

The Azores

Geographic Reality

The Azores is a Portuguese archipelago, composed of nine islands. Situated in the Atlantic Ocean, half way between Europe and North America, its most easterly island is 1.000 Kms from the Portuguese continent and its most westerly island is 1.600 Kms.

Population

The archipelago has around 239.000 inhabitants, 18.359 of which work in the Autonomous Regional Public Administration. Administration workers represent 18% of the workforce in the region.

Autonomous Region

The Autonomous Region of the Azores is one of two autonomous regions in Portugal. As an autonomous region, it has its own legislative and government institutions.

Historically, the main institutions have had their headquarters on three of the nine islands according to the principle of three polarity, commonly accepted since the beginning of the autonomy process.

Azores Regional Government

The X Regional Government of the Azores is composed of nine departments (Presidency of the Azorean Government; Vice-Presidency; Regional Secretariat for Science, Technology and Infrastructures; Regional Secretariat for Education and Training, Regional Secretariat for the Economy; Regional Secretariat for Employment and Social Solidarity; Regional Secretariat for Health; Regional Secretariat for Agriculture and Forestry; Regional Secretariat for Environment and Seas) which have headquarters on three islands. Seven of the eight governmental departments have peripheral services on other islands.

Regional Public Administration

Incorporated on those nine departments there one regional secretary (Regional Secretary of the Presidency), two undersecretaries (Undersecretary of European Affairs and External Cooperation and Regional Undersecretary of Fisheries), and thirty Directorates.

The archipelagic reality of the Region induces a strong emphasis on the organization and on the functioning of its public administration. The organisms and services are dispersed over the nine islands and on each one of the islands there are necessary infrastructures to support any activity. The ports and airports are two good examples.

Development Strategic Vectors

A detailed study fulfilled in 2005 entitled “Strategy for the Quality in the Autonomous Region of the Azores” identified three axes of priority intervention or strategic vectors: Companies, Public Service, Citizenship.

Let us give here a perspective of the “Public Service” vector.

The Regional Plan for Quality Promotion in Public Services

In its program, the IX Regional Government of the Azores (2005-2008), stipulated, as one of its basic objectives of administrative modernization, the improvement of the quality of services given to the citizen. The X Regional Government 2009-2012 have decided to incorporate on his programme the development of this objective.

Based on these proposals, several projects and initiatives were and continue to be developed in order to change the model of the organization of regional administration of the Azores that presides since seventies of past century

The new management model of regional administration is based on three pillars:

- 1st) Management of human resources;
- 2nd) Organization of services;
- 3rd) Evaluation of services.

1º) The Administration of human resources

The Administration of human resources has its support on:

- Central Personal Database

Since May 2005, the regional administration of the Azores has had a database of human resources information. The Central Personal Database is installed in the Regional Directorate for Organization and Public Administration under the Vice-Presidency of the Government. This database is "fed" monthly by decentralized databases sent by the remaining departments, organisms and services of regional administration.

At any given time it is possible to know how many people there are, who they are, gender, age, qualifications, professional group, career details and any other category that individuals may to.

- Island Chart of Public Servants

All employees of regional administration services resident at each island have been integrated on their respective Island Charts of Public Servants.

This new configuration provides a larger mobility of employees within each island. It allows a better distribution of human resources, moving people from services where they are surplus into other services

- The Qualification Management Process of Public Servants

Under the banner of Regional Directorate for Organization and Public Administration, there is a division responsible for the vocational training of public workers who belong to the common careers of regional and local administration.

The Center of Formation of Public Administration of the Azores (CEFAPA) offers, annually, a vocational training program in areas of management, computer science, accounting and law, among others.

In recent years, in order to accompany the new philosophy of action of the Regional Government of the Azores, as well as assisting the information which has come from the daily relationship with services, students and instructors, DROAP, through CEFAPA, has been trying to adapt its offer to the search, by offering specific vocational training to specific needs identified by the top leaders of the services.

