the potential to revolutionise reporting processes in local government. It offers opportunities for increased productivity, monitoring capability, and evaluation of MFMA compliance for improved financial management and service delivery. It

streamlines the completion and submission of monthly, quarterly, and other reports, automates data collection and analysis thereby eliminating the possibility of human errors and ensuring consistent and accurate reporting. It is also user-friendly and can be shared, allowing multiple users to access and update the data in real time, enabling faster and more informed decision-making. The system has a built-in data encryption and protection measures to limit unauthorised access or modification.

The screenshot below illustrates the layout of a typical Evaluation:



Dashboards and reports

The information is consolidated into several dashboards. The dashboards provide high level overviews by covering different financial management disciplines, trends, and progress in improving MFMA compliance within municipalities or municipal entities.

The dashboards of the Monitoring and Evaluation system are data driven as information is extracted from the data submitted by the municipality or municipal entity for **Reporting and Evaluating** purposes.

The Muni eMonitor system supports improved decision making by enabling users to extract real time information and reports for discussion and decision making at management meetings. The filter mechanism allows for selection of relevant reported information to be extracted for inclusion in reports destined for use by the various oversight structures, such as Management, Council, Council Committees, MPAC and Audit Committees.

The combined risks of late submission and incorrect reports being submitted for review, are eliminated. Consolidation errors are eradicated as the system consolidates the information for inclusion in the dashboards and reports.

Active use of the system will help municipalities and municipal entities improve in various areas of compliance and provide treasuries with real-time consolidated information which may then be used to target support identified as areas of weakness and highlight where urgent interventions are required.

Accessing the system and related assistance

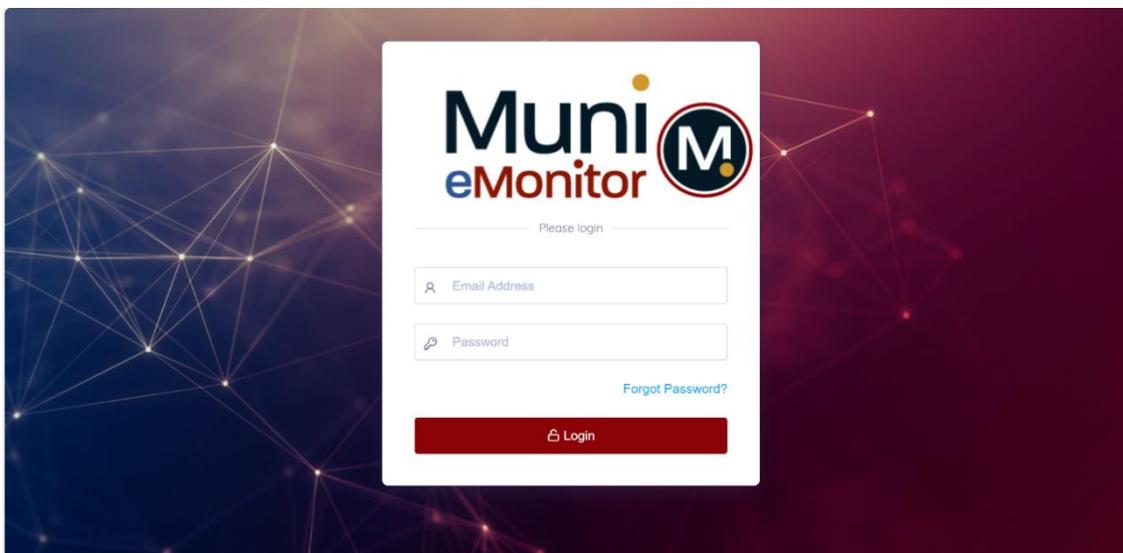
The Muni e-Monitor system is available as a web portal, mobile application, and windows application. It is supported by Chrome (the preferred web browser), Firefox, Microsoft edge and Safari and is available for downloading from the following stores:

- Google Play Store
- Huawei App Gallery – to be published soon.
- Apple Apps Store – to be published soon.
- Microsoft Store (Desktop widget) - to be published soon.

The desktop widget and mobile applications contain the electronic MFMA calendar and actions as well as the deadlines for any given day, week, or month. Available selections include filtering by process, regulations, and responsible official. Detailed access to specific actions or evaluations are available on the web application of the system.

