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"INCREASING THE CAPACITY OF THE STATE TO MEET ITS OBLIGATIONS
TO THE CITIZENS;READY TO SERVE"



PREFACE

The new political dispensation has posed many great challenges and opportunities to both the government communication system and government communicators. The democratic breakthrough of 1994 signalled government's commitment to society; a commitment to create space for every member of society to participate in building our new democratic state, a state whose basis is the respect of human rights and human development.

It is this paradigm that compels a government communicator to view communication as a strategic element of service delivery. Because this challenge is new to all of us, it is a critical period of great learning, a challenging period.

One of the core decisions taken by Cabinet in September 2000, is that "a handbook on Government Communication will be published by the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) to entrench the new ethos and approach". This Government Communicators' Handbook is designed to assist government communicators to locate themselves in the overall government communication system in a rapidly changing working environment.

In a sense, this Handbook seeks to provide the government communicator with simple guidelines and reference tools around government communications. These guidelines include amongst others, government communication strategy, media liaison and management, campaign management, development communication, understanding of government policy, marketing and advertising, and managing the corporate identity of government.

The last three years have witnessed the dawn of many positive changes with respect to providing a professional, effective and efficient government communication service. The establishment of the GCIS has ushered in a new approach to shape the integration, coordination and improvement of government communications.

This includes among others, promoting policies and mechanisms which encourage diversity of the media; communication and information resource management; professional, effective and creative communication service; broadcast production, content development and production; distribution channels; and media placement.

Strategy and planning remain key elements for effective, integrated and coordinated government communications. The capacity to communicate with one voice is manifested in such practices as pre-Cabinet meetings, Government Communicators Forum, Media Liaison Officers Forum, Communication Clusters, post-Cabinet briefings and joint communication around programmes and campaigns undertaken collectively by some Ministries.

However, there is still a number of challenges lying ahead for government communicators and the country at large. As stated earlier, the central challenge is to infuse an appreciation of government communication as a strategic element of service delivery. Related to this is the challenge to grapple with managing public perceptions. Essentially, citizens who experience government's performance in all spheres of governance form their own perceptions about the implementation of government's programme of action.

It is within this context that government communication is based on the premise that access to development information enables people to become active and conscious participants in the complex process of social transformation.

Key among these is the commitment to intensify direct and unmediated communication with the public and professionalising all aspects of our operations with an emphasis on planning and implementation, sharpening media response mechanisms and nurturing the relationship between the media and government.

It is hoped that this Handbook will add value and further equip government communicators with requisite skills and knowledge to broadly locate themselves in the entire government communication system.

Mdu Lembede
Chief Director: Government and Media Liaison
GCIS

2 INTRODUCTION

This *Government Communicators' Handbook* seeks to provide government communicators in all spheres of government, with an overview of government communications environment, practical guidelines and quick references relevant to their work. It is also written with sufficient flexibility to be adapted as and when required to enable government communicators to be effective and innovative in their day-to-day work. Emphasis will be on accessible and succinct guidelines to provide the communicator with quick references, a one-stop-shop solution to challenges which transcend all government communication areas.

The Handbook covers the history, the paradigm and the political framework within which government communication in South Africa takes place. It also provides an overview of the communication structure and the role of the GCIS in coordinating government communication.

The government communicators' toolkit within the Handbook also, as its main objective, provides the communicator with simple practical guidelines relating to the challenges facing a government communicator generally, and a South African communicator in particular. The toolkit is followed by attached relevant documents significant to the work of a government communicator.

To help the communicator in a complete manner, the last section is a list of names and addresses of media companies. There is also a list of relevant websites providing quick information for communicators at work.

The Handbook contains guidelines for Communicators; it is not meant to be a formal expression of government policy on the matters under discussion.

3 GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION IN CONTEXT

The current context of communication takes cue from the constitutional imperative of freedom of information founded on the objective to make a visible shift from the apartheid state to a truly democratic state. The free flow of information, open dialogue, openness and accountability, and media freedom are all fundamental tenets of a thriving democracy.

This compels government to ensure that it maintains a continued dialogue with the citizenry. It is this communication that guarantees an informed and appropriate response to people's needs in order to enable all South Africans to become active and conscious participants in the process of social transformation. It also ensures that government is sensitive to the needs of the people.

3.1 THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Government's Programme of Action for each year is outlined by the President in the State of the Nation Address and the Budget Speech by the Finance Minister. They both serve as agenda and tone setters for the Government's priorities that shape the content of government communication. These two developments essentially create communication opportunities and challenges to government communicators. Therefore, it becomes necessary for government communicators to regularly assess the communication environment and identify communication opportunities that may need to be exploited in order to communicate a coherent and cohesive message to the public.

South Africa has a government of the people, founded on democratic principles, and with democratic majority rule entrenched in all spheres.

There is a general optimistic national mood, with a marked acknowledgement of the democratic gains of the country's

transition. While the registered changes are irreversible, this mood exists alongside the view that there is also a sense that the historic fault-lines in our society still persist. This mood provides communication with a solid foundation, an enabling space for development communication to thrive and an exciting time and challenge for every government communicator.

The Government's Annual Programme of Action, with its purposeful character, creates a sense of a decisive shift and presents a range of challenges for government communication in that it demands government communicators to have a firm grasp of government policies and priorities which, essentially, inform the allocation of resources. This includes an objective analysis and understanding of research, media reports and commentary around the quality, pace and comprehensiveness of service delivery which shape people's attitudes and perceptions about government's commitment to improving their lives.

3.2. THE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

It is critical for a government communicator to understand that no political environment is static. For this reason, it is important for every communicator to assess the social, economic and political environment periodically. The function of government communication in the current political dispensation is founded on principles mentioned earlier, and operates within this constitutional and political framework.

While this framework remains a conducive environment for democratic consolidation, ownership and control of the media remain issues which need special attention. These are central challenges that the Media Diversity and Development Agency (MDDA) will address in terms of creating an enabling environment for a multiplicity of voices and diversity of opinions to

flourish. So, while government communicators' function or must function within this paradigm, transformation of the newsrooms may not happen at a pace consistent with this democratic paradigm.

The year 1994 was the beginning of irreversible steps in ensuring media freedom. While, generally, the media agenda has been in some respects consistent with the positive national mood, it has tended to be more narrowly negative and heavily weighted towards an oppositional perspective. To a greater extent, this has been a manifestation of a mindset rather than judgement based on concrete issues.

In the event where the relationship between government and the media has been strained at times, this has never resulted from any act or intent on the part of government to silence the media. Nor has it ever led to action or threat to revoke the constitutional obligation to media freedom and the general right to information.

Both the South African National Editors Forum (SANEF) and South African government acknowledge that there is a skills shortage on both sides. It is common cause that there has been a juniorisation of the newsrooms. It is within this context that efforts by SANEF, Forum for Black Journalists and some media houses aimed at improving the level and standard of journalism should be encouraged, promoted and appreciated. This would, in the main, enable journalists to inform and educate citizens to take active part in the process of consolidating our young democracy. The information needs of the citizenry, include amongst others, matters regarding their freedoms and responsibilities, access to opportunities, resources and services and how they can take part in improving their lives for the better. Media forms a critical part of platforms for such communication, and government values the role of the media in this regard. Generally, there is a positive climate in the country for such developmental communication to take place. Furthermore, the government pursues its service to the people

with a firm belief that communication itself is a site of delivery, a constitutional obligation and a fundamental component of the Government's political mandate.

4 THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATORS' TOOLKIT

The toolkit is meant to share with government communicators mechanisms of dealing with different functions expected of any communicator working for government. It will outline the policy positions relating to the work of a government communicator as well as provide guidance on how to approach certain functions.

4.1 GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AS A COORDINATED FUNCTION

The Communication Task Team (COMTASK) that was set up by Cabinet in 1995 to investigate and make recommendations about government communication revealed as part of its findings that "government lacks central coordination of messaging and adequate planning of information campaigns".

As a result of COMTASK findings and recommendations, government established the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS). The GCIS was thus established as a structure within which the framework of all government communication and information would be coordinated. The GCIS was given a mandate to introduce a system that is comprehensive, integrated, streamlined and structured for delivery.

Since its birth in May 1998, the GCIS has put in place systems to coordinate and plan the communication work of government. Among these is the Extranet, which serves as a calendar of events designed to enable government communicators to share their plans for public activities and programmes. This system enables communicators to take advantage of the opportunities created by other departments for bilateral work, to be more sensitive to the environment within which information is released and approaches taken and to be more proactive in setting the government agenda.

Additional to this is a series of forums for government communicators at national, provincial and local level designed to ensure collective planning and strategising around communication in government.

The Government Communicators Forum (GCF), which is convened quarterly by the GCIS, provides a platform for government communicators to plan and identify communication opportunities across all spheres and sectors of government through substantive discussions and joint planning to fulfil the Government's commitment to accelerate service delivery. The introduction of the GCF webpage (<http://www.gcis.gov.za/gcf>) assists government communicators to access minutes of previous GCFs, presentations and current information around government communication issues.

In addition, communication clusters have been established to provide a platform for government communicators to jointly plan and collectively implement government communication programmes. These communication clusters are designed in the same manner as Cabinet clusters and thereby allow for communication programmes to be developed on the basis of concrete plans that emanate from Cabinet.

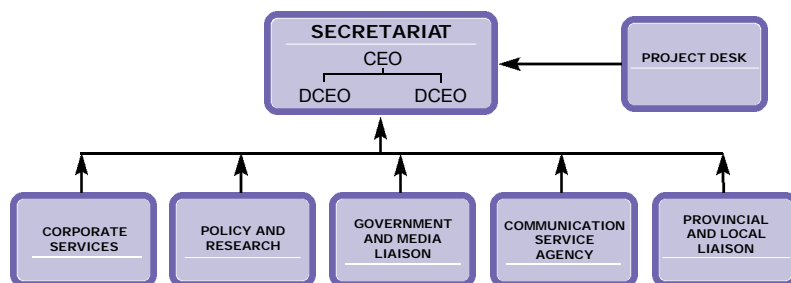
BuaNews Online is an electronic government publication targeting, especially, community media. It provides daily stories covering activities of government and other sectors of society to community media across the country. The Head of GCIS sits in Cabinet and conducts post-Cabinet briefings to communicate the decisions taken by government on a number of policy matters.

Accordingly, Communication Clusters, the GCF, *BuaNews Online*, post-Cabinet briefings and GCIS Media Briefing have

helped enhance government's approach to co-operative governance and have responded to the need for a coordinated process of realising messages and information of government.

These efforts have created a new consciousness and appreciation of communication as a strategic tool for service delivery.

The structure of the GCIS is as follows:



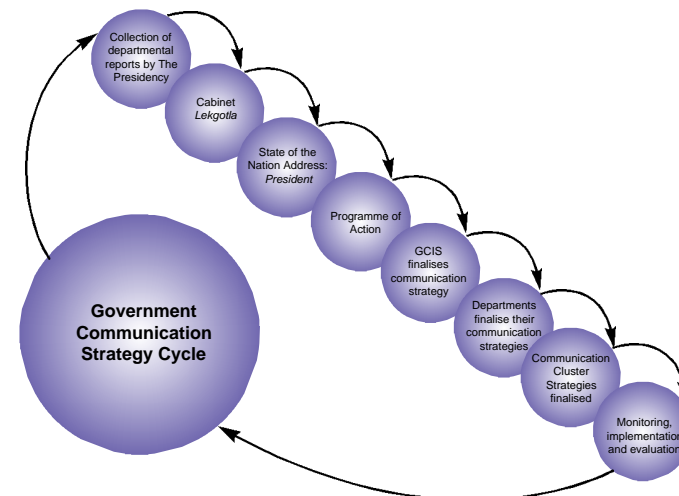
- Corporate Services is in charge of the human resource needs of the organisation – (012) 314 2402.
- Policy and Research is responsible for analysing the impact of government policy as well as research into the communication environment within which government operates. This section also facilitates research into the communication needs of other government departments on request – (012) 314 2176.
- Government and Media Liaison coordinates and facilitates the development, analysis and implementation of communication strategies; it manages and strengthens the relationship between government and the media; and convenes all the coordination forums aimed at promoting the integration of government communication – (012) 314 2108.
- The Communication Services Agency is responsible for content development and production of government

information products; coordinating bulk-buying of advertising and marketing space for government; and managing the video, photography and radio units of GCIS – (012) 314 2297.