- The Public Employment Stock Market of Azores (in portuguese BEP-Açores)

In order to achieve the goals drawn up, the Regional Government published the Regional Legislative Ordinance n.º 50/2006/A, of December 11, that creates the Public Employment Stock Market of Azores.

BEP-Açores is available on-line from 1st March 2007 at <http://bepa.azores.gov.pt>, publishing all notices of the opening of personnel tenders, offers of public jobs, as well as the results of the former.

Services are forced to consult the requests of employees' mobility and/or the publishing mobility offers, as a previous condition to the resource of the recruiting expresses of personnel.

As soon as possible, a curricula vitae stock market for anyone interested will be created, with work offers for several sectors of activity in the Azores.

2º) Services Organization

During the process of restructuring the previous structural model of regional administration of the Azores, the creation of central services was also considered.

The Regional Legislative Ordinance n.º 49/2006/A, of December 11, also enables the constitution of central services.

Central services will be created at island level, attending the socio-economic needs of each one, tends as purpose the functional organization of the regional administration workers.

The concentration of tasks, actually dispersed by organisms and services, will allow the liberation of human resources for deficient organisms and services of such capital.

The creation of central services for centralized remuneration processing by Island Charts of Public Servants, as well as for administration of vehicle fleets (drivers and vehicles), are two good examples.

In the future, this process will permit the externalization of some services developed at the moment by regional administration. This will permit the stimulation of local economy.

3º) Services Assessment

The Assessment on Regional Public Administration Services

As for this pillar, the Regional Plan for the Promotion of Quality in Public Services came to foresee the self-assessment as a fundamental step in the pursuit of processes of continuous improvement in the services.

Three evaluation principles were considered: evaluation by citizens (evaluation questionnaires made available to citizens), auditing and self-assessment.

Resolution n° 119/2003, of October 2, later altered by Resolution n° 120/2006, of September 21, concerning self-assessment it came to establish the strategy of implementation of CAF in the services of Regional Public Administration and to strengthen the constitution of Quality Promotion Groups (in portuguese NPQ), one for each department of the Regional Government. These NPQ, among other tasks, were created to accompany this process internally.

The Orientation n° 2/2006 - IX Regional Government, of January 27, stipulated the compulsory nature of all of the services apply CAF as a tool of organizational analysis. In effect, self-assessment teams were created in all of the organisms and services of regional administration.

The option for the tool CAF had to do with the fact that this tool is scattered for the public administrations of the European Union.

For education and health services (schools, hospitals and health centers) and because of their specificities, it was establish exceptions in what concerns to the self-assessment tools. In Education it was created a project denominated "Qualis - Evaluation of Schools" that adapted the CAF tool to the school reality. In Health sector, it was decided that they should continue with their specific tools.

The role of different participants on the CAF implementation process

The Vice-Presidency of Regional Government (VPGR) through Regional Directorate for Organization and Public Administration (in portuguese DROAP)

The VPGR, through DROAP (VPGR / DROAP), as the department with competences on organization and public administration, is responsible for the general coordination of the process, in particularly:

- Accompany the implementation of this process, permanently coordinating with the Quality Promotion Groups (in portuguese NPQ);

- Make available a group of instruments that allow the apprehension of knowledge by all the parts involved in this process, such as: the CAF manual for Regional Administration; make available support documents on the website www.vpgr.azores.gov.pt; elaboration of unfolded and other documents; maintenance of an electronic address to support a permanent connection between NPQ and VPGR / DROAP, collecting suggestions and opinions, as well to receive reports;
- Promotion of seminars, workshops and specific vocational training, involving the majority of leaders and collaborators, participants of this process;
- Publicise, at specific forums and share information of CAF implementation process with homologous organisms of central portuguese and european administrations.

Quality Promotion Groups (NPQ) role

NPQ are essential pillars and strategic links for purposes prosecution. Therefore, they developed tasks, such as:

- The survey, follow-up and to give dynamism to CAF implementation process, from CAF teams creation to the prosecution of improvement plans;
- Support CAF teams, gathering and contacting with them frequently;
- Report, quarterly, to top management and VPGR/DROAP, information about the self assessment process and execution of improvement actions.