The Monitoring and Evaluation system is accessible on the following URL link:

<https://muniemonitor.treasury.gov.za>



User guides will be provided to all delegates at the training sessions. The updated User Guide is also available under the User Guide menu item in the Muni e-Monitor system and for your convenience a PDF version may be downloaded.

Further assistance will be made available at provincial level. Details of the relevant provincial treasury official assigned to assist officials are indicated in the table below:

NO.	PROVINCE	NAME OF OFFICIAL	E-MAIL ADDRESS	CONTACT NO.
1	Eastern Cape	Nkosinathi Ngwenya	nkosinathi.ngwenya@ectreasury.gov.za	0837462216
2	Free State	Pulane Matsaseng	pulanem@treasury.fs.gov.za	0652909549
3	Gauteng	Abigail Maila	abigail.maila@gauteng.gov.za	0719637029
4	KwaZulu-Natal	Sandile Khumalo	Sandile.khumalo@kzntreasury.gov.za	0726204389
5	Limpopo	Kholofelo Morufane	morufanemwk@treasury.limpopo.gov.za	0152918441
6	Mpumalanga	Peaceful Khumalo	mpkhumalo@mpg.gov.za	0723041739

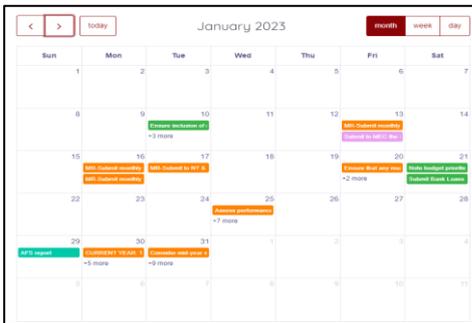
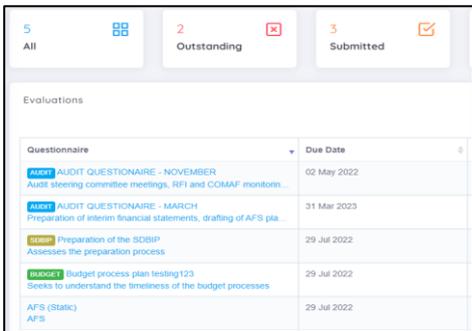
7	Northwest	Mpho Muelelwa	MSMuelelwa@nwpg.gov.za	0834448038
8	Northern Cape	Gerald Beukes	gbeukes@ncpg.gov.za	0614006117
9	Western Cape	Dian Cronje	dian.cronje@westerncape.gov.za	0846280935

National Treasury has introduced a helpdesk e-mail address, specifically for the Muni eMonitor system queries (muni.emonitor@treasury.gov.za).

Annual Implementation Plan

Table 1 below reflect the annual implementation plan for the rollout of the MFMA Monitoring and Evaluation system in respect of the Actions and Evaluation questionnaires:

Table 1: Annual Implementation Plan

System components	Timeline
<p>Legislated Calendar Actions</p> 	<p>All Actions appearing under the legislative calendar for each month must be processed within the specific month that they appear in the calendar.</p>
<p>Evaluation Questionnaires</p> 	<p>Quarterly Evaluations will be published by NT quarterly for submission within 30 days after the end of each quarter.</p> <p>Some Evaluations may be based on emerging issues. As a result, these evaluations will be issued as and when required, thereby making the sector more responsive.</p>

Conclusion

The MFMA legislated calendar and the MFMA Monitoring and Evaluation information links to priorities to improve overall financial management, compliance, and outcomes as they encompass all areas that have specific regulatory and reporting responsibilities.

The Muni e-Monitor system will assist provinces and national perform their oversight responsibilities, to prioritise legislated actions, monitor and evaluate progress and provide targeted and customised support to municipalities and municipal entities.

The aim of introducing the system is to migrate municipalities and municipal entities out of a position of significant non-compliance with the MFMA and related regulations and to show real-time improvements. The system will be enhanced with linkages to other NT systems and further development as the reforms unfold.

Please bring this Circular to the attention of municipal officials, municipal councils, Board of Directors of entities and the relevant oversight structures, such as Finance Committees and Municipal Public Accounts Committees.

Contact



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