- Provincial and Local Liaison is in charge of the coordination and facilitation of all development communication work towards the provision of government information and services for the empowerment and development of South African citizens. This section manages the Multi-Purpose Community Centres project of government and liaises with offices across the country – (012) 314 2426.
- The GCIS Project Desk assist government departments with specific campaigns and events; it receives and processes communication projects/ campaigns requests by other government departments on behalf of the GCIS – (012) 314 2277.

The government communication strategy

4.2 NATIONAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY



(GCS) sets the framework for government communication each year. Taking serious account of their key programmes, departments are expected to follow this framework in determining their communication strategies and plans. The GCIS is mandated to monitor progress in the implementation of the government communication strategy. The Cabinet *Lekgotla* resolves on the broad programme and strategic priorities of government.

Towards the end of each financial year, departmental reports are assembled for the State of the Nation Address. The President announces the Government's Programme of Action in the State of the Nation Address at the beginning of each year. On the basis of this programme, the GCIS then finalises the GCS. At this point, the GCIS then presents to government communicators the government communication programme with the central government message which then guides the work of a government communicator for that particular year. Heads of Communication are, therefore, expected to submit, to the GCIS, departmental communication strategies and programmes that are developed in line with the overall Government strategy within two weeks of Cabinet approval of the strategy.

4.3 GENERIC FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY - A PROCESS IN OUTLINE

Why strategise for communication?

A thousand voices speaking without a common message and single purpose will in the end just make an indistinct noise that few will hear.

We must, therefore, speak with shared purpose and clarity of message. Our actions must be informed by an understanding of the environment we are working in, of who we are trying to reach, what they are thinking and how they are best reached.

In other words, we must strategise for communication, translating our ideas into a concrete programme of action that promotes our objectives.

The strategising process:

There are many ways of approaching this challenge. What follows is a process that has emerged out of the GCIS' own experience in strategising for communication. It is formulated in nine steps. But this is not

a mechanical process that yields automatic results. It needs hard work and lots of thought.

These steps are the elements of developing strategy for communication and implementing it. Each step is of critical importance, and interlinked. But there is a logical order. We need, early on, to give critical attention to two things or our work will be undermined. Those two things are the objectives and messages.

Strategising is about how to achieve objectives. Individuals and organisations are all able to strategise. But if we are unclear about our objective or get it wrong then all the rest will be of little or no value. And the same goes if we have not correctly defined what we want to say i.e. what the message is.

The communication strategising process entails the following core elements: background, objectives, environment, communication challenges, messages and themes, messengers, audiences and channels, types of event, a phased communication programme, structures and processes and action plan.

• Background

Outlines what has led to the need for the communication strategy in order to ensure that we are conducting the right battle and engaging in the right terrain.

• Objectives

Clarifies intended outcomes. Broadly clarify why you are communicating and what you are trying to do. It may be to educate, reassure people, receive or provide feedback about a departmental or government programme, change perception, etc.

• Environmental analysis/ Communication Environment

This will define the terrain and environment in which you choose to communicate. It should deal with issues like the public mood, the media agenda, concerns and attitudes of varying

sectors and forces, potential for improving environment, etc.

It is critical to understand the environment before implementing the communication strategy. In fact, the exercise of scanning the environment contributes greatly to the kind of programme you end up developing for your department. Such a scan may require a number of areas that we may not clearly understand and needs further research.

• Communication Challenges

Having considered broad OBJECTIVES in the context of a defined ENVIRONMENT will lead you to identify specific communication CHALLENGES which have to be met successfully in order to achieve the objectives. Challenges could be developments which we must expect and take full advantage of, and obstacles which we need to overcome.

Once challenges are clarified, it will be possible to know exactly what it is we must communicate and how that should be done.

• Messages and Themes

It is critical to indicate the themes and concepts that are associated with the communication effort being undertaken. A distinction can be drawn between core themes and sub-themes.

Once this has been done effectively it will be possible to formulate a core message. It is important to avoid making a simple list of messages. Rather arrive at a core message and then important sub themes and messages.

When adopting a core message it is critical to integrate it with the Government core message for the year. For instance, recent key messages were *Unity in Action for Change* for 2001 and *A nation at work for a better life for all* in 2000. The government's core message is particularly important because it communicates the central message adopted by Cabinet in the national communication strategy.

Element/Tasks	Date	Responsibility	Remarks
Phase 1:			
Phase 2:			
Phase 3:			

An example of a table format to develop an action plan for a communication strategy.

• Messengers, Audience and Channels, Types of Event

A campaign should always have its own voice. Who is to speak for it? To whom? This requires a detailed breakdown of the audiences it is aimed at. In what ways? Through which channels? Here we can distinguish between the person who will speak and play the lead role in communication and support messengers. This could be different adverts etc. This leads to the type of events that need to be planned or are already on the calendar but which can be used for the campaign.

• Phased Communication Programme

There are two parts here: phasing of a campaign and the broad outline of a communications programme.

Very rarely is there just one stage to a campaign. One may move, as in the case of Y2K, from a first phase of education and awareness to a second of mobilising for action to prepare for the millennium; and then a third one of reassurance that the country is prepared. Each phase has its different needs and challenges.

Then one can begin, and it may be no more than beginning, to map out a broad communication programme.

• Structures and Processes

Implementing the communication strategy requires consultation with various structures. It has to be well articulated who the partners in the programme are and what their role will be.

• Strategy document and action plan

A well-written Communication Strategy Document is a critical instrument for a good campaign.

The document will be the guide for all future action, the standard against which the success or failure of communication is measured and the most critical means for keeping the campaign on track. It is a communication tool in itself, helping principals and colleagues to understand what the issues are and how they will be managed in terms of communication. If a tender process is being considered, it should also act as a basis for a brief.

It needs to be clear and concise and well-written in a form that is easily understood and persuasive, not as a series of bullet-points but as a logical presentation of the thinking behind the strategising session, crisply articulating the core message and the themes.

To put into practice the ideas resulting from strategising requires an action plan that spells out in detail what is to be done for each event in the programme; who is to do it; what its specific targets and objectives are, budgets, and so on. This will also serve as an instrument of strategic management and coordination to make sure the objectives are met.

An action plan is best set out in a table format (see example on page 11).

A critical part of the action plan is to identify other supporting plans needed, for example:

- media liaison strategy consisting of a detailed plan of interviews, press briefings, media/journalists to be targeted and opinion pieces. Most importantly, from the communication strategy, we may be able to develop a statement of key messages and Questions and Answers (FAQs), for communicators and writers to use.
- especially for campaigns whose objectives are to educate and inform and have a medium to long term duration, there is a need for a positioning strategy with a clear statement of the type of brand identity to be developed, something related to the objective, challenges and message.
- A distribution strategy citing a detailed plan on how the various products/ services will be disseminated to the identified target audiences.

4.4 POLITICS AND A GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATOR

If there is one area of governance which fully represents the political and administrative interface it is the task of communication. The communicator straddles the relationship of political and administrative operations, harmonises the varying emphasis of these two Siamese fraternities to emerge with messages which reflect their unity of purpose. It is usually a

government communicator who must deal with packaging messages in a manner which harmonises the administrative and political arms of government. The elements of the administrative and political interface are represented by individual Ministers on the one hand, and the Departmental heads on the other.

Indirectly, the work of the communicator is likely to be related to party political expressions as he/she communicates policy positions most of which, if not all, are associated with a ruling party. To this extent a government communicator presents policies, positions and information which may be counter to those of opposition parties.

Government communicators often need to make the fine distinction between communicating the policies of government and improperly using one's position to promote or prejudice the interest of a political party. Government communicators are public servants, whose operational code is impartiality and professionalism as encapsulated in the Public Service Regulations. Section 36 (c) of the Public Service Act states that public servants are prohibited from acting in a manner that is intended to promote or prejudice any political party. It reads as follows, *"an officer or employee may not draw up or publish any writing or deliver a public speech to promote or prejudice the interests of any political party"*.

It must also be noted that communication tends to be an embodiment of the politics of a ruling party and government administration with messages emerging from the administrative-political melting pot. The following is an abridged version of guidelines regarding the conduct of government communicators during elections.

4.4.1 Guidelines on Government Communication during an election period

The period of elections is usually a testing time for government communicators because it requires a government communicator to identify the fine line between party political communication

and government communication. It is normal practice in most democracies that, during an election period, particular attention is paid to ensuring that government communication structures and officers do not act in a way that advantages or disadvantages participants in the electoral contest.

Prior to the national election in 1999, the GCIS developed guidelines on government communications during the formal election period.

On 31 March 1999, Cabinet decided on a possible "framework to be formulated to regulate against the dissemination of government information during election periods" in a way that is to the advantage of one political party and to the disadvantage of others. It adopted the guidelines on 28 April 1999.

The guidelines remain relevant and are meant to assist government communicators and other relevant public servants in determining the specific parameters within which they should conduct their work during the election period. The guidelines have been decided upon at the initiative of government. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) may, independently, take whatever relevant steps it deems necessary on this matter.

4.4.2 Scope of Application

According to the IEC, an election period is the period during which the IEC's Code of Conduct and Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (ICASA) regulations apply. For municipal elections, this period will be determined once the date for the election has been announced, and party lists are submitted and participating parties and candidates confirmed. The period will end when election results are certified and announced.

Strictly formulated, during an election period: "state-financed media shall not be used for the purpose of promoting or prejudicing the interests of any political party". What is state-financed media?

"State-financed media" means any newspaper, book, periodical, pamphlet, poster, media release or other printed matter, or statement, or any audio and video material, or any information in electronic format such as CD-Rom, Internet or e-mail which is produced and disseminated to the public, and which is financed by, and directly under the control of, government". *Bua News Online*, internal government newsletters and magazines are some examples of state-financed media.

These regulations apply to communicators and other relevant public servants. In so far as Ministers, other political representatives, contractual workers and employees in role-playing posts are concerned, the parameters of their political work in government are regulated by the *Ministerial Handbook* and other relevant regulations; and they are not the subject of these guidelines.

4.4.3 Public Service Act

In accordance with the Public Service Act, public servants are prohibited from acting in a manner that is intended to promote or prejudice any political party. In particular, Section 36 (c) prohibits an employee from drawing up or publishing any writing or delivering a public speech which promotes or prejudices the interests of any political grouping or party.

According to Section 20 (g) of the Act, "an officer, other than a member of the services or an educator or a member of the National Intelligence Services shall be guilty of misconduct and may be dealt with in accordance" with Public Service regulations "if he or she makes use of his or her position in the Public Service to promote or to prejudice the interests of any political party." This includes the use of government resources.

During an election period, these and other provisions of the Act continue to apply to all public servants. Communication agencies and components of government and their employees have to exercise special care to ensure that their media

ANC fund abuse probed

City Press, 05 November 2000

NORTHERN Province director general Manching Benedicta Monama launched an investigation into the abuse of state resources for electioneering by the ANC on Friday.