Self-assessment teams role

The CAF teams are responsible to self-assessment on their services and organisms.

These teams, depending of self-assessment ambit (organism, service or group of services), shall:

- Establish an execution schedule of the self-assessment process and submit it to superior consideration;
- Plan and execute, evidencing in every moment (recordings, reports), all of the stages considered in the schedule;
- Proceed to self assessment based in CAF criteria and sub criteria;
- Elaborate the improvement plan;

- Program the next moment of self-assessment;
- Elaborate the final report and submit it to superior (top leader) approval;
- Present the final report and the result of its work to all collaborators.

Self-assessment process scope

The self-assessment process using quality management tools is, at the moment, a widespread process in all regional administration services.

During 2006-2007, 117 CAF teams were created, 54 of which in 2006 and 63 in 2007. 459 collaborators of regional public administration are integrated on those CAF teams. CAF teams established in 2006 did the self-assessment exercise with CAF-2002 version and CAF teams created in 2007 did it with CAF-2006 version.

CAF Vocational Training

Because the majority of CAF team members didn't have the necessary qualification to proceed with this process, it was prepared a vocational training plan.

As result, 20 editions of the formation "The implementation of CAF in the Azores Public Administration Services", were carried out, with 363 CAF team members, 168 in 2006 and 195 in 2007.

In April 2007 it was organized the workshop denominated "CAF in Regional Public Administration of Azores - Challenges and Strategies", with 163 participants representing all CAF teams and Quality Promotion Groups.

That event counted with the participation of European Institute of Public Administration and the Portuguese representative in the European Group of Innovative Public Services.

CAF self-assessment results

CAF teams results that applied CAF-2002 version

54 organisms and services that created CAF teams in 2006 applied CAF tool - version 2002. Of that, 52 elaborated their final reports and implemented the improvement initiatives proposed. Many of those initiatives were accomplished.

The final average score obtained was 11,37 in a scale of 0 to 45.

The criteria whose average score was lower were 8 "Impact in the society" and 6 "Results guided for the citizens/customers". On the contrary, the criteria whose global average score was higher are 4 "Partnerships and Resources" and 1 "Leadership", by this order.

Comparing means criteria with results criteria we could concluded that, on average, organisms and services obtained better scores in the first ones (1,37 versus 1,12 in a scale of 0 to 5).

CAF teams results that applied CAF-2006 version

63 organisms and services that created CAF teams in 2007 applied CAF tool - version 2006. Of that, 48 concluded the process and implemented the improvement initiatives proposed.

The final average score obtained was 284 in a scale of 0 to 900.

The criteria whose average score was lower were 9 "Key-Process Results" and 8 "Impact in the society". On the contrary, the criteria whose global average score was higher were, also, 4 "Partnerships and Resources" and 1 "Leadership", by this order.

Comparing means criteria with results criteria we could concluded that, on average, organisms and services obtained better scores in the first ones (37 versus 25 in a scale of 0 to 100).

Considering the score difference among means and results criteria, we could concluded that regional public administration services only on that moment were started to comprehend the importance to evaluate and quantify their practices.

Improvement Initiatives Implemented

On the end of 2008, of the 316 improvement initiatives proposed by CAF teams during self-assessment process on that period, 30% were concluded, 47% were in execution and 23% were not implemented. The number of not impemented iniciatives is justified because many teams concluded the self-assessment process in 2008, some of them in second semester. On the end of 2009, 45 % of them were already concluded.

E. g., the majority of services have determined their missions, visions, values, and strategic objectives, in a management perspective, with the collaboration of their workers. They also started to work on the results indicators.

Some services have implemented new electronic tools to manage their resources (human, material, finance).

Services have elaborate procedure and welcome manuals, qualifications plans, among others.

Some services improve their internal and external communications, using new electronic software such as e-mail, newsletters, electronic forums, correspondence management systems.

Most services started to make inquiries to internal and external clients and to collaborators, measuring their satisfaction.

Majority of services started to assemble evidences on a daily basis.

Main objectives achieved

CAF implementation on organisms and services of regional public administration of Azores on that period (2006-2008) were extremely important for the overall collaborators' involvement in processes of continuous improvement. Services began to become aware of their strong points and improvement areas. Most of the improvement initiatives accomplished, as a result of self-assessment process, have generated evident improvements on services delivery. It was evident the need of manage by processes and by evidences. This process has allowed top and middle management, a vaster knowledge of their organizations, in order to supply better public services to the citizens.

One other objective achieved with the CAF implementation on that period was prepare organisms and services to execute some of the premise that were adopted in the new process of organizational and individual evaluation that entered in force since one of January of 2009 named: Integrated System for Management and Evaluation of the Performance for Public Regional Administration of the Azores (SIADAPRA).

The reform of Public Administration in course

Since 2004 the reforms in Portuguese Public Administration are a reality, with new processes of progression on carriers, of measuring performance, of annual evaluation.

Azorean Autonomous Public Administration could not falling back on these new reality, so in the middle of 2008, to be precise with the publication on 27 of August of Regional Legislative Law n° 14/2008/A, was determined that in one of January of 2009, Azorean Autonomous Public Administration would now be covered by a new System for Management and Evaluation of the Performance for Public Regional Administration of the Azores (SIADAPRA).

National and Regional differences on these new system

Drawing the experience of implementation of self assessment on regional public administration between 2004 and 2008, in particularly with the use of the CAF, Azorean public makers, has decided incorporate it on the new system.

This is one of the biggest differences between regional and national systems.

How do we emphasize and value the self-assessment in this new context?

This is our biggest challenge on this moment.

The number 2 of article 14° of Regional Legislative Law n° 14/2008/A determines that services self-assessment is annually realized based on improvement action plans elaborated in the scope of application of self-assessment tools or methodologies, particularly CAF.

Annually, services are evaluated based on a matrix of criteria that punctuate and ranking the services who apply for excellence among their respectively Government Member.

This Matrix includes 12 criteria, each one with 10 levels, punctuated by one to ten.

In order to emphasize the application of CAF or other similar tools and methodologies it was included on that matrix a criterion denominated “Total Quality Management”. This criterion, thus defined, came meet the stipulated in the Regional Legislative Law n° 14/2008/A and get the services of a margin progression in the process of searching for quality.

In order to be more clarifying, the ten levels and respectively punctuation of this specific criterion are described below:

Criteria – Total Quality Management	
Points	Level
1	One of these two situations are observed: 1) the service already applied once the CAF or Qualis. The service was already involved once by the process
2	One of these two situations are proved: 1) the service apply on present annual management cycle self-assessment using CAF; 2) the service was involved in a process of self-assessment using CAF on present annual management cycle ; 3) The service are in a process of implementation of improvement actions in a sequence of application of CAF.
3	The service prove that as already applied CAF more than once. The last application demonstrate that service present an insignificant evaluation relatively to penultimate CAF application.
4	The service prove that as already applied CAF more than once. The last application demonstrate that service present a positive evaluation relatively to penultimate CAF application.
5	The service prove that as already applied CAF more than once. The last application demonstrate that service present a significant /expressive evaluation relatively to penultimate CAF application.
6	The service prove that as already applied CAF more than once. The last application demonstrate that service present a significant /expressive evaluation relatively to penultimate CAF application. In addition it was realized one benchmarking or benchlearning action with an homologous service.
7	The service prove that already start a process of certification based on a recognized national or international methodology.
8	The service prove that it is finalizing a process of certification based on a recognized national or international methodology.
9	The service prove that it is already certified by a recognized national or international methodology.
10	The service prove that already start a process of run for a second level of process of certification based on a recognized national or international methodology.

As we see looking for this grid, the first five levels are related directly to the application of CAF in compliance with the stipulated in number 2 of article 14° of Regional Legislative Law n° 14/2008/A. The last five get the services of a margin progression in the process of searching for quality.

What are for services and for individuals the good consequences of being in internal quality processes?

This new system (SIADAPRA) incorporates three subsystems and seeks to relate them in an integrated way

The subsystem SIADAPRA 1 seeks to evaluate the performance of the services and organizations of Azorean Public Administration.

The subsystem SIADAPRA 2 seeks to evaluate top and intermediate directors' performance.

Finally, SIADAPRA 3 seeks to evaluate workers' performance.

SIADAPRA is to be applied in the end of every annual management cycle, normally corresponding to a year.

Associated to each of these subsystems there are methodologies, tools and instruments in order to operationalize and evaluate them. These methodologies, tools and instruments are enumerated below:

SIADAPRA 1:

QUAR (Evaluation and Responsibility Chart) – This chart was created to measuring the main strategic indicators of each organism during the annual management cycle. These indicators are associated to efficacy, efficiency and quality objectives negotiated between organisms' managers and government members in the beginning of each annual management cycle.

BSC – BSC is not precisely referred in Regional Legislative Law n° 14/2008/A, but the Law leaves open the possibility of using others methodologies recognized internationally. It is intention of the DROAP stimulate the use of these methodology too.

Activities Plan

CAF

SIADAPRA 2:

Performance Evaluation Form – this form is used like a contract between top managers and intermediate managers. In this form there are several individual efficacy, efficiency and quality objectives, negotiated for both parts in the beginning of each annual management cycle.

SIADAPRA 3:

Performance Evaluation Form – this form is used like a contract between intermediate managers and each work. In this form there are several individual efficacy, efficiency and quality objectives, negotiated for both parts in the beginning of each annual management cycle.

During the annual management cycle the organizational (SIADAPRA 1) and individual performance (SIADAPRA 2 and 3) are being measured, and at the end a evaluation performance is made.

This evaluation leads to a scale in accordance with the following:

SIADAPRA 1

- Excellent Performance
- Good Performance (**only 20% could be Relevant in each annual management cycle, 5% of these could be recognized by excellent**)
- Satisfactory Performance
- Non Satisfactory Performance

SIADAPRA 2

- Excellent Performance
- Relevant Performance (**only 30% could be Relevant in each annual management cycle, 5% of these could be recognized by excellent**)
- Satisfactory Performance
- Non Satisfactory Performance

SIADAPRA 3

- Excellent Performance
- Relevant Performance (**only 30% could be Relevant in each annual management cycle, 5% of these could be recognized by excellent**)
- Satisfactory Performance
- Non Satisfactory Performance

With the implementation of this new system services are evaluated in each annual management cycle by:

- Results obtained
 - Results of effectiveness
 - Results of efficiency

- Results of quality
- Internal Quality processes implemented
 - Implementing action plans providing by a process of quality tools application, in particularly CAF.
- Internal and external recognition
 - Workers Satisfaction
 - Government Member recognition
 - Clients Satisfaction
 - Internal and external audits
 - Certification and accreditation processes
- Politic recognition
 - Government Member recognition

The services with best results obtained and quality processes implemented could expect being recognized as Excellent on that annual management cycle inside of their Government Department.

For such recognition within the department services ask for the appreciation (based on criteria matrix) of the respectively government member.

The services recognized by the government member with an excellent performance in an annual management cycle, are authorized to increase their relevant and excellent percentages of managers and workers to 40% and 10% respectively in the new annual management cycle, with practical effects on their professional careers.

Information System SI-SIADAPRA

At this moment we are in an acquisition process of software that will support the planning, monitoring, measurement and evaluation of all the instruments, tools and methodologies considered in this new system - SIADAPRA.

Our intention is to make an integrated management of all these instruments, tools and methodologies, so that communicating among themselves, we will get results for each of them and as a whole.

The scheme below presents our intention:

