



GCA BULLETIN 6

A milestone for improved and effective government communications in 2009 and beyond

5 December 2008 saw the gathering for the Government Communicators' Awards (GCA) function that was held in Johannesburg at Emperors Palace. It was another memorable event that will stay in the minds of many communicators who came to witness "the celebration of the stars" – the Government communicators.

The GCA event took place hot on the heels of an eventful 2008 with its challenges for communication. Today, modern government needs modern communication and new technologies bring new challenges for government communicators. The changing media landscape means people get their information from a rapidly expanding number of sources. This means that the traditional methods of communicating are overtaken by new and technologically advanced methods.

Many communicators in South Africa continue to seek better and improved ways of communicating with the public to meet their communication and information needs. It were these efforts that ensured their place as finalists at the 2008 GCA.

The event was attended by the Minister in The Presidency, Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, the GCIS CEO, Mr Themba Maseko, government communicators and the representatives from the companies that sponsored the 2008 event (Mercury Media, SABC, Standard Bank, Eskom, 3 Cities group, Nestle, ITEC and Datacentrix).

Both the minister and the CEO of the GCIS were in unison in their messages that, at the centre of government communicators' mandate, is the task of ensuring that South Africans join hands in changing their lives for the better. They also called for responsible and efficient communication that will demonstrate clearly to the citizenry, that government cares and that it will do it to improve the citizens' quality of life through the delivery of services.

The Department of Home Affairs' "ID Yourself Now!" Campaign came out tops as the Government Communicator of the Year. The campaign also won the National Ubungcweti Award, which recognises excellence in content, writing, editing, layout and design, in campaigns and projects.

Other categories included the National Bua Award, won by the Department of Social Development; the Provincial Ubungcweti Award, won by the Mpumalanga Department of Roads and Transport; the Local Bua Award and Local Ubungcweti Awards, both won by the Communication Unit of the Greater Sekhukhune District Municipality.

The Minister said that she hoped that these awards would provide encouragement for higher levels of performance for all communicators in our country, as such improved levels of performance would be needed in the coming year as many challenges lay ahead. These include the elections, 2010 communications and many other key priorities of government.

As we prepare for the future, we should fully be conscious of the fact that at the centre of government communicators mandate is the task to ensure that South Africans join hands to change their lives for the better. Therefore, our objective should be to ensure that all our people have access to information. We should also ensure consistency in our messages, which are simple, user friendly and easy to understand.

ENJOY YOUR HOLIDAYS, SEE YOU IN 2009



**government
communications**

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