The probe into alleged abuse in the office of the premier follows media questions about the use of tax funds and government officials to organise a rally at the ANC's Ga-Sekgopo constituency office yesterday.

MEC in the premier's office, Catherine Mabuza, hosted and addressed the rally to officially open the office, which was assigned to her for political party work by the provincial legislature.

Her government public relations officer, used government computers, fax machines and telephones to organise the rally and invite 40 dignitaries and 300 local residents to the event.

Monama's spokesperson, Kenny Mathivha, con-

firmed on Friday that investigators would also probe indications that state funds were used to rent a tent, chairs and other equipment.

The use of state resources for political party campaigning is strictly prohibited by South Africa's electoral and public service regulations.

"We acknowledge there was a misuse of resources here and if we find that any state money was used we will act against the officials and recover the money," said Mathivha.

"Constitutional work never falls within the definition of government duties and cannot be funded at taxpayer expense, even when there are no elections."

Mathivha confirmed that provincial public relations officers were warned about the potential for abuse earlier this week and insisted the PRO acted without the knowledge or approval

of his superiors.

National government communication information service head Joel Netshitenzhe added that the incident was the first reported abuse of state resources during the run-up to local government elections on December 12.

"Government issued clear guidelines that apply to all government structures during the election period.

"No public servant is allowed to act in a way that unfairly advantages or prejudices any political party," said Netshitenzhe.

Stressing officials were constitutionally allowed to belong to political parties, Netshitenzhe said they could only do volunteer work for their parties after hours.

Elected politicians and some of their closest assistants are, however, allowed to use state property such as vehicles to

do constituency work under limited conditions.

The incident is not the first time the ANC has been accused of misusing public property for electioneering in the Northern Province.

Premier Ngako Ramatlhodi was previously criticised for using government vehicles, staff and military helicopters to ferry journalists round the province on an ANC election campaign during the June 1999 general elections.

Ramatlhodi flew journalists from Pietersburg to Hoedspruit, Bushbuckridge and Giyani in a SAAir Force Oryx helicopter at a cost of roughly R25 000 to attend a series of ANC political rallies which starred ANC president Thabo Mbeki as keynote speaker, but which had no link to official or government business.

African Eye News Service

Government communicators are not allowed to use their positions in the Public Service to promote party political interests.

products, statements and public events do not promote or prejudice any political party.

4.4.4 Constitutional Rights and Obligations

Government communicators and their departments should continue meeting the obligation of government to provide information to the citizenry. Thus, they should continue exercising their responsibility to articulate, promote and defend the policies, programmes and actions of the government. Like all other citizens, communication officers have the freedom of association to belong to any party of their choice. Subject to provisions of the Public Service Act quoted above, any political activities that individual public servants, including communicators, may wish to undertake, in their own private time, is their own private matter.

4.5. UNDERSTANDING GOVERNMENT POLICY

It is a clear government policy to communicate with the people. This policy is founded on the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Section 32 (1) which states the following:

- (1) *Everyone has the right to;*
 - (a) *any information held by the state*
 - (b) *any information that is held by another person and that is required for the exercise or protection of any rights.*
- (2) *National legislation must be enacted to give effect to this right, and may provide for reasonable measures to alleviate the administrative and financial burden on the state.*

The Promotion of Access to Information Act seeks to give effect to the right of the public to information as provided for by the

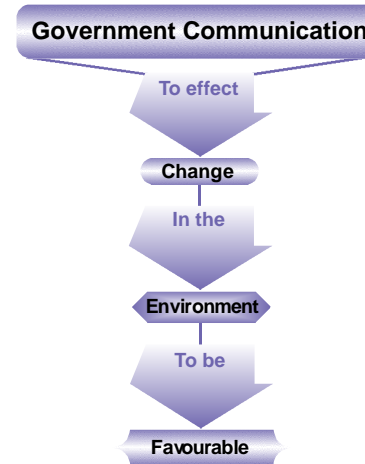
Constitution. It is imperative for government communicators to have a firm grasp of government policies to be able to articulate government's position confidently.

4.6 GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

Communication in government is complex in nature and character. While it sometimes happens in government bureaucracy, it is pursued to fulfil the mandate and duty to inform the public. As a government communicator, you are expected to understand the chain of events in the government communication system. Moreover, you should be able to examine all objective and subjective conditions that characterise the environment. Government communication takes place in an environment which must either be changed, improved, sustained or encouraged.

The above illustration suggests that a communicator pursues the function of communication to alter certain environments in favour of his/her communication objective in the fulfilment of government's mandate. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that as a government communicator, you make serious attempts to analyse the environment in which your messages will be communicated.

As a government communicator you must bear in mind that your function is directly linked to the function of meeting the information needs of society. The key messages are, amongst others, communicated to satisfy this need. So, every communicator must seek to execute their function with the knowledge that the messages are to satisfy a public expectation. These messages may also be mediated by various media. The challenge for a government communicator arises because these mediators are not devoid of interest groups agendas, some of which might be in conflict with those of government or any



state department. So, a communicator must understand these dynamics that are always at play within the environment.

The next challenge for a government communicator is to understand the journey taken by the messages to be communicated. What and who deals with these messages before they reach those they are intended for. More often, those who communicate tend to lose sight of the intended receiver of the message. Before messages are disseminated, as a government communicator you must analyse the probable line of your message from its exit point to the target audience. In this way you will understand possible distortions and mediations and their effect on your original message.

As a government communicator it is critical that you understand that the messages you will communicate may reach your target audience through the interpretation of those who are mediating them. So, your communication strategy must take this into account. The key issue to deal with is the possible changes in the message and how your strategy will minimise distortions to the content of your message.

4.7. DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

"Development communication is the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country and the mass of its people from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater social equality and the larger fulfillment of the human potential." (**Nora Quebral**; Quoted in *Development Communication – rhetoric and reality* by Pete Habermann and Guy de Fontagalland.)

What does development communication mean in the South African context?

Stated below are some key features of a developmental paradigm of communication. Development communication in this sense refers to communication which takes into account the needs of society, the developmental goals of government and general empowerment of the citizenry.

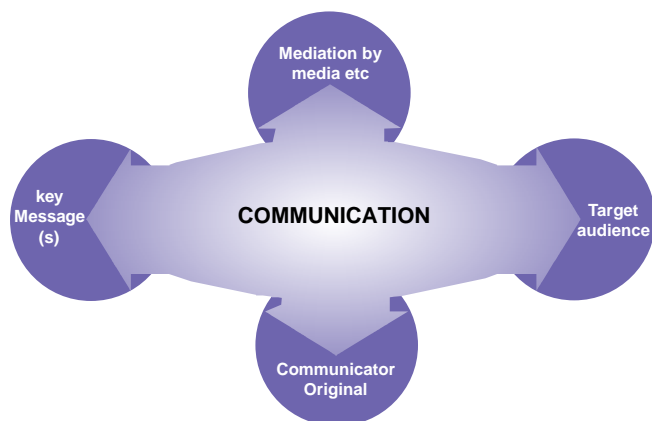
In South Africa, Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs) have been identified as the primary approach for the implementation of development communication and information as they offer a wide range of services that communities can use for their own empowerment. However, it must be borne in mind that they constitute one, probably the most important manifestation of the development communication approach.

Providing services and information in an integrated fashion seeks to address particular historical, social and economic factors, which characterise freedom of access to information and citizen participation in South Africa. This includes socio-economic problems such as poverty, high unemployment, low standards of living (people living below the poverty line), poor access to basic services, remote settlement patterns, lack of access to technology, lack of information, poor health services, lack of education and skills, lack of proper infrastructure, etc.

The discipline of communication offers the development process a number of inputs:

- a way to survey a new environment, especially by establishing consultative vehicles
- a way of raising consciousness and awareness amongst communities of issues pertaining to a better life for all – something to aspire to
- a way of promoting feedback – a dynamic two-way process can be set up between people and 'developers'
- a way to teach new skills
- selling a national dream and a vehicle for programmes directed at nation building.

It is critical to understand the following key components of communication (see structure below)



Key elements of development communication approach:

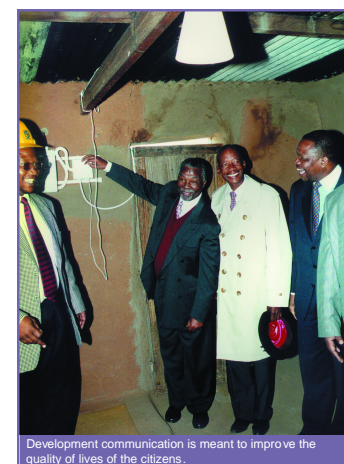
- **It must be responsive/empowering.** Development communication seeks to instruct the communicator to determine first the needs of communities and various other stakeholders. Communication must have, as its central message, the improvement of the quality of life of the citizenry. It does not provide futile or sterile information, only deemed essential by central planners. People understand their own needs better and through this approach communication becomes a tool in the planning and development process, not a mechanism to persuade communities once unpalatable decisions have been made ('in their best interests!').
- **It is interactive and hinges on feedback.** It is fundamentally, about consultative processes being managed at community level and encourages intense interaction around government's programme of action. It is not a one-way process but involves dialogue mechanisms about the information which was transferred.
- **It should be innovative and creative.** When the message is uninspiring, it affects the entire communication process. The message must show clearly how the information transmitted will make a difference in the life of the recipient – it must not instill doubt or disbelief, but trust and confidence. Development communication workers should, however, balance creativity with an understanding of what communities would be prepared to accept and consideration should also be given to the norms and prevailing values of that community.
- **It enhances participatory democracy.** This approach builds participatory mechanisms and functional networks involving NGOs, CBOs and Traditional Leadership structures, while also encouraging links with networks from across the country and indeed all over the world. These can either prove or disprove the validity of the information



An example of development communication responsive to the needs of the community.

transmitted. Therefore, it is not about 'government speak'.

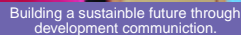
- **It's about sustainability and continuity.** All appropriate forms of media have to be used to provide the required information and two-way communication services, among others print and electronic media, direct communication with communities through unmediated products and community liaison, the Internet and telecentres. It is not about



Development communication is meant to improve the quality of lives of the citizens.

communities need, fail to be relevant initiatives and, more often than not, fail to be sustainable.

- ***It's about the use of simple and relevant language*** where concepts are packaged in the experiences of communities, in their own language and where communities themselves have played a major role in the development of material for development communication programmes.
- ***Internal communication.***
Your department as an instrument of service delivery must be able to empower its personnel with information that will make each staff member an effective agent of government delivery. This means that as communicators you must perform the critical task of attaching communication implications to departmental programmes and activities. For this to happen, an internal communication plan which is targeted at internal publics must be adopted and it must reflect clearly the needs, roles and responsibilities of government employees.



It is crucial to communicate in a simple and relevant language that can be best understood by your target audience.

- **Video.** Basic training in this skill and securing sponsorship of equipment. People understand issues when they capture their own experiences. Use videos to try and record issues relevant to the community, either feature as the content of the next community meeting or sent to decision-makers in provincial capitals, nationally, etc. In this way you

- Government has adopted an approach of dialogue with its citizens which is described as “development communication”.

- Development communication can be seen as a thread linking a number of national development initiatives aimed at eradicating socio-economic drawbacks.
- As development communication is practised in a number of spheres in which public policy is exercised – sanitation, health, safety, economic stability, agriculture, land rights, etc. the approach requires careful coordination if it is not to deteriorate into a haphazard and watered-down effort – doing the right thing in the wrong way!
- In South Africa, MPCCs have been identified as vehicles through which development communication activities can reach communities.
- It should be recognised that the development communication approach is wider than the MPCC initiative and drives the service and information delivery approach used by a number of government departments.

NB: For more information about development communication, visit the MPCC web page at: <http://www.gcis.gov.za/mpcc/>

4.8. MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

"Ad hoc communication is expensive and often wasteful. Furthermore, it often fails to meet targets and reach the right audiences where and when they are available".

Comtask Report

Comtask identified that much of government advertising is wasteful and that with better media planning, less *ad hoc* advertising and centralised bulk buying, substantial savings for government could be achieved.

Government advertising has many different forms, target markets and purposes. These include sales of unwanted equipment, recruitment advertising, tender notice, legal notice, auction notice and campaign communica-

tion. Each of these must carry with it a brand identity of government and your department.

Depending on your role in the communication chain, you may be called upon to promote, advertise or market the programmes and activities of your Department. Marketing, like any other communication project must deliver maximum service in the most cost-effective manner.

Launching an awareness campaign against the abuse of women

The Minister has asked you to head the team that will be responsible for marketing and advertising. This may look like a daunting task but if you just calm down and follow this friendly advice you will be the queen or king of government communicators.

A good starting point is a brainstorming session with your team. The session should focus on the following:

4.8.1 Creative Brief Development and Checklists

1. The campaign brief should be clear and specific.
2. Set clear objectives for the campaign.
3. The executional requirements and specifications should be clearly spelt out from the start.
4. Provide a detailed background around the campaign that you are hoping to launch.
5. It should have clearly identified campaign themes and target markets.
6. Positioning of your department should be well articulated. For instance, your brief should reflect how you want to be perceived by the target market, how it should look and feel.
7. The Coat of Arms should be used for all your corporate imagery of all government campaigns so that the public is at all times aware where messages are emanating from. Therefore, the Coat of Arms should always be placed at the bottom right hand in all print adverts and should be in the closing sequence of all

television adverts.

8. If there are more than two departments participating in the campaign, it should be branded as a South African government initiative, using the Coat of Arms.
9. Identify target audiences. For example, there may be agreement that women are the primary audiences and depending on your budget you may break this broad audience into smaller target groups such as women in relationships.
10. Construct possible messages, for example, once is already too much.
11. Both your target audience selection and your budget will determine your choice of appropriate media. In other words, the most glamorous medium may not be the most effective.
12. Link the budget to specific marketing and advertising activities.
13. Ask the GCIS Marketing, Advertising and Distribution division to assist you with available media research findings.
14. The GCIS is available to provide advice on the creative development of transversal campaigns. The Communication Service Agency (CSA) has been tasked to help facilitate the development of the Corporate Identity of government and the following example is a guide for departments to benefit from the national brand of government uniquely placing it within this wider government communication environment.

An example of a creative brief

Government Communication and Information System

CORPORATE VIDEO BRIEF

CLIENT: MARKETING DIRECTORATE
Contact: Mankitseng Molokoane (012) 314-2443

Products to be developed

A corporate video for GCIS

Vision of Above

Vision Statement

A corporate video that emphasises the role of GCIS in government communications. It must give insight to services and products being offered by GCIS.

The set of values which guides the client's work

We need a strong corporate feel and look. We are looking for an aspirational and professional corporate video. Reflecting GCIS role in managing the government Corporate Identity.

Background to the project

Background to project

GCIS has come up with a marketing strategy whose objectives are as follows:

- Create top of mind awareness regarding GCIS and the different services offered

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position GCIS as an aspirational organisation • Clarify our role and services and procedures to our target markets • Entrench GCIS as the first choice in the Government communications system • Promote GCIS' services and project an image of a quality offering to government departments thereby building a brand image and securing their commitment • To help foster relationships with local and provincial government departments through the use of GICs and MPCCs • Build awareness regarding the essential role of GICs and MPCCs • Educate non-governmental publics regarding the role of GCIS • Help facilitate the corporate image of the Government <p>The corporate video must facilitate the above.</p>
Positioning statement
To entrench GCIS as the first choice in government communication and to foster relationships with government in general.
Objectives
Objectives of project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make it easier for GCIS staff to present the GCIS offering at roadshows • To help position GCIS as the first choice in government communications • To educate clients and prospective clients on GCIS products and services • To facilitate access to GCIS products and services • To show funders and private sector partners what GCIS provides
Competitive Background
<p>GCIS is producing a lot of communication material for different departments and different campaigns. We have to make sure that this video is unique and creates top of mind awareness with our clients. There should be a distinct differentiator between this video and the MPCC videos.</p> <p>There should be no confusion between this video and other videos that have been produced by GCIS.</p>
Target market
Segment 1: The Government departments This segment is comprised of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national and provincial government • The Presidency • The clusters • Cabinet • MPCC
Segment 2: International Community This segment is comprised of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local diplomatic corps • SA embassies • Visitors to South Africa • Foreign Investors • Donor Funders

Segment 3: Media Community This segment comprises of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local media: electronic and print • Community media: electronic and print • International media
Segment 4: Other Stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parastatals • Communications industry • Other interest groups
Executional requirements
<p>We require a 12- minute video that covers all the services and products offered, this includes the GIC offices and the IRC in Cape Town.</p> <p>The emphasis on this video is access and what GCIS means for the target market. That is, which Chief Directorates and Directorates to contact for what service and product.</p> <p>The agency is requested to produce a concept including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment ideas: the look, feel and tone of the video • A script for the video • Project Plan • Budget • Please note: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) That the Coat of Arms must be in the closing sequence with the name of the department. (2) That the broadcast production department in GCIS will provide a camera person and camera equipment
Key lessons and development
<p>We currently have a corporate video that was produced last year. There is a need to focus more on actual services and products and specific departments. The last video was leadership based.</p> <p>This video must last for a time span of at least 2 years.</p>
Deadlines
Submission of quote/tender : End of October Appointment of Service Provider : End of December Completion of Projects : End of January
Evaluation Process
Does the video address the objectives and executional requirements listed above? Is it easy to understand? Does it facilitate access?
Budget
R80 000

4.8.2 Basic steps to maximise advertising and marketing in government communications:

REMEMBER!!!

Your objective is to alter the environment in which you communicate by eliciting favourable responses from and influencing the behaviour of your audience(s).

Cost-breakdown structure

This includes a number of specific actions necessary to determine the cost of each task and hence the project as a whole. Therefore, this task requires that the cost allocated to each task ultimately roll up to an allowed or approved total cost. The components of this process are:

(a) Estimating costs

- identify similar previous projects and obtain the cost data
- identify similarities and differences between the current and past projects
- drawing on these experiences, adjust the cost estimates of the current project to suit cost fluctuations
- obtain the approximate rates for each major activity or cost driver
- document the total cost estimates
- compile a resource management plan, which should include a staff requirements plan, infrastructure requirements and total project cost estimates.

(b) Compiling a budget

- summarise project cost estimates by time periods
- create an expenditure plan by performing the following:
 - Identify items which would require tender procedures
 - Determine when these items must be ordered or purchased
 - Collate the expenditure plan and the cash flow statement into a project budget.

(c) Now you are ready to buy

MEDIA BUYING

When buying space for promoting Departmental activities and programmes remember that you are dealing with public funds and ensure that the money spent is justified by your predetermined outcomes.

4.8.3 Procedures to be followed for bulk-buying and advertising:

The GCIS has developed the following guidelines and requirements through which the best value can be extracted from the huge financial investment in advertising.

These guidelines are an attempt to define the very best working practices required to ensure that the potential for financial risk is minimised and that the vital requirement of government to communicate with its citizens can be fulfilled as effectively as possible.

> Disclosure of budgets

The very first process to be completed in order to secure the levels of bulk discount that are appropriate to the GCIS is the full and early disclosure of the total financial investment that has been budgeted for the forthcoming financial year.

> Media *Modus Operandi*

With the wealth of communication choices available to reach a given target market, it is essential that the media planner is involved in the campaign development process from the beginning. The overall team working on the GCIS will consist of four principals, namely: Departmental Heads of Communication, GCIS, Creative Agency/creative source and the media planning and buying agency.

> Interaction Between Departments, the GCIS and the media agency.

Stage 1: Planning & Buying – Media Strategy

Stage 2: Planning & Buying. Tactical Media Planning & Buying

REMEMBER!

It is compulsory for government communicators to place adverts through the GCIS bulk-buying approach to qualify for, among others:

- rapid response to your request
- cost-effective service
- efficiency.

Contact the GCIS Marketing, Advertising and Distribution (MAD) Directorate for more information.

Stage 3: Campaign Monitoring

Stage 4: Financial and Billing procedures.

> Preparing a Brief

- *Who Should Be There?*

All parties involved in the campaign should be present at the briefing. These should include the Head of Communication or any designated person for this purpose, GCIS, the appointed media planning and buying agency and the creative agency.

- *When Should It Take Place?*

There are no hard and fast rules here except that it should always take place as early as is possible.

- *Who Is Responsible For What?*

There is only one thing to bear in mind here! The media planning and buying agency is appointed as the sole media strategic and tactical media agency for the GCIS and as such is being paid a fee to provide this information. The appointment is made on the basis of competency and suitability for the task and is therefore deemed, and should be considered so, as the best supplier of an advertising media service.

- *What Information Should Be In the Brief?*

Following is a checklist that includes all the elements required by a media agency to deliver the appropriate media strategy and tactical plan that will guide the buying of the media time and space

required to deliver the campaign results. For administration purposes, the following generic information is required:

- Campaign brief
- Budget
- Date
- Department/s, Section (if applicable)
- Campaign
- Control number
- Issued by
- Requested deadline
- Agreed deadline.

> What Are The Next Steps?

Once the brief has been received and accepted by the agencies, work towards the delivery of the communication campaign will begin. At all times the department coordinator and relevant GCIS staff should make themselves available to the agencies to answer such questions that affect the effectiveness of the campaign. This is just the beginning of the communication process and the brief can often be seen as the starting point from which the final campaign will evolve.

The media buying department will then book and confirm space/time, check the campaign for clashing interests and issue the creative agencies with media check-lists detailing insertion/flying dates, sizes/duration of advert and material deadlines. The creative agency will then supply the media buyer with TV/Radio flying codes and print key numbers/captions.

The media buyer will then prepare and issue flying schedules and copy instructions to the relevant media owners. In the event of any misflights or

poor reproduction the media buyer will then negotiate compensation and advise GCIS accordingly.

• *Issuing of Purchase Order Numbers*

Each approved media schedule, whether it be TV, print, radio or cinema, requires its own individual purchase order number which is to be attached to the schedule at the time of signing off by the GCIS. This purchase order number is essential in that it provides physical proof that the buying agency has received approval to secure the time and space as detailed on the implementation plan and buying brief. Without this purchase order number they are not in a position to secure and confirm time or space. Before order numbers are issued, departments must transfer funds to the GCIS account.

• *Penalties for Late Payment*

Overdue payments will be reconciled and charged at 2% over the standard base rate.

• *Reconciliation of Account*

Any debits or credits passed for a specific month will be included in the following months account.

Distribution

If your marketing strategy includes the distribution of material to your target audiences, do consider the following:

- Ensure that the material is tailored to the needs of your target audience.
- Your method of distribution must take into account the location of your audiences (urban-rural divide), language, gender and cultural issues.
- Where appropriate, the material must be distributed electronically.
- Since distribution can be a time consuming, costly and labour intensive activity, you may want to employ the services of a reputable distribution agency. Consult with the GCIS with regard to suitable agencies.

4.9 MANAGING THE CORPORATE IDENTITY OF GOVERNMENT



New Coat of Arms

Cabinet approved the implementation of the new Coat of Arms within the framework of the *Batho Pele* Corporate Management Initiative on 29 March 2000. Indeed, uniformity is central to communication, and this new Coat of Arms creates an identity brand for the Republic of South Africa. It is a symbol, which must uniquely identify government's communication with the public.

The Government believes this initiative will signal a new era in South Africa and renew a sense of pride and patriotism around the symbol of a new Coat of Arms underpinned by the principles of *Batho Pele* for better service delivery and effective integrated government.

An independent assessment found that public servants wanted to improve service excellence and that the public still needed education about their rights in making *Batho Pele* a reality.

Streamlining the branding of government and re-establishing the *Batho Pele* principles will effect cost savings across government. The *Batho Pele* Corporate Management Initiative is led by the Department of Public Service and Administration in partnership with the Presidency, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) and the Department of Public Works.

It ensures a single branding strategy for government and communicates the benefits of a new Coat of Arms and the *Batho Pele* Corporate Management Initiative to the public servants and the public. The announcement of the new Coat of Arms

linked to the *Batho Pele* principles on Freedom Day, 27 April 2000, has presented a myriad of challenges to speak with one voice.

4.9.1 *Batho Pele*

Service delivery to the people is central to realising government's commitment to a better life for all. *Batho Pele*, or 'people first' was initiated in October 1997, to promote service excellence in the public sector and to encourage the public to expect excellent service from government.

The initial aim was to "kick-start" the transformation of the public service into a vehicle of service delivery that was people-oriented. Campaign material carried slogans like: **"For a change public servants will listen to you. They will treat you with consideration and respect. New systems, procedures and structures will be customer-oriented and will ensure high-quality service. Drastic action will be taken when service falls short of delivery".**

The success of the *Batho Pele* project is vested in the ownership of the following *Batho Pele* principles: consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress, value for money. It is these principles that underpin developmental communications and enhance democracy whose essential component is participation of the citizenry.

Batho Pele can be greatly enhanced by linking it to a wider government initiatives such as the campaign to manage the corporate identity of government.

Linking these two initiatives will lend *Batho Pele* a structured network to simplify its principles and to monitor its effectiveness at the points of service delivery. The Corporate Management Initiative will benefit from an already established string of values, which will lend meaning and significance to the Coat of Arms as a symbol of effective integrated government. Further, if government is seen to be implementing a corporate branding strategy without linking it to the principles

of *Batho Pele* it potentially faces public criticism of "new look, same old service delivery, wasting public money, again".

4.9.2 *Batho Pele* Corporate Management Initiative and the New Coat of Arms

The new Coat of Arms provides the Government with a window of opportunity to implement the *Batho Pele* Corporate Management Initiative. The implementation of a new Coat of Arms on government signage, stationery and other elements is one of the approaches adopted in ensuring that the *Batho Pele* Corporate Management Initiative becomes central within government as a whole and in the manner in which it communicates.

The Initiative will also address the Government's communication priority: "Improving the capacity of the state to meet its obligations to citizens (Ready to Serve)." It creates a basis for improving people's confidence in the system, and opens up possibilities for greater mass participation, both in the implementation of programmes and in monitoring the performance of government.

This Initiative is primarily founded on the following Comtask Report recommendation: **"It is proposed that all government buildings have recognisable corporate imaging ... And that documents and other products have a design or official logo that makes them easily identifiable and accessible."** This will be addressed by applying the Coat of Arms to a branding strategy for the whole of government.

Streamlining the branding of government and re-establishing the *Batho Pele* principles in government will also effect cost savings in the following areas:

- the procurement of paper, preferably produced locally
- the development of a simpler system of information technology by the use of templates
- the production of signage
- the development of a corporate branding strategy for the whole of government instead of the expensive

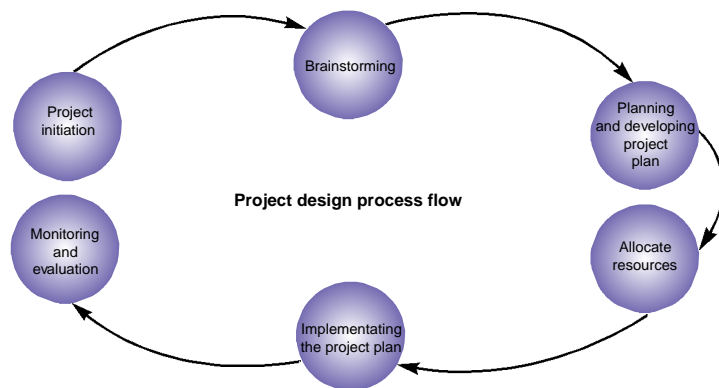
individual branding strategies existing in many government departments.

All these initiatives are aimed at designing a single branding strategy for the whole of government in order for it to appear accessible and visible and for easy interaction by the South African public. Also, to facilitate a cost-effective phased-in approach of this branding strategy, it is crucial to communicate to government staff and the public the benefits of a new Coat of Arms and the *Batho Pele* Corporate Management Initiative, that will forge a new patriotism – the dawn of an African century.

4.10 CAMPAIGN MANAGEMENT

Over the past few years of the new political dispensation, communicators have had to deal with specific campaigns, which required planning and management. To name just a few, the Government has dealt with Arrive Alive, AIDS Awareness, Taxi Recapitalisation Programme, Y2K and many more. Many of these campaigns have presented communicators with a variety of challenges. For all of them there are basic steps that are essential to guarantee reasonable success. Another challenge is that a developmental paradigm requires communicators to understand and plan campaigns in a particular manner.

When a campaign is to be embarked upon, it must be preceded by:



- Thorough research of its objectives, audiences, feasibility and possible consequences
- Identification of costs and capacity needed
- A clear strategy and programme of action
- Project leadership
- Crisis anticipation (Drawing of scenarios and possible solutions)
- Identification of key players and time frames
- Consistent, efficient and effective communication with the target audience
- A decision on the leading communication voice on the campaign if necessary
- If you are to select an agency to manage a campaign, have clear guidelines, based on the objectives of the campaign. Efficiency is crucial.

Managing communication projects effectively

A. Project Design

This process seeks to guide you as a communicator to identify key issues when managing a communication project. It will help you manage what steps you have to undertake to achieve maximum success.

B. Project design process flow

(see illustration below)

C. Project Identification

1. Project Title
2. Client
3. Project Leader (GCIS)
4. Project Leader (client)
5. Theme supervisor

4.11 MEDIA LIAISON AND MANAGEMENT

"It seems clear to me in that context, that as government we have not done really what we ought to have been doing more effectively, which is to communicate about what the Government is doing and thinking. I think the message has come across very strongly, that this has been a very serious failure on the part of the government. Clearly, it is something that we need to correct."

President Thabo Mbeki addressing the South African National Editors' Forum

This statement by the President is true about both government communication in general and the relationship between the media and the government in particular. Corrective action in this regard is about enhancing the ability of government communicators to handle and manage the media effectively. This can only happen if government communicators build sound and professional relations with members of the media.

"Government spokespersons don't seem to understand what our job is. They make it difficult for us to inform the public."

Radio journalist

What must a government communicator do?

Remember, you are unlikely to be happy in your job if throwing knives at your photo has become a form of stress release in some newsrooms. As a dedicated government spokesperson, you can contribute to the building of healthy government-media relations in the following ways:

- Know the policy positions of your Department.

- Bear in mind that South Africa is a democracy and this means that the public's access to government information through newspapers, radio, television and the Internet is an important right.
- Be professional, efficient and enthusiastic.
- Know the journalists who work in your field and avoid limiting your relationship to that of a voice over the telephone.
- Develop an understanding of the different kinds of media and customise your service to journalists to suit each medium.
- Make time to visit newsrooms in order to understand the news process and how decisions about what is newsworthy are made.
- Find out about deadlines since each newspaper, radio station or television station has its own deadlines. As a general rule, print media will have longer deadlines than the electronic media. This means that a radio journalist will be working on hourly or even half-hourly deadlines compared to the print journalist who may have a day or longer to write an article.

A journalist's nightmare:

If you want to be a journalist's nightmare and create negative media perceptions of government, all you need to do is to follow this Fools' Guide:

- be unaware of what your department is doing
- lie to the media
- make promises you know you cannot keep
- be pompous and rude with journalists
- show a lack of respect for media deadlines
- make sexual advances towards journalists
- do not alert the journalist about a press release you have sent especially if it was via e-mail
- keep sending long press statements and treat the media as the PR wing of your department

- be constantly unavailable
- send inaccurate information
- make inconsistent statements.

Pro-active media strategy

Department of Education taken to court

The Department of Education has been taken to court by a group of parents because it has decided to reduce the subsidies of private schools without warning. All media are showing keen interest because the Human Rights Commission and some Members of Parliament have come out in support of these schools. The MEC for Education calls a press conference in which she announces that the department never intended to cut subsidies. In fact – the MEC explains – subsidies are to be increased but there will be a delay in depositing the money into schools bank accounts. The opposition parties issue scathing statements in which government is accused of inefficiency and call for the MEC to resign.

What you are thinking is correct. This problem could have been avoided.

How?

Clearly, this Department had something to communicate **BEFORE** it was faced with this public relations crisis.

What are the specific steps they should have taken?

When it was discovered that there would be a delay in the payment of subsidies, a communication plan should have been designed. Such a plan should take the following into account:

- identify and design the message which must be communicated
- identify the target audience(s)
- identify the means through which the message will be communicated
- identify the key person or people who will speak on the matter. Ideally, and for the sake of consistency, it is better to have one person talking to the

media, especially during periods of crisis

- design an implementation plan which stipulates:
 - The person who will manage the process
 - The person or people who will write the statement
 - Members of the media to whom the statement will be sent
 - A monitoring and evaluation mechanism
 - The briefing of another or other departments if there is a need
 - Clear time frames for all specific activities
 - The person who will handle all enquiries.

REMEMBER!

If you can, avoid giving bad news to parties who will be affected by your decisions through the media. Media statements must complement direct communication with such parties.

Press Statement

Whether times are good or bad, you will issue a press statement or media release at some point.

If this is the first part of the handbook you went to, you are not alone. Government spokespeople love issuing press statements and get quite agitated when they pick up the newspaper and see nothing.

REMEMBER!

- We write press statements in order to promote good relations with the media, publicise our programmes and inform the public and put something on record.
- On an average news day your press statement competes with hundreds of other stories
- Most press statements feed the rubbish bins of the newsrooms they are sent to. In this day of the e-mail, most press statements enjoy the status of junk mail.

Some government communicators seem to be confused about what press statements were designed for. They seem to write them just to impress their bosses or to be seen to be working. That is why I end up keeping a large collection of government media releases in my dustbin. *Print journalist*

Although arrogant and pompous, this journalist has a point, doesn't he? So, we will – like the dedicated and professional government communicators we are – keep our shirts on and follow the advice he gives below.

10 POINTS TO REMEMBER!

1. Your writing must be accessible, clear and direct.
2. Your first paragraph must be punchy but avoid going over the top.
3. Talk to the journalist before you fax or e-mail the press release.
4. You should seek to inform and arouse the interest of both the editor and the journalist who is going to write the story.
5. Your statements must be newsworthy. Check this with the journalist because what is newsworthy to you may be as exciting as watering dead plants to a journalist.
6. Give your statement a title, not a headline.
7. Your typing should allow space for editing. Statements typed in double spacing are preferred.
8. Never type on both sides of the page.
9. Provide all your contact details and where additional information can be obtained, e.g. website.
10. In terms of lay out try to put all the information in one page and any variation of the following structure:
 - subject
 - name of the department
 - the information you are communicating
 - in the case of events, state the venue or place
 - give the date
 - indicate the benefits of your programme or project
 - identify the beneficiaries
 - contact person.

Message Presentation Strategies:

REMEMBER!

Government communication exists to ensure that the public is constantly informed about service delivery and the challenges facing the state. In the process, government communicators are delivering a service that is as important as the delivery of houses, water or electricity. It is, therefore, important that you construct government messages in a way that would capture the attention of the public.

A badly constructed message can be as bad as denying citizens their right to information.

How can I avoid badly constructed messages?

- organise a brainstorming session with the communication team and relevant officials
- identify key messages
- identify target audiences
- identify appropriate media and journalists.

Handling a media crisis

Since you will not be able to prevent crises all the time, there are a few things you can do once it has arisen:

- do not lie
- do not issue statements if your department has not made decisions about what to say
- if the crisis is going to impact on government as a whole, develop an inter-departmental or government-wide approach
- do this while approaching members of GCIS to coordinate the process
- have a central point from which statements will be issued and coordinated
- develop a parallel process for managing the parties who will be directly affected by the process.

GCIS Communication Centre: City Press: June 3, 2001

Hands up if you know what the NYC stands for

SINCE its launch in 1997, the National Youth Commission (NYC) has been dogged by controversy. To worsen matters, it is widely perceived as suffering from a serious leadership crisis.

Some observers comment that, ineffectual as it was under the leadership of previous head Mkhongeli Rhenyu, it has gone from useless to worse.

Just how disorganised the NYC is became clear to me while doing a story about the 25th anniversary of Youth Month, June.

When first approached to comment on the NYC's planned programme of action for Youth Month, NYC chairperson Jabu Mkhulu insisted the organisation had just resolved that Monda Mkhulphi was its designated spokesperson, the person who could handle all media inquiries.

Mkhulphi in turn referred us back to Mkhulu as the "proper person to speak to", and he in turn has never had anything to say.

It took some 30 hours at the time of that incident before Mkhulphi finally thought he should carry out his duties as a spokesperson of sorts and stop referring us back to his chairperson.

Even then, Mkhulphi would not be drawn on as simple a question as whether the 25th anniversary of June 16 had any significance for young people.

On the eve of this significant anniversary, it is to be hoped the NYC is a little more accessible to the youth – whose interests it supposedly represents – than to the media.

So what exactly is the National Youth Commission?

Ask a cross-section of youngsters at random, and you are guaranteed to draw blank stares. That happened on a SABC youth programme two years ago.

Seemingly preferring the lofty position of helping to craft policy rather than to get in touch with young people in the streets, the NYC has no credibility with the youth.

In its defence, the NYC has said it does not need to make itself visible in the streets because its mandate was always to influence government policy.

There is some evidence of this in the "victories" the NYC claims: establishing the inter-departmental committee on youth affairs to co-ordinate the youth programmes of 28 government departments and agencies, and influencing the establishment of the National Youth Service. This latter project has led to national youth pilot projects being launched in partnership with the department of public works.

The NYC was established by an act of Parliament, the National Youth Commission Act of 1996, and consists of five commissioners, whittled down from the original 19. The commissioners are appointed by the office of the presidency.

Mkhulu took over as chairperson at a time when the NYC was already mired in controversy after it emerged that his predecessor, Rhenyu, was getting an annual salary of R250 000.

It is these kinds of salaries, paid by government to an organisation that apparently lacks concrete programmes and a purpose, that makes the NYC's commissioners look like young fat cats.

Previous commissioners pocketed annual salaries of between R171 000 and R260 000 at a time when the NYC's very existence was being questioned because of its tendency to hold what many considered were totally useless conferences (called summits).

The other commissioners are deputy chairperson Yodawa Matima, Mkhulu Matima, Daniel van Vuuren and Ngwanakopi Ramosho. The NYC has an administrative arm headed by Leandri Mboyi, who serves as chief executive.

Andile Nogata

This is an example of a communication effort that went wrong.

5 NEW MEDIA AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The mouse, not the dog, is a communicator's best friend!

The developments in information technology in recent times have granted government the opportunity to communicate in new and exciting ways. Developments on the Internet front have resulted in an explosion of information that is available to both government communicators and members of the public. The Internet has become an important tool for research and the distribution of government information.

Government departments are investing in their own websites as a means of extending the dialogue between government and civil society. As a communicator you may have to ensure that the information contained on the website is relevant, topical and addresses the needs of citizens.

In order to sharpen your research and other skills, please visit the following websites:

A. SEARCH ENGINES

International Search Engines

- www.altavista.com
- www.Askjeeves.com
- www.dogpile.com
- www.excite.com
- www.hotbot.com
- www.Infoseek.com
- www.metacrawler.com
- www.yahoo.com

South African Search Engines

- www.aardvark.co.za
- www.ananzi.co.za
- www.Intertainment.co.za
- www.max.co.za
- www.worldonline.co.za

B. GRAMMAR AND STYLE

- Government Communicators Style Guide
- www.bartleby.com/141/
- www.ccc.comment.edu/grammar/

C. GOVERNMENT SITE

- www.gov.za
- www.gcis.gov.za

D. NEWS SITES

- www.ananzi.co.za
- www.fanagalo.co.za
- www.iafrica.com/news
- www.iol.co.za
- www.mg.co.za
- www.mediaweb.co.za
- www.bday.co.za
- www.news24.com
- www.cnn.com
- www.bbc.com
- www.timemagazine.com
- www.reuters.com
- www.nytimes.com
- www.google.com

6 ADDENDUM

ADDENDUM ONE

6.1 GENERIC KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS FOR HEADS OF COMMUNICATION (HoCs)

Cabinet approved the introduction of measures to allow the GCIS to monitor and coordinate government communications more effectively and ensure implementation of the overall government communication strategy.

These measures include the introduction of generic key performance areas for HoCs which are aimed at enhancing the coordination and integration of government communication.

This follows the resolution taken at the Government Communicators' Forum (GCF) to the effect that the GCIS should be more involved in the processes aimed at improving government communications.

This initiative should enable the GCIS to improve government communication for better coordination and integration of messages, campaigns and programmes. The Key Performance Areas outline the generic functions of the HoCs in a ministry and department. This empowers the heads of communication to be actively involved in the strategic decision-making machinery of their respective departments in terms of creating a new consciousness and appreciation of communication as a tool for service delivery.

Functions of HoCs

Cabinet approved that communicators should fulfill their obligations towards the coordination of government-wide communications by adhering to mechanisms that have been established to fulfill this objective. A Head of Communication shall, among others:

- Submit departmental communication strategies and programmes developed in line with the overall Government strategy within two weeks of Cabinet approval to the GCIS;
- Participate and contribute to the programme of communication clusters, GCF, meetings for HoCs and Ministerial Liaison Officers (MLOs) to plan for post-Cabinet briefings, pre-Cabinet meetings, training fora, Government Communicators' Extranet, submission of news releases and diary information to *BuaNews* Online, and the development of communication strategies for clusters
- Ensure quality of the work of the Ministerial Liaison Officer (MLO), with specific reference to the following:
 - (i) responsiveness to media enquiries, i.e. responding to all enquiries and issuing media statements, opinion pieces and feature articles
 - (ii) maintaining a healthy relationship with the media, including the Press Gallery Association
 - (iii) developing deliberate strategies to keep the foreign press corps informed of the department's work and approaches to issues
 - (iv) ensuring that there are clear plans for each campaign and that such are linked to the Government Communications Strategy
 - (v) ensuring professional and strategic presentations for media briefing weeks
 - (vi) contributing to Cabinet memoranda, in particular the item on communications implications
 - (vii) communicating with the GCIS the plans and outcomes of exchange programmes with other countries

- (viii) improving proficiency and maintaining quality standards in so far as adhering to the basic fundamentals of communications management, such as -
 - (aa) managing advertising and other agencies that do communications work for the department;
 - (bb) ensuring strategic planning around main communications events such as budget vote; national and international days; any other main campaigns and events aligned to the department;
 - (cc) proactive communication activities for the Minister and department;
 - (dd) ensuring cost effectiveness in the use of resources;
 - (ee) strategic management, monitoring and evaluation of campaigns;
 - (ff) managing the distribution of publications and materials to reach target audiences, including through the Information Resource Centre, Government Information Centres and Multi-Purpose Communication Centres; and
 - (gg) building capacity for the communication division by implementing training programs.

Assessment of Key Performance Areas

The Minister and/or Director-General will conduct regular assessments of a Head of Communication, or any other senior official delegated by them as per the Public Service Regulations. The "assessing authority" will also consult the GCIS on its views regarding the performance of the HoC, especially on matters pertaining to the HoC's contribution within the government communication system as a whole. The form of such consultation will be worked out between the GCIS and the Ministry/Department concerned.

ADDENDUM TWO**6.2 IMBIZO MANUAL****1.Introduction**

During 2000, Cabinet decided that *Imbizo* as a style of interactive governance and communication should be adopted to promote increased dialogue between the government and people without mediation.

Imbizo promotes active involvement and participation of the public in the implementation of government programmes. This should happen as the norm of government operation on a continuous basis, but there will be certain periods of intensified public participation across government reflected by Cabinet members, Premiers, Mayors and other senior government officials coming into active contact with different sectors of society. These will be the *Imbizo* focus weeks.

Imbizo is, therefore, aimed at building a partnership between government and the South African public in the process of social change. In the spirit of partnership between the government and the communities, attempts may be made to identify stakeholders and/or individuals within communities who are actively involved in projects that have a positive impact on community development. In this way, the concept of service delivery would not be seen as one-way traffic from the government.

In this regard, the President has set aside two to three days in his diary three times a year to give concrete expression to the *Imbizo* Programme through visits to provinces.

Periods of intense government-wide coordinated interaction with the public

While this emphasis on interaction to build a partnership between government and people for development will be the norm in government communication, there are at times periods of intense activity involving coordinated communication action across government. The national communication strategy envisages the *Imbizo* Focus Weeks will happen twice a year, once following the President's announcement of the government's programme of action in the State of the Nation Address and after the budget speech and once towards the end of the year.

During the focus weeks Cabinet Ministers, Premiers, MECs and Mayors will engage in outreach programmes to further enrich and give support to government's development programme. The central characteristic of these activities and events will be direct interaction with the people to receive feedback on programmes that are already being undertaken and to highlight to the people what government is and will be doing to improve the quality of their lives.

Each focus week will be given coherence in content and communication through the use of publicity material produced by the GCIS and the Department of Finance, which communicates the Programme of Action for the year and the Budget that will underpin its implementation. The core message for that particular year, e.g. **Unity in Action for Change**, will be prominent and visible throughout.

The President's participation raises the profile of this style of governance and sets an example to government as a whole.

2.What is Imbizo?

Imbizo brings government and people together in order for them to interact with one

another on matters of common interest and/or concern. In terms of government, *Imbizo* is conducted to engage on issues of service delivery and development. The aim is to give people an opportunity to raise issues about the programmes of government. This would, in the main, ensure that government listens and notes the issues raised and ensures adequate follow-up with responsible departments and bodies and where possible responds immediately, if action has already been committed or taken. Where it is not possible to respond immediately, the government has to commit itself to get back and respond within a particular time frame.

Imbizo can take the form of a gathering under a tent in a village or township where the President, Minister, Premier, Mayor, Councillor or other senior government officials come to listen to ordinary people and provide answers to their questions. It can also take the form of a meeting between the people above with relevant stakeholders, i.e. representatives of business, church, labour, youth, women and any other sector of society. Provincial Outreach programmes where the Executive Council meets the people from one region to the next are a reflection of *Imbizo*.

Imbizo can be undertaken over a few days or just in one day depending on the content of the programme that has been agreed upon.

What matters is not the name but the principled practice of direct interaction with the people around issues of service delivery and development. Provinces already have outreach programmes and are, therefore, already implementing the practice of direct interaction with the people.

Below is a set of guidelines to ensure that any government sphere or department wishing to undertake *Imbizo* does so honouring the spirit and letter of the general principles.

These guidelines will cover the following essential areas of *Imbizo*:

- o Interaction with the people
- o Media liaison
- o Publicity
- o Follow-up on issues raised.

3.Guidelines for undertaking Imbizo**3.1. Strategising for Imbizo Communication**

An *Imbizo* Communication Programme has to be based on a defined communication strategy. The strategy must clearly outline the objectives of undertaking such an *Imbizo* and must contain all the elements of the communication strategy as outlined in the generic framework for developing government communication strategies. For a detailed framework for developing a communication strategy please consult the *Handbook for Government Communicators*, also available on www.gcis.gov.za

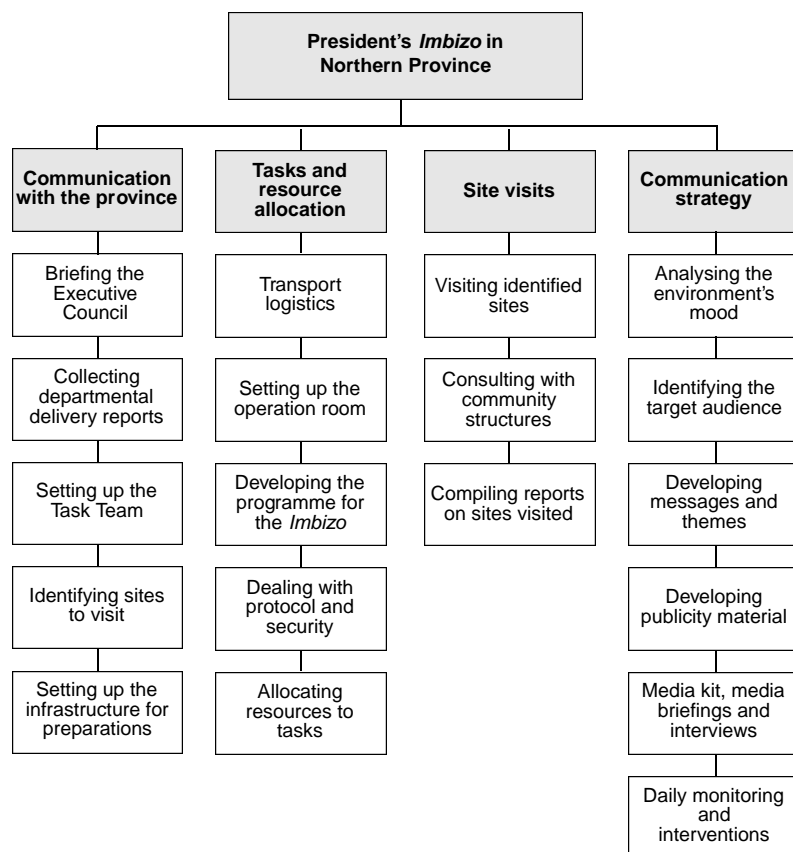
3.2.Implementing Imbizo**3.2.1.Planning**

Effective planning is a critical aspect of any successful campaign. This embodies initial conceptualisation of how the whole *Imbizo* will take place, using the communication strategy as a guide. At this stage, the role-players must be identified and the necessary steps and processes specified in a work breakdown structure and action plan.

An example of a work breakdown structure for the President's *Imbizo* in the Northern Province is shown below. Underneath it is an action plan showing how the implementation will take place.

These should be used only as guides and checklists as each specific *Imbizo* should dictate what steps and processes to follow.

EXAMPLE



PROJECT PLAN

Task	Measures	Deadline	Responsibility	Cost
Statement of work	Develop a clear objective of the visit of the President into the Northern Province and communicate such to the authorities	23 March	Presidency	None
Project specifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultations with the province on the objectives of the visit • Indications of all the tasks at hand • Identifying the resources needed for the project 	23 March	<i>Imbizo</i> project team and Presidency	None beyond what is identified for the whole <i>Imbizo</i>
Communication Strategy	• Developing a communication strategy and an action plan	25 March	Project team	R25 000, includes publicity
Human Resource Strategy	• Allocation of personnel to all tasks	23 March	Project team	All personnel will come from within government
Project integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close working relations with all parties involved • Briefing to all stakeholders 	23 March for those in project team 30 March for all others affected	Project team leader	R2000 for transport costs
Managing the visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all tasks are fulfilled • Risk management during days of visit 	25 – 27 April	Project team leader	R2000 miscellaneous
Project evaluation	• Debriefing session for the evaluation of the visit	28 April	Project team	None
Compiling project report	• Drafting report on the basis of the debriefing session	29 April	Project team leader	None
Submission of report	• Submit report to GCIS management and Presidency	30 April	Project team leader	None

Work Breakdown Structure for the President's *Imbizo* in the Northern Province

It is important to put as much detail into the plan as possible so it can serve as a guide during tasks review meetings.

3.2.1. Establishing a Task Team

A Task Team should be established and charged with the overall responsibility of implementing the *Imbizo*. The Task Team should preferably consist of selected government communicators from the Department, representatives from Protocol and Security; a senior person who will be the link with the Provincial Executive Council and others as may be deemed fit.

The significance of having communicators in the Task Team is that of ensuring that the communication objectives of the *Imbizo* are kept intact and not compromised.

Protocol and Security have to be taken on board at all times as their understanding of the *Imbizo* is crucial to its success. Sometimes neglecting to brief them thoroughly may result in the failure of the *Imbizo* as these people are understandably critical and responsible for the movements of the principal on the ground.

Personnel from the province are also important in the process of implementing *Imbizo*. Preferably, it has to be someone with direct access to the Premier or the entire Executive Council, the MEC in the province, depending on the nature of the *Imbizo*.

The Task Team must have a designated Project Leader who will have the overall responsibility for the work of the Task Team. He/she should also have direct and full access to all those who need to be consulted to sign off things and approve the programme.

3.2.2. Role clarification

Once the Task Team has been established, the roles of the various role-players should be clarified to ensure a smooth implementation of the *Imbizo*. This must be as detailed as possible and should make very clear who will be responsible for which tasks.

3.2.3. Budget

The budget is another crucial aspect of implementing *Imbizo*. Sometimes the budget commitments will be shared between the national department and the province. When this is the case it must be made clear which aspects of the budgets are the responsibility of the province and which of national department.

At times this is left hanging and often results in unnecessary debts and unhealthy relations.

3.2.4. Consultation with the province and local municipality

Most *Imbizos* are conducted in a particular local area. It is important to observe all necessary protocol before pronouncing publicly the intention to undertake *Imbizo*.

Improper consultation can be a recipe for the failure of the *Imbizo*. As such, all parties must be consulted in advance about the *Imbizo*.

Once the necessary consultation has been done with the provincial leadership, the Task Team should then begin its work. It is advisable that the Task Team should as much as possible be stationed and operate from the province where the *Imbizo* will take place a

few weeks before the event. This is critical as reports that are submitted by provincial officials about potential projects and sites to visit need to be confirmed by actually visiting them.

3.2.5. Developing the *Imbizo* programme

The programme is the ultimate reflection of long hours of work putting things together. At a glance, the programme should confirm if what is being undertaken is *Imbizo* or not.

This means that the *Imbizo* programme should cater for the principal's interaction with the people, allocating enough time for people to express their concerns and issues. The projects to be visited should also relate to the developmental and service delivery programme of government.

Long before deciding what the programme should look like, the province should have been requested to submit ideas about possible projects and programmes, which can be visited or undertaken by the President, Minister or Premier.

On the basis of responses received, the Task Team should select those suggestions that are closest to the objectives of the *Imbizo* as outlined in the communication strategy. For instance in a rural and poverty stricken province, issues that should be prioritised by an *Imbizo* programme are:

- Water
- Roads
- Poverty Alleviation Initiatives
- Health facilities
- Electricity
- Housing
- Education programmes
- Agricultural initiatives
- Economy boosting initiatives.

There may be other political or social ills that are high on the agenda of the province and as such may need to be addressed during the *Imbizo*. These may be problems of racism, the high level of crime, or even witchcraft.

By making these considerations, the programme will be responding to the needs of the environment as outlined in the communication strategy.

The programme has to be approved before any commitments are made about it either to different stakeholders or to the media.

Once the programme is approved, a second version for the public has to be produced. This will then be handed to interested parties, especially the media. This version will not include details that are necessary for security and protocol purposes.

3.2.6. Media Liaison

Media Liaison is critical to *Imbizo* because we need to popularise this style of governance in order to relate to people the commitment government has in forming unity with them for change.

A Media Liaison manager must be identified to be in charge of activities that relate to media liaison. Having too many people managing media liaison activities results in confusion about directives and often makes media people furious, resulting in negative

coverage of the *Imbizo*.

This person and his/her team will then be responsible for the development and implementation of an effective media liaison strategy and plan. The strategy and plan should entail amongst others:

- Briefings to the media
- Interviews
- Which media/journalists are to be targeted
- Opinion pieces
- Statement of key messages about the *Imbizo*
- Contents of the media kit.

It is crucial that the media should be informed in time what the *Imbizo* is about – and this does not, at initial stages, have to be about details in the programme.

During some *Imbizos*, it may be necessary to organise transport for the media to move from one venue to the next so that at all times they have access to the activities of the principal.

Another essential element of media liaison during *Imbizo* is to provide the facilities necessary for the media to do its work effectively. This may be an Internet Café where the media can file their stories. A briefing room should also be handy for when the need arises to give further briefings to the media.

3.2.7. Publicity

In order to reinforce the message, publicity material has to be developed, availed and widely distributed. The publicity material must relate to the programmes of government, reflecting on successes and challenges of service delivery.

To achieve maximum impact during *Imbizo* focus weeks, common publicity material is used. This is in the form of posters, pamphlets and leaflets. The GCIS is responsible for producing leaflets and posters for the State of the Nation Address and the People's Guide to the Budget, which it makes available for *Imbizos*. Departments and provinces can produce other material of their own, as long as they will integrate the central message of government.

People are often not well informed of government activities and programmes through the mainstream media, hence the emphasis of publicity material during *Imbizos*.

3.2.8. Promotional material

Media statements, interviews and publicity material can be complemented by promotional material. These can be T-shirts, caps, backdrops, banners, etc. Again, these promotional material must prominently reflect the core message of the *Imbizo*.

3.2.9. Conducting research for *Imbizo*

Preliminary research: Research must be conducted on the given area where the *Imbizo* is planned to happen. This could either be on a province or on a particular community or village. In terms of quantitative data, some of the service delivery indicators that could be used include statistics of:

- Electricity grid connections

- Houses completed or under construction
- Water – people gaining access
- Health Care – people gaining access
- Telephone lines – number of lines installed
- Education – matriculation results or educator: learner ratio.

The above statistics must be collected from 1994 – current to show trends of progress. This can be used on publicity material for the *Imbizo*. In terms of qualitative data, consideration must be given to development issues in the specified area, languages spoken, natural resources and the communications milieu of the area.

Secondary research: In assisting the project team to make informed decisions on the development of the programme, it is necessary for information to be gathered from various service delivery departments on successes and challenges that face their service delivery programmes in the given area.

- It is important that information received from departments is verified by independent research, which may involve field visits or contacting people involved in the programmes, etc.
- In processing the research consideration must be given to both the output and impact of service delivery.
- Research briefings must be written on each service delivery programme, whether it is building a school, construction of a clinic or the operations on a small holding. All research briefings must be in a format that is easily readable and succinct. It should ideally contain sections on background, success, status of the programme and challenges.
- It is important to keep the briefing notes clear and precise, because they can then be used and further processed by the Media Liaison Officer to be included into the press packs.

Assessment and follow-up research: This is crucial for an effective *Imbizo* which will ultimately be measured by its follow-up in terms of action taken –

- The researcher needs to identify and brief scribes for each event. Scribes must be fluent in both English and the prevalent language spoken at the area where the *Imbizo* takes place.
- Ideally, scribes should come from the communications section, because they are more aware of the communications environment in which they will be documenting issues raised.
- A user-friendly form needs to be drawn up by the researcher for each scribe to complete when documenting issues raised by the people.

Hint: Copies should be made of the form and compiled into a booklet with a hardback cover and a plastic front cover. This is to help scribes document easily in rural areas.

- **An example of the format of the form is attached as a guide.**
- All scribe notes need to be collected and collated into a follow-up report of all issues raised. Ideally, this should be in the form of a database, such as Access, or in a tabular form, which captures all the fields of the scribe form.
- A fortnight after the *Imbizo* visit, it may be necessary to visit the province to obtain their reportback as well as discuss the development of a consolidated report.
- The consolidated report, which will also include timeframes of action required by responsible departments and bodies, should be presented to the principal, i.e. President, Deputy President, Premier, Minister, Mayor, Councillor, etc.
- The report must be communicated to the relevant responsible departments or bodies via the proper protocol channels, to ensure that action is taken and communicated to the affected province or area.

Together with other documentation and plans, all research material and notes must be filed and used during the assessment and closure of the project for that particular *Imbizo* event.

3.2.9. During the *Imbizo*

So far, we have dealt with plans and processes leading up to the *Imbizo*. During the *Imbizo* there are critical things that the Task Team has to be in charge of.

3.2.9.1. Recording proceedings

The Task Team has to allocate people who will be in charge of recording and documenting the issues that are raised by people and the responses that are given by government officials.

This is critical for follow-up. An *Imbizo* is not complete and successful if government does not follow up on issues and concerns raised by the people. In order to achieve this, detailed recording and documenting of proceedings is required.

People allocated to perform this task during the *Imbizo* should be fully dedicated to this and should not be distracted, as they need to capture everything. Audiovisual and radio recordings should also be done to reinforce the recording process.

An important part of ensuring that things are well recorded and that people are able to raise their issues audibly is the need to avail communication facilities for this purpose. Thus, the Team must ensure that there is an operational Public Address (PA) System and roving microphones for people to speak from.

Given the mobility nature of these sessions, it would be advisable to outsource the PA System from venue to venue. GCIS Broadcast Production may be requested to record the events that have a development communication element. These requests need to be made within a reasonable timeframe and the GCIS would provide its services depending on the availability of resources at that time. The recorded material should be transcribed and out of that material, a detailed report of the entire *Imbizo* should be the outcome. In the past only the principal's speeches were transcribed and copies of the material circulated to the provincial community radio stations.

3.2.9.2. Monitoring the programme

The Task Team should allocate members to all the venues where the *Imbizo* will be taking place. There they must ensure that things are organised as agreed. Developments/problems must be reported immediately to the project leader for alternative arrangements if necessary.

The project leader should at all times be with the principal, advising on proceedings and managing the time. Adherence to the time allocated in the programme is crucial as late arrival to the next destination can cause irritation and even shape the attitudes of people. Thus, it is critical to advise people about the actual and accurate venues to avoid situations where people wait for the principal in particular venues that are not part of the political principals' itinerary.

However, the leader should be dynamic and flexible to deal with unforeseen circumstances. Continuous briefings to the Head of Protocol and Security is important to take them on board and consult them where the programme has to take a slight or drastic change. If the *Imbizo* is happening over a few days, the Task Team should meet at the end of each day's programme and assess the proceedings for that day as well as plan for the next day.

3.3. Post *Imbizo* tasks

The Task Team does not disband immediately after the last item on the programme of the *Imbizo*. There are issues to be dealt with after the *Imbizo*.

3.3.1. Evaluation of the *Imbizo*

The Task Team needs to make an evaluation of the *Imbizo* and critique where necessary for future improvements. The evaluation should be the first step towards writing a report about the *Imbizo*.

3.3.2. *Imbizo* report

The Task Team has to produce a report about the *Imbizo*, which is submitted to management. The report should contain recommendations about how issues raised will be taken forward.

3.3.3. Follow-up

The Task Team should also set up a process by which issues that were raised during the *Imbizo* will be followed up. This may entail consulting relevant government structures that may not have been at the *Imbizo* but are the competent structures to respond to issues raised.

Formal contacts need to be made with those structures through the political head or any such official appropriate to do so.

Continuous assessment of the follow-up is required to ensure that indeed government is fulfilling its commitments. After a while, it is advisable to return to the areas visited during the *Imbizo* to see if there have been changes. In certain instances there are huge progress and that can form the basis for a good media follow-up.

4. Conclusion

The generic guidelines and checklists outlined in this document should be adhered to in order to conduct a successful *Imbizo*. It should, however, be borne in mind that *Imbizo* is not a public relations exercise, but a catalyst aimed at getting a sense of the needs of ordinary people themselves in order to better respond and improve the quality of life of all citizens.

An example of the form to be filled in by Scribes during the *Imbizo*

IMBIZO TO THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE BY DEPUTY PRESIDENT JACOB ZUMA

Name and contact details of Scribe:			
Date: Friday 06 July 2001			
Event (tick appropriate box)	Relebogile Clinic	Taditional Leaders meeting	Lebotlwane MPCC
Issue Raised:			
Raised by whom:			
Action already taken:			
Action needed or committed:			
Provincial responsibility: (tick the appropriate box)			
Portfolios for North West province			
Office of the Premier (Premier P.S Molefe)			
Traditional Affairs & Corporate Affairs (MEC J.D Thibedi)			
Agriculture, Conservation & Environment (MEC Molewa)			
Education (MEC Z.P Tolo)			
Finance (MEC M Luscus)			
Economic Development, Planning & Tourism (MEC Modiselle)			
Health (MEC M Sefularo)			
Development, Local Government & Housing (MEC D.E Africa)			
Transport, Public Works & Roads (MEC F Vilakazi)			

Provincial Safety & Liaison (MEC Rasmeni)	
Social Service, Arts, Culture & Sport (MEC Mayisela)	
National responsibility: (tick the appropriate box)	
National Department	
Agriculture & Land	
Labour	
Arts, Culture, Science & Technology	
Minerals & Energy	
Communication	
The Presidency	
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Provincial & Local government	
Defence	
Public Enterprises	
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Health	
Sport & Recreation	
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Housing	
Transport	
Intelligence	
Water Affairs & Forestry	
Justice	
Other responsible organisations:	

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Fax: (012) 326 1221

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NEWS EDITOR
Pat Sydie

ENGINEERING NEWS

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PO Box 75316
GARDEN VIEW
2074

Bedford Centre
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BEDFORDVIEW
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Fax:(011) 341 0629

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EAST WAVE RADIOFrequency
FM 92.2

Mail
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FINE MUSIC RADIOFrequency
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FM 98.0

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Frequency
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Fax:(041) 364 1038

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Frequency
FM 89.9

Mail
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FM 107.6

Mail
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0100

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Fax:(0331) 424 108

RADIO MATIE FM

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Mail
Private X1
Matieland
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Tel:(021) 808 911
Fax:(021) 808 4336

RADIO PHOENIX

Frequency
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RADIO PUK

Frequency
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FM 90.5

Mail
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0161

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FM 97.0

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2400

Fax:(015) 196 428

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FM 89.1

Tel:(053) 833 3786
Fax:(053) 833 3787

RADIO TNG

Frequency
FM 96.2

MAIL
Private Bag X07
Pretoria North
0166

Tel:(012) 799 9257
Fax:(012) 799 9256

RADIO TODAY

Frequency
FM 106.3
MW 1485

Mail
P O Box 910414
Aucklandpark
2006

Tel:(011) 482 6767
Fax:(011) 482 6761

RADIO TUKS

Frequency
FM 107.2

Mail
P O Box 13762
Hatfield
Pretoria
0028

Tel:(012) 362 53716
Fax:(012) 342 5313

RADIO TURF

Frequency
FM 103.8

Mail
Private X1106
Sovenga
0727

Tel:(015) 268 3062/3
Fax:(015) 268 3516

RADIO TYGERBERG

Frequency
FM 96.7

Mail
P O Box 4321
Tygervally
7536

Tel:(021) 948 8801
Fax:(021) 948 8870

RADIO UNITRA

Frequency
FM 97.0

Tel:(041) 502 8775
Fax:(041) 302 2801

RADIO PANORAMA

Frequency
FM 107.6

Tel:(057) 388 4049
Fax:(057) 388 5300

RADIO ROSESTAD

Frequency
FM 100.6

Mail
PO Box 28894
Damhos
9310
Tel:(051) 436 6744
Fax:(051) 436 7340

RADIO WEST RAND

Frequency
FM 90.7

Mail
PO Box 22700
Heldergrein
1733

Tel:(011) 768 0270/1/2/3
Fax:(011) 768 0274

RHODES MUSIC RADIO

Frequency
FM 89.7

Tel:(046) 622 7182
Fax:(046) 622 8608

RAINBOW CHRISTIAN C.RADIO

Frequency
FM 90.7

Mail
PO Box 69
Roodepoort
0724

Tel:(011) 763 7440
Fax:(011) 763 6187

SOSHANGUVE COMMUNITY RADIO

Frequency
FM 93.0

Mail
P O Box 200
Soshanguve 0152

Tel:(012) 799 6054
Fax:(012) 799 8334

SOWETO COMMUNITY RADIO

Frequency
FM 105.8
Tel:(011) 982 1085
Fax:(011) 982 7003

SUID KAAP STEREO

Frequency
FM 104.1

Mail
PO Box 554
Outshorne
6620
Tel:(044) 272 6230/1/5
Fax:(044) 272 5864

UBUNTU COMMUNITY RADIO

Frequency
FM 107.5

Tel:(041) 57 3238
Fax:(041) 57 3736

UCT RADIO

Frequency
FM 104.5

Mail
UCT, Private Bag
Rondebosch
7701

Tel:(021) 650 3550/686 1870
Fax:(021) 650 2940/658 4856

UNVEN RADIO

Frequency
FM 99.8

Mail
Private Bag 5050
Thohoyandou
0950

Tel:(015) 962 8336
Fax:(015) 962 4749/4741

VAAL COMMUNITY RADIO

Frequency
FM 90.6

Mail
P O Box 301
Vereeniging
1930

Tel:(011) 331 0391
Fax:(011) 311 1143

VOICE OF SOWETO

Frequency
FM 87.6

Mail
P O Box 23472
Joubertpark
2000

Tel:(011) 331 0391
Fax:(011) 331 1143

VOICE OF THE CAPE

Frequency
FM 100.4

Mail
P O Box Vlaeberg
8018

Tel:(021) 422 2835
Fax:(021) 422 2828

VUKANI COMMUNITY RADIO

Frequency
FM 100.3

Tel:(047) 972 204
Fax:(047) 313 1050

WINTERWELDT COMMUNITY RADIO

Frequency
FM 99.5

Mail
P O Box 9111124
Rosslyn
0200

Tel:(012) 702 9718
Fax:(012) 702 9718

ZIBONELE COMMUNITY RADIO

Frequency
FM 92.2

Mail
P O Box 35292
Lingeletu West
7765

Tel:(021) 361 9344
Fax:(021) 361 